

ceptance of revealed truth, man will remain an insoluble problem. The acceptance of it is the firm and safe foundation upon which every inquirer about man must base himself. It is from this that he must begin in order to rightly solve the various parts of the question and learn the truth by means of true science.”¹⁵

7. Holy Hieromartyr Hilarion (Troitsky), Archbishop of Verey

St. Hilarion (1886–1929) was a prominent hierarch, theological writer, apologist, and close co-worker of St. Tikhon, Patriarch of Moscow. After the Revolution of 1917, he defended the Orthodox Church from the incursions of the Soviet-supported “Living Church,”* taking back and reconsecrating temples that had been confiscated by the schismatics, and exposing their deceptions in public debates. Because of this, the “Living Church” exerted its influence with the new regime to have St. Hilarion arrested. In 1923 he was sentenced to the Gulag, where he shone with sanctity amid great suffering and finally met his martyric end. He was among the 1,200 New Martyrs and Confessors glorified by the Russian Orthodox Church in 2000.

In his writings, St. Hilarion argued for the truth of the Orthodox Faith as against a diversity of heterodox Western ideas that had infiltrated Russian society. Among these ideas were evolution and its corollary, progress. In an essay published in 1913, “The Incarnation and Humility,” St. Hilarion explained how faith in evolution and progress feeds the pride of man. Soon afterward he would see this faith become a moving force behind the Communist regime and the modernist “Living Church,” both of which would embrace evolution as a cardinal doctrine. Such faith, he understood, is the antithesis of true faith in Christ, which inculcates only humility in the heart of man. As he wrote:

“Through the misuse of his freedom man has so corrupted his nature that he is only left to cry out: ‘Wretched am I, poor me! I cannot save myself.’ We require a new creation, we need an infusion of a new energy of grace. This is precisely what all mankind should say in order

* On the “Living Church,” see pp. 64–65 above.



Holy Hieromartyr Hilarion.

to believe in the incarnate Son of God. Such a humble admission, such a lowly confession of one's frailness, of one's guilt before God's handiwork—is this in the spirit of the modern man? On the contrary, the contemporary conscience is saturated with the idea of evolution, the idea of progress, i.e., the very idea that nourishes human pride. Christianity demands a humble conscience. There was perfect Adam, my forefather; and I, mankind, have only been involved in sin and corruption. The Church calls us to humility when she calls Adam our ancestor. But evolution? Descent from a monkey? No matter how modestly someone may judge himself, still he cannot avoid thinking with some pride: at least I am not a monkey, at least some progress has been realized in me. This is how evolution, by calling a monkey our ancestor, feeds our pride. If a monkey is our benchmark then one can pride oneself in progress, but if we compare ourselves to the sinless Adam, this external progress will lose its value. The external progress is at the same time a refinement of sin. If humanity is moving forward in its development, then we can rely on ourselves. We can create ourselves. But the Church says the opposite. 'We could not become incorrupt and immortal if the Incorruplicable and Immortal One had not first become

what we are now.' To believe in the Incarnation means to confess that without God all of mankind is nothing.

"The Church through the ages carries the ideal of deification. This is a very high ideal, and it demands much from man. It is unthinkable without the Incarnation;* it forces man to first of all be humbled. Humanity rejects this high ideal and it no longer needs the Incarnation of the Son of God. An infinitely lowered ideal of life allows mankind to speak about progress; it gives it the opportunity to feel proud about its achievements. Precisely these two thought-patterns comprise the two worldviews: the ecclesiastical and the secular. The ecclesiastical: the descent of perfect Adam, the fall, the need for the Incarnation—humility. The secular: the ascent from the monkey, progress, the needlessness and denial of the Incarnation—pride."¹⁶

8. Holy Hieromartyr Thaddeus (Uspensky), Archbishop of Tver

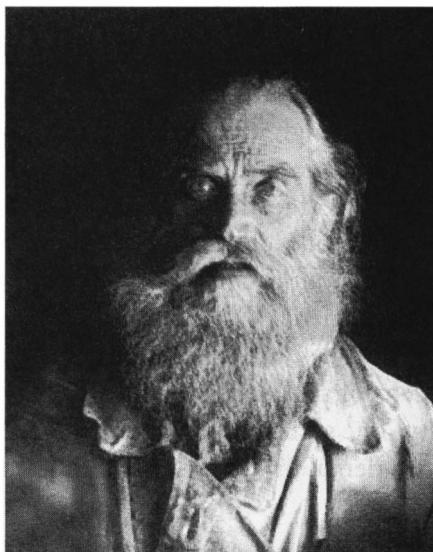
Called a "holy man" and "rare luminary of the Church" by his patriarch, St. Tikhon of Moscow, St. Thaddeus (1872–1937) was an ascetic bishop and apostolic preacher who sacrificed himself entirely for the sake of his flock. Because he was so greatly loved by the faithful throughout his diocese and beyond, he was one of the first hierarchs to be arrested under the Soviet regime. He was imprisoned three times and exiled once during his episcopal service, and was finally executed in Tver in 1937. In 2000 he too was glorified as one of the New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia.

St. Thaddeus' comments about evolutionary theory anticipate the most powerful argument against the theory in our own times, which centers on the origin of biological information. He wrote: "A man who does not believe in God wants to explain, from the gyrations of cosmic dust, the origin of the world, whereas in every blade of grass, in the structure and life of even the tiniest beings there is enclosed so much information [разум: literally, reason, intellect, mind] that it is beyond human understanding. The many centuries of human wisdom have

* Unthinkable, that is, for man in his fallen, corrupted state. On what might have been if man had not fallen, see pp. 691, 702–3, 710–11, 763–66, 774 above.



Holy Hieromartyr Thaddeus.



Holy Hieromartyr Varlaam.

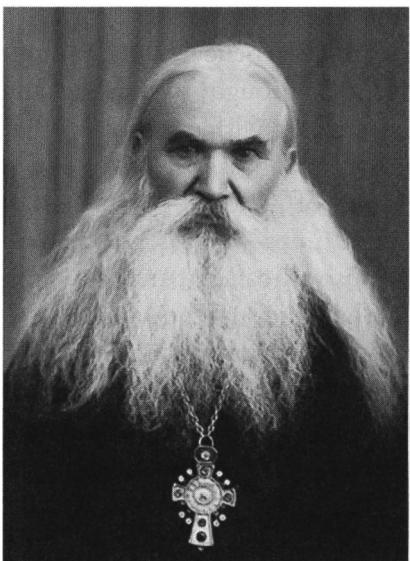
not been able to create one living grain, and meanwhile unbelief tries to explain all the wondrous variety in the world by unconscious movements of matter.”¹⁷

In one of his sermons, the holy hieromartyr made this observation: “Life, as they say, is an enormous, complex mechanical process, brought into being they know not when, by whom, or for what purpose.... But if life is a mechanical process, then one must renounce the soul, thought, will, and freedom.”¹⁸

9. Holy Hieromartyr Varlaam (Nikol'sky), Holy Hieromartyr Nicholas Pokrovsky, Holy Hiero-confessor Gabriel (Igoshkin), and Holy Hieromartyr Paul Andreyev

Since molecules-to-man was a dogma of the atheistic Soviet regime, citizens who disagreed with it were at times accused of “disagreement with science” and of “agitation against Soviet education.” Among the New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia glorified in 2000, there were

MODERN SAINTS AND ELDERS ON EVOLUTIONISM



Holy Hiero-confessor Gabriel.



Holy Hieromartyr Paul Andreyev.

some whom the Soviet government found guilty of this “crime,” as shown in the KGB files that were released to the public after the fall of Communism.

For example, Hieromartyr Varlaam (Nikol'sky) (1872–1937), an abbot of the Moscow Diocese who had already endured three years of exile, was asked during the interrogation that led to his imprisonment and execution: “Did you try to conduct religious propaganda among schoolchildren? In particular, did you say that in the schools they do not correctly explain the origin of man?” To this the holy martyr replied: “Last year I was walking past a school, and a student of the school addressed me with the question of where man came from, saying that the teacher had said in the lesson that man originated from apes. He asked me what I thought, and I answered that man came from God.”¹⁹

Likewise, Hieromartyr Nicholas Pokrovsky (1895–1937), a priest of the Tikhvin region in northern Russia, said during an interrogation: “I am a religious man. I have never denied and never will deny my con-

victions, despite the fact that religion and science have parted ways. To take the question of the origin of man, I prove to believers and am myself convinced that man was created by God, [though] science says the opposite.”²⁰ St. Nicholas was thereafter executed with a group of other prisoners, including several clergymen and an abbess.

Whereas Hieromartyr Nicholas spoke of “science” in the sense that materialists had given to it in modern times—that is, as a branch of knowledge in the service of philosophical naturalism—the Hiero-confessor Archimandrite Gabriel (Igoshkin) of the Moscow Diocese (1888–1959) spoke of it according to its proper, more humble meaning—as simply a branch of knowledge concerned with the physical world. At the same time, St. Gabriel affirmed that which lies beyond the limits of scientific inquiry: the Christian revelation concerning the world’s creation. When he was accused during his interrogation of ignoring science, he answered: “That is not true. I love science. I have studied all my life and advise others to study, for knowledge is light and ignorance is darkness... [but] about the creation of life on earth and man I have said that it is as it is written in the Holy Scriptures, and I cannot say otherwise.”²¹ Arrested three times, St. Gabriel endured a total of eighteen years in Soviet prison camps for his faith, surviving beatings and minus-forty-degree weather in the far north.

Disbelief in Darwinism was also among the accusations leveled against Hieromartyr Paul Andreyev (1880–1937), a protopresbyter who served parishes in Moscow and the Volokolamsk region. Hieromartyr Paul was arrested and imprisoned three times, and endured three years of exile in Kazakhstan. After his final arrest, while he was still in prison awaiting his sentence, a former cell-mate of his, then a free man, testified against him before the Soviet authorities. In listing instances of St. Paul’s “anti-Soviet” views, the witness related what he had heard in the prison cell: “The priest Andreyev ... said that the Soviet authorities preach the teaching of Darwin, that man proceeded from apes, but that this is a blasphemy and a lie.”²² St. Paul was sentenced to death and shot along with two other priests from the Volokolamsk area.

10. St. Nikolai (Velimirovich), Bishop of Zica

Known as the “New Chrystostom,” St. Nikolai (1880–1956) was, together with his disciple St. Justin (Popovich) of Celije, one of the great Holy Fathers of modern-day Serbia. Having earned a doctorate in England, he possessed a wide-ranging knowledge of European thought and life, which enabled him to appreciate what was still valuable in Western culture and at the same time to see the dangers of the West’s increasing godlessness. In a homily on Christ’s healing of the woman with a twisted spine, St. Nikolai observed that, while the Divinely revealed Faith of Christianity confesses God’s omnipotence, those who believe in the modern Western doctrine of evolution call this omnipotence into question, if they believe in God at all:

“How can a twisted spine be straightened without breaking? How can a stiffened neck move without remaining a source of pain? It takes a million years, say the ignorant minds of our day, for a monkey’s spine to become straight and a monkey to become a man. Thus they speak, not knowing the power and the might of the living God. It took just a second, at one word from the Lord Jesus, for the woman’s spine, which was much more bent than that of a monkey, to be straightened. But how is a spine straightened? How is a neck unstiffened?... Do not ask about all this, but thank God as this woman did.”²³

In another place, imagining a dialogue between Christ and Western Europe, St. Nikolai summed up the whole project of modern Western society: to dethrone God and set up man in His place. The doctrine of evolution, St. Nikolai showed, is central to this project:

“If the history of the last three centuries—the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth—could be given one true name, no name would be more suitable than the Proceedings of the Court Case between Europe and Christ. For nothing has occurred in Europe over the last three hundred years that has not had a significant connection with Christ our God.

“The case between Christ and Europe develops like this:

“... Christ asks sadly: ‘How can you men live by imperialism alone, that is, by material interests, by bestial greed for bodily food? I

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St. Nikolai (Velimirovich) of Zica.



Schema-Abbot John, Elder of Valaam.

intended to make you gods and sons of God, but you resist and hurry to make yourselves equal to beasts of burden.'

"Europe replies: 'You are outdated. In the place of your Gospel, we have discovered zoology and biology. Now we know that we are not descended from you or your Father in heaven, but from orangutans, gorillas, and monkeys. We are now grooming ourselves to be gods. We do not recognize any other gods but ourselves.'"²⁴

In the same work St. Nikolai wrote again of how heretics and unbelievers, in viewing themselves as the descendants of apes, lower man to the level of beasts: "For this reason God has given them up to shameful pleasures [cf. Rom. 1:26], so that they find pleasure only in things of the earth and not in heaven, and only in what provokes laughter from the demons and tears from Christ's angels. They take pleasure in looking after their bodies, in plundering the property of others, in stealing from the small and weak, in multiplying their earthly treasures and extending their states and their rule, in the

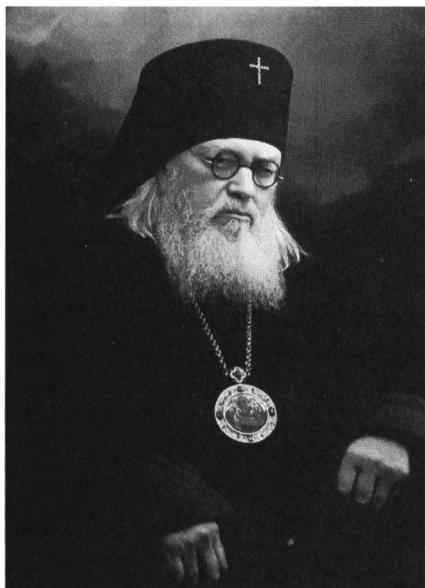
wicked usurpation of the homelands of others, in merriment and dancing, in the rejection of every faith as superstition, in the denying of God, in a totally biological life, in shamelessly calling monkeys their ancestors, in the drowning of anthropology in zoology.”²⁵

In yet other places, St. Nikolai sets forth the Orthodox teaching on the entrance of death and corruption into the creation through the fall of man (see pp. 736–38 above). Whereas St. Nikolai says that death is “unnatural” and “an uninvited stranger” with respect to the original state of man and the cosmos, evolutionism not only sees it as “natural” but even views it as a primary agent leading to the appearance of man. St. Nikolai’s disciple, St. Justin of Celije, would later underline this conflict between the Orthodox and the evolutionary worldviews (see below).

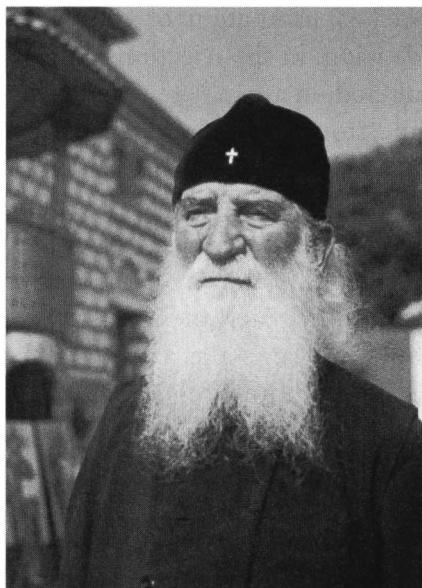
11. Schema-Abbot John (Alekseyev), Elder of Valaam

Schema-Abbot John (1873–1958), an elder of Valaam Monastery in northern Russia, was chosen as abbot of the community on the eve of the Winter War (1939–1940), when all the monks had to leave their monastery, never to return. The community established itself in Finland, where Elder John reposed two decades later. Some of his letters of spiritual direction have been translated into English under the title *Christ Is in Our Midst*.²⁶ In the following passage, translated from the more complete Russian edition of his collected letters, Elder John refutes modern secular notions of origins on the same grounds as did St. Nikolai of Zica, contrasting such notions with the traditional Christian belief in an omnipotent God and His manner of creation:

“An academy student and missionary said to me that by God’s creation in days one must understand millions of years. You poor missionary—you represent the omnipotent Creator as being very weak and attribute millions of years to Him. That’s how your reason speaks, but I believe that, as the Lord said, ‘And the evening and the morning were the first day,’ one must understand days and not millions of years. For the Lord said, ‘And it was so.’ With a word He divided the water from the land, and the water, with a noise, stood in its indicated places: there were seas, the rivers and streams began to flow, and across the



Holy Hiero-confessor Luke.



St. Justin (Popovich) of Celije.

whole earth there were warm waters and cold springs. The Lord said, ‘Let there be forests,’ and there were forests across the whole earth in perfect form—one kind in the north, and another kind in the south—and then they began to gradually grow. So also the birds were created by God’s word: they immediately flew across the whole earth and were of various kinds; and all the rest of creation, as it is said in the Bible. The more I consider nature, the more I am amazed and come to know the omnipotence of the Creator.”²⁷

*12. Holy Hiero-confessor Luke (Voino-Yasenetsky),
Archbishop of Simferopol*

A doctor of medicine, university professor, and world-famous pioneering surgeon, St. Luke (1877–1961) served the Church as an archbishop while conducting his surgical practice and writing books and articles on regional anesthesia and surgery. An outspoken confessor of

the Faith, he was exiled and tortured numerous times, and became widely known as a miracle-worker. With his background in the natural sciences, he critiqued the idea of grand-scale evolution both theologically and scientifically. In an article entitled “Science and Religion,” he wrote:

“Darwinism, which declares that man, by means of evolution, has developed from the lower species of animals, and is not a product of the creative act of the Godhead, has turned out to be merely a supposition, a hypothesis, which has become obsolete even for science. This hypothesis has been acknowledged as contradictory not only to the Bible, but to nature itself, which jealously strives to preserve the purity of each species,* and knows of no transition even from a sparrow to a swallow. There are no known facts of a transition of an ape into a man.”²⁸

13. St. Justin (Popovich) of Celije

An outstanding transmitter of Patristic teaching in twentieth-century Serbia, St. Justin (1894–1979) was a beloved spiritual father, fiery preacher, and prolific author. Bold in his confession of the Faith before the Communist authorities, he had no qualms about condemning Marxism’s cherished doctrine of evolutionism. In his work *The Orthodox Church and Ecumenism*, he included the above-quoted passages of his spiritual father, St. Nikolai of Zica, about how sad and shameful it is for unbelievers to call apes their ancestors. In the same work he wrote—much in the spirit of St. Theophan the Recluse in the nineteenth century—concerning how people can be deceived while pursuing knowledge in the sciences, if they are not grounded in faith in God and do not submit their reason to such saving faith:

“The infallible Apostle advises and directs Christians: ‘Be not carried about with diverse and strange doctrines, for it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace’ (Heb. 13:9). More often involuntarily than voluntarily, people deceive themselves with their various sciences. They deceive themselves by sin, which has become their intellectual power through habit, and has become so natural and

* That is, species defined as a kind of organism that is able to interbreed. On the changing definition of “species” in modern science, see p. 181n above.

human that it is not felt or recognized by those guided and led by sin in their reasonings and sciences. Through sin we come to the creator of sin, the principal logic of sin: the devil. He has countless and very skillful and subtle ways of infiltrating his lies into the human sciences, alienating men from the only true God. Moreover, he introduces all his wiles by the logic of sin into these human sciences, artfully deceiving men with his blasphemy, so that they, in their self-delusion, deny God, reject God, are blind to God, or fence themselves off from Him.”²⁹

In a letter to an Orthodox student of theology, St. Justin wrote at length on what he thought of the modern “scientific” theory of evolution. In answer to the student’s question on whether evolutionism is compatible with Orthodox theology, St. Justin immediately began by considering the soteriological implications. As in all his writings and sermons, he focused his attention on the central fact of human and cosmic existence: that “God became man so that man might become God.”* To the student he explained that evolutionism undermines every aspect of the Orthodox doctrine of salvation: the original nature and calling of man, the corruption of human nature through sin, death as the consequence of sin, and the transformation, perfection and deification of man through the God-man Jesus Christ, which he calls the true “evolution.” Below we present his letter in full:

“My dearest child in God,

“You would like me to answer the question posed by the ‘Theological section’: Can the scientific understanding of the evolution of the world and man ever be reconciled with traditional Orthodox perception and knowledge? What is the judgment of the Holy Fathers in this regard? Is there a need at all for reconciliation?

“In short: the New Testament anthropology stands and falls with the Old Testament anthropology. The entire Gospel of the Old Testament: man—the icon of God; the entire Gospel of the New Testa-

* This classic Patristic formulation is found in the writings of St. Irenaeus (*Against Heresies* 5.Preface), St. Athanasius (*On the Incarnation of the Word* 54), and St. Gregory of Nyssa (*Catechetical Oration* 25), and has been echoed in Orthodox theological writings throughout the centuries.

ment: the God-man—the icon of man. Heavenly, divine, immortal, everlasting, and unchangeably human is the icon of God in man: godlikeness. This godlikeness of the human being has been scarred by man's voluntary sin, his pact with the devil through sin, and death as the consequence of sin. For this reason, God became man 'to renew His image which had been corrupted through sin.* God became man, and remained in the human world as God-man, as the Church, in order to give man, the image of God, all the necessary means—the Holy Mysteries and holy virtues in the Divine-human Body of the Church—by which godlike man would be elevated. 'Unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ' [Eph. 4:13].—This is the divine-human evolution of man, this is the divine-human anthropology. The aim of man's godlike being: to gradually become 'perfect like God' the Father [cf. Matt. 5:48], to become 'god by grace,' god-man by grace; to become divine, to become divine-human, to become Christlike, to become triune. According to the Holy Fathers: 'God became man so that man might become God.'

"On the other hand, the so-called 'scientific' anthropologies do not recognize at all the godlikeness of the human being. Hence they deny *a priori* the divine-human evolution of man's being. If man is not the icon of God, then the God-man and His Gospel are unnatural for such a man, and also mechanical and unachievable. The God-man Christ is a robot and creates robots. The God-man is an oppressor, because he forcibly wants to transform man into a being 'perfect like God.' Actually, this is an unviable utopia, an illusion, and an unreachable 'ideal.' In the final instance, it is a fairy tale and a fable. Furthermore, if man is not a godlike being, then the God-man is superfluous. For scientific theories of evolution acknowledge neither sin nor the Savior from sin. In this earthly world of 'evolution' everything is natural; there is no place for sin. That is why it is ridiculous to speak of the Savior and of salvation from sin. In the final analysis everything is natural: sin, evil, and death. For if everything comes and is given to man through evolu-

* Compare St. Gregory the Theologian: "To create anew the corrupted image, God came to be among us" (*Dogmatic Poem 10: Against Apollinarius*, line 20, PG 37.467A, PPS 21, p. 81*).

tion, then what is it that has to be saved in man, inasmuch as there is nothing immortal and intransitory in him, but all is from the earth, earthly, earthen, and as such is transitory, corruptible, and mortal?* In such a world of ‘evolution’ there is no place for the Church, which is the Body of the God-man Christ. That theology which bases its anthropology on the theory of ‘scientific’ evolution is nothing but a contradiction in terms. In reality, it is a theology without God and an anthropology without man. If man is not immortal, everlasting, and a divine-human icon of God, then all theologies and all anthropologies are senseless farces and tragic comedies.

“Your father Justin.”³⁰

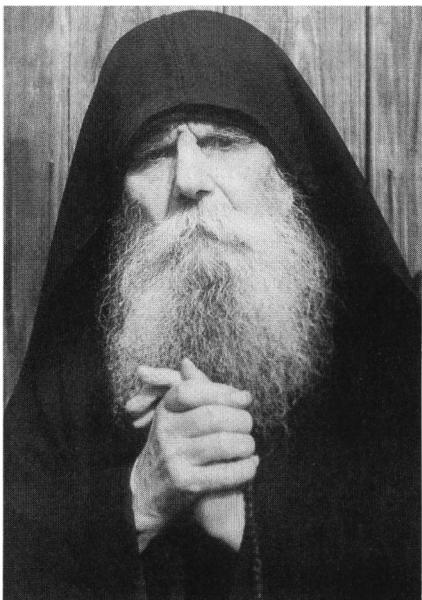
14. Elder Paisius (Olaru) of Sibastria and Sihla

Serving as a priest-monk in the mountain monasteries of northern Romania, Elder Paisius (1897–1990) came to be known as a grace-filled father confessor, overflowing with self-sacrificing love for his spiritual children. During the dark years of Communism, thousands of Romanians flocked to him for advice, spiritual strength, and consolation, including many of the country’s other great spiritual fathers.

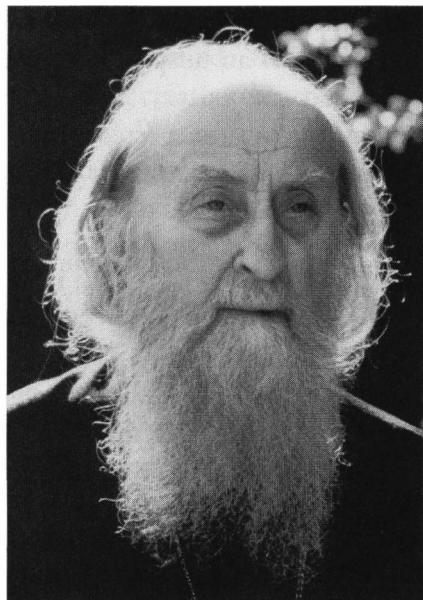
In the following words of counsel, transcribed from a tape-recording, Elder Paisius is responding to a nun who said that she was having doubts concerning the Faith. The Elder speaks about the problem of unbelief generally, and then gives a specific example of an idea born of such unbelief: the notion of man’s evolution from ape-like creatures:

“What do you mean you don’t believe? Hold your tongue! Who is it that brought you to the monastery? These are the thoughts of the devil. Why do you listen to what the enemy says? The devil’s aim is to make people doubt and believe that there is no God. Because if there is no God, then neither is there any sin, and people can do anything. Doubt

* It is noteworthy that, in saying that evolutionism denies the godlikeness of man, St. Justin is implicitly rejecting the theistic evolutionary notion that God made man into the image of God at some point in his ascent from the apes. Recognizing that evolutionism originated in a denial of Christian revelation, St. Justin did not even bother to consider such an artificial melding of two opposing worldviews.



Elder Paisius of Sihadria and Sihla.



Elder Sophrony of Essex.

is halfway to the renunciation of God; that is why the devil tempts us. The Savior says that the days will come—and, look, they have come (cf. Luke 18:8). Some people say that man was made from an ape. It was a madman who said this; man is the image and likeness of God.”³¹

15. Archimandrite Sophrony (Sakharov) of Essex

Living as a hermit on Mount Athos, Greece, Elder Sophrony (1896–1993) was granted the gift of Divine illumination and became the spiritual heir of a monk of holy life, St. Silouan, whose life and teachings he passed on to the world. Later he founded the Monastery of St. John the Baptist in Essex, England, where he lived as a beacon of holiness and wisdom until his repose. In his spiritual autobiography, written toward the end of his life, Elder Sophrony had the following to say about the modern evolutionary theory of origins:

“For many of the representatives of modern science, ‘in the begin-

ning was a hydrogen atom,’ and from it, by the path of evolution, over the course of an unspecified number of billions of years, arose everything that now exists.... The idea is absurd to us, that from ‘accidental’ combinations, unexpected by the first atom itself, could arise human thought, with its quests for THE ORIGIN.”³²

16. Elder Paisios (Eznepidis) of Mount Athos

Elder Paisios (1924–1994) was one the most loved and revered Greek Orthodox elders of our times. Living as a monk in the ancient monastic republic of Mount Athos, he received many heavenly visitations and was granted the Divine gift of seeing into human hearts. He spent his nights in prayer and his entire days guiding, consoling, and healing the countless people who came to him.

Elder Paisios was the founder of the Holy Monastery of the Evangelist John the Theologian in Souroti, Thessaloniki, Greece, which he guided for twenty-eight years. After his repose, the abbess and sisters of the monastery published his letters and transcriptions of his spiritual talks. In the following conversation, Elder Paisios spoke with characteristic humor about the theory of man’s evolution from microbes, explaining how it denies God’s omnipotence even when God’s role is somehow acknowledged in the process. Also, he pointed out a Christological implication of evolutionary theory that “Christian evolutionists” either fail to consider or choose to ignore. With his Christian conscience made sensitive through prayerful cooperation with God’s grace, he saw the idea that the God-man Christ descended from a monkey as nothing less than a blasphemy:

“The nonsense we hear in school these days about Darwin’s theory and the rest! Even the teachers themselves do not believe what they are teaching; but they go ahead, because they want to pollute the minds of our youth and take them away from the Church. This is what someone told me: ‘Let’s say that the soil contained various substances and microorganisms, and God took these and created man....’ ‘You mean,’ I replied, ‘that if those elements did not exist in the soil, God would not have been able to create man? It would have been really difficult for Him!’ ‘Well, let’s say,’ he continued, ‘that He took

some things from the monkey and perfected them; couldn't that be how it happened?' 'Are you trying to say,' I answered, 'that God cannot create a perfect creature, that he cannot create a human being, even after dedicating a whole day to that? What should He have done? Go get spare parts? Why don't you read the prophecy of Job from the Scripture readings of Holy Thursday?*' Now scientists do not accept all of their own claims about our kinship with monkeys. How long has it been since man went to the moon? In all these years, have monkeys evolved enough to build a bicycle or at least a skateboard? Have you ever seen a monkey on a skateboard? Of course you can teach him to do that, but that's not the same thing ...' But the man would not give up. He insisted, 'Let's assume this,' or 'Let's say that ...' 'Well, let's just say that you will not say a thing,' I finally told him. 'That way you'll find the certainty you want.'

"The theory of evolution was being taught by a professor I knew at the university. Once, I said to him, 'In time and with proper care a green bean plant will become a better green bean plant, the eggplant a better eggplant. If you feed and take care of a monkey, he will become a better monkey, but he will not turn into a human being....' And then, there's this to think about. Christ was born of a human being, the *Panagia!*** Are we supposed to believe that His ancestors were monkeys? What blasphemy! And those who support this theory don't realize that they are blaspheming. They throw a stone and do not check to see how many heads they have cracked. All you will hear from them is, 'Mine went further than the other fellow's.' That's what they are all about these days; they marvel at who will throw a stone the furthest. But they care nothing about those who are passing by and the many heads their stones will crack."

Elder Paisios was then asked: "Geronda,*** some people think that these theories will help bring Marxists to church."

He replied: "Well, perhaps a few Marxists might come to church at

* Job 38:14: "Or didst thou take clay of the ground, and form a living being, and set it with the power of speech upon the earth?"

** *Panagia* (literally, "Most Holy"): the Most Holy Mother of God.

*** Geronda: elder.

first. But then they will want to organize as a party and start giving orders to others: ‘Now you must go to church; now you may not. Now do this, now do that.’ They will have rules for everything. And in the end, they will start telling people: ‘Who told you that there is a God? There is no God! The priests are making it all up to deceive you.’ This is what will happen; the Marxists will use these good-willed folks to achieve their goal. Marxists with a good will and disposition will come back to the Church, repent, and go to Confession. But those who have no good disposition, they will never change.”³³

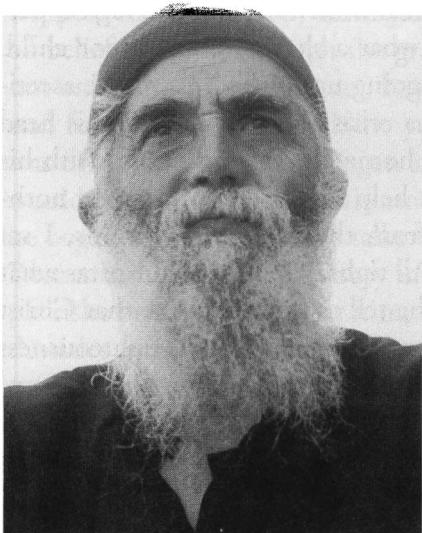
At another time, the Elder was asked: “Geronda, some devout young men are troubled while serving their military duty by those who are abusive and curse. What should they do?” To which he replied: “This requires discernment and patience. God will help. The wireless operator that I worked with in the army was a blasphemous, unbelieving doctor. Every day he would come to the administrative unit to brainwash me with his ideas! He talked to me about Darwin’s theory of evolution, and other such things; things entirely blasphemous.”³⁴

In yet another conversation, Elder Paisios spoke of how he was told of evolutionary theory as a boy, how it challenged his faith in Christ, and how he met the challenge with prayer, until Christ appeared to him. Here we may note that, like the Orthodox saints before him, Elder Paisios clearly associated evolutionism with *unbelief*—with loss of faith in the God of Christianity—due to which it had been devised in the first place.

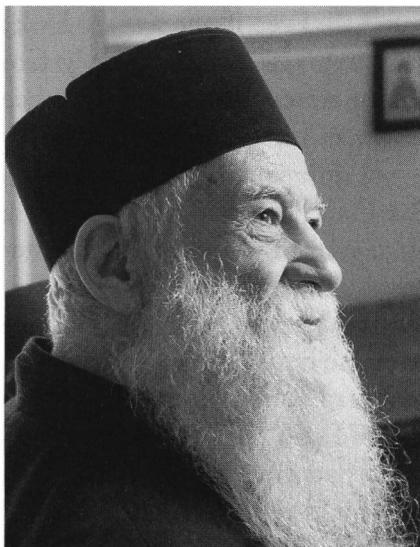
“Geronda,” he was asked. “I am troubled by the thoughts of unbelief that come to me.”

“The fact that you are troubled by them and do not accept them,” he answered, “means that these thoughts come from the evil one.... I’m going to share something from my own life to help you....”

“When I was a young boy in Konitsa, I read about the lives of many saints, and sometimes I gave the books to the other boys to read, or I would gather them in one place and we would read them together. I marvelled at the great degree of asceticism and the fasting that the saints practiced, and tried to do the same. From fasting, my neck had become as thin as a cherry stem. The children teased me. ‘Your head will fall off,’ they would say to me. What I had to put up with! Well,



Elder Paisios of Mount Athos.



Fr. George Calciu.

never mind. In addition, because I often got sick from fasting, my older brother was afraid that I would not be able to finish school, so he would take and hide my little pamphlets with the Lives of the saints. After that, I started hiding them in the forest, at the country Chapel of St. Barbara, and would go there secretly to read them.

“One day a neighbor named Kostas said to my brother, ‘I will make him change his way of thinking, throw away those books he is reading, and give up his fasting and prayer.’ He found me—I was about fifteen years old then—and he started talking to me about Darwin’s theory. He started talking, and went on and on and was making my head spin. In my haze, I headed for the forest, to the Chapel of St. Barbara. I went in and began praying to Christ. ‘My Christ, if You exist, reveal Yourself to me in some way,’ I kept saying, while constantly doing prostrations for a long time. It was summer. The sweat was running down my body, and I was drenched and completely exhausted. But I didn’t hear or see anything. Nor did God help me in any way with even a small sign, some sound, some shadow; I was only a child,

after all. Even if one were to look at this from a human and logical perspective, one could say, ‘My God, what a shame for the poor child. From eleven years old, he has been going up to the hills to live ascetically, and now he is going through a crisis. That man made his head spin with some foolish theories. At home, he has difficulties with his brother. He ran to the forest to seek help from You ...’ And yet nothing, nothing, nothing! Exhausted from the many prostrations, I sat down for a while. Then I thought, ‘All right, when I asked Kostas what he thought about Christ, what did he tell me? He told me that Christ was the best, the most righteous man, Who proclaimed righteousness and had so offended the Pharisees that they crucified Him out of envy.’ Then I said, ‘If Christ was such a good man, so righteous, and no other man had ever appeared like Him, and others killed Him out of envy, then it is right of me to do for this man far more than I have done, even to die for him.’ As soon as I looked at it this way, Christ appeared to me in a great light—the chapel was full of light—and told me, ‘I am the Resurrection and the Life. He that believeth in Me, though he die, yet shall he live’ (John 11:25–26). These same words I could also read in the open Gospel which He held in one hand. There was such an inner transformation in me that I found myself saying constantly, ‘Come here now, Kosta, to discuss if there is or there isn’t a God.’ You see, for Christ to appear He waited for my *philotimo*-filled* response. Now, if Christ requires such a response from even a young child, can you imagine how much more He would expect from a mature adult?”³⁵

17. Fr. George Calciu

A holy confessor of our times, Fr. George (1925–2006) spent a total of twenty-one years in Romanian Communist prisons because of his Orthodox Christian faith. During his first incarceration, which lasted sixteen years, he was subjected to the scientific experiment of Pitesti: the most diabolical system of torture ever devised, which at-

* *Philotimo*, according to Elder Paisios, is reverence, honor, goodness, and love, devoid of self-interest; it is a humble sense of gratitude toward God and one’s fellow man, and a corresponding desire to repay the slightest good that one has received.

tempted to methodically dismantle the human personality and destroy all belief in God. Through the grace of Christ, he survived this ordeal not only with his faith intact, but with the superhuman power to love and forgive his torturers. Nine years after his release from prison, he was ordained a priest and began a heroic public ministry that he knew would lead to another imprisonment and probably to death. In 1978 he began a series of weekly talks to young people at the church of the Romanian Orthodox seminary in Bucharest. Hundreds of young people risked their lives to hear him, climbing over the walls when the authorities tried to keep them away. Having been purified in a crucible of suffering, Fr. George's fiery soul cried out to them, calling them out of the atheism and materialism of Communist society, awakening them to the true meaning and purpose of their lives, and leading them to faith in Christ.

In denouncing the scientific materialism of Communist society, Fr. George struck at its very foundation: its story of origins. In his first homily to the youth of his country, he declared:

"You have been told that you descend from the apes, that you are a beast which must be trained; but now you discover an astonishing thing: that you are the temple of God and in you dwells the Spirit of God. You are being called, young friend, back to your dignity as a metaphysical being; you are raised up from the low place in which false education has sunk you to the sacred office of being the temple in which God dwells."³⁶

Two weeks later, in his third homily, he asked:

"Tell me, young man, how much have you believed the statements which you have heard repeated to the point of obsession—at school, on the radio, on television, in the newspapers, and at young people's meetings—that you descend from apes? And how honored did this revelation make you feel?!..."

"I know, friend, that you are tortured by questions concerning the meaning of your life in this world, and concerning the purpose of the world in general. Do the ready-made authoritarian statements in answer to your limited questions satisfy you; namely, that 'heaven is fiction, matter is everything, and it is matter speaking to you through your internal and external senses'? Matter organized its own structure

and evolution by certain laws of great complexity before even the slightest rudiment of the human brain was formed. Thus, once the higher brain of man appeared—the only means by which matter recognizes itself—it could no longer recognize itself. And from that time until now human intelligence has been struggling in a sterile and vain effort to discover laws which heedless matter fixed in a period when there was nothing but darkness and unconsciousness!

“What do you think of this game of non-intelligence which annuls all human intelligence, even the collective one? Do you not see that the most elementary logic obliges you to admit the presence of an intelligence outside of this world?”³⁷

As a result of his bold confession of the Faith, Fr. George was again sent to prison, where he was granted to experience the grace of Divine illumination. With the help of political pressure from the free world, he was released in 1984 and exiled to America, where he became a beloved spiritual father to many souls. When he returned to Romania in 1989, ten thousand young people came to pray with him, despite concerted efforts by the authorities to stop this event.

On November 6, 1996, Fr. George was interviewed by an American Orthodox nun, Mother Nina. This was less than two weeks after Pope John Paul II had read a now-famous address expressing approval of the theory of evolution.* Fr. George took the opportunity to refute the pope’s statement, and to affirm the proper order of theology and natural science in the Christian hierarchy of knowledge:

“I read in the newspapers just a few days ago that the pope made a statement [that evolution is ‘more than a hypothesis’].... He tried to justify this statement by saying that only the soul of man is made by God. But until the appearance of man, what did God do? Did He sleep? When did He start to make the soul of a man, and why? If you accept that the body of man and the body of animals are not created by God, that they are the result of evolution, then why did God begin to make the soul of man?...

“There was a professor of apologetics at the seminary [in Bucharest]. He said that now is the time for science to be in accord with

* See p. 571n above.

theology—not theology with science. And that is right!... And the pope says that God has no role in the creation of the world? That matter created itself, without having any brain to organize the laws of the universe?* And now human beings, who do have brains, are unable to discover the laws of the universe made by matter without a brain? And God only created the soul of man? If we accept the theory of evolution as the pope said we should, it would mean accepting that in the beginning was a cell, and only afterwards a man. When, then, did God decide to give man a soul? To Neanderthal Man or to modern man? Thus, it is absolutely stupid for a pope to say a thing like that.”³⁸

* In his address, the pope did not explicitly state that matter and the laws of the universe came into being of themselves; however, he gave credence to this naturalistic notion by endorsing evolutionism without any qualifications save for a pronouncement on the Divine creation of the human soul. As Fr. George commented in the above-mentioned interview, the pope was effectively “limiting God to a being that could only make a soul from time to time” (*Father George Calciu: Interviews, Homilies, and Talks*, p. 121).

APPENDIX THREE

Biological Evidence and the Neo-Darwinian Paradigm

By Yuri Zharikov, Ph.D.

This general theory [neo-Darwinism] ... continues to cast a bright light on what may be called the modern synthesis.

—Ulrich Kutschera and Karl J. Niklas¹*

Take heed therefore that the light which is in thee be not darkness.

—Luke 11:35

Woe unto them ... that put darkness for light, and light for darkness ... that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!

—Isaiah 5:20–21

1. Two Models

RECENT years have seen the re-emergence of public and scientific debate about the ways in which life, the Earth, and the universe at large have come to be.^{**} As is evident from the book by Fr. Seraphim Rose *Genesis, Creation, and Early Man*, two mutually exclusive models have been competing for human hearts and minds. One, held by the Church from the time of the Apostles until now, can be defined as the model of Creation. In its simplest form the model postulates the six-day Creation of a perfect (“very good”) world by the Eternal, All-righteous, Almighty, All-kind, Omniscient God, Who is Love, worshipped and

* From a review of the state of evolutionary biology as of 2004.

** See, for example, <http://www.intelligentdesign.org>.

glorified in the Holy Trinity. Today, we can still see an image of the originally created world, albeit much distorted and corrupted by the fall of the first people, Adam and Eve. An important characteristic of this fallen world is its gradual decay relative to the originally perfect state. The other model, whose origin is often ascribed to the ancient philosophers Empedocles and Anaximander* and which from the early eighteenth century became ever increasingly adopted by secular Western societies, posits a progressive development of the world by purely material, naturalistic processes. This model can be defined as the evolutionary model. Although many versions of the evolutionary model exist, it is its currently most popularized form, known as Darwinism,** that has captured the imagination of many people across the world. In a broad sense, the model of Darwinian evolution postulates gradual historical self-organization of living matter and development of more complex life-forms from simpler ones. This process is *hypothesized* to have led to the appearance and transformation of living species on earth.***

* See p. 557n above.

** Charles Darwin (1809–1882) was among the first naturalists to conceptualize and publicize the idea of the naturalistic self-development and diversification of biological life. (See pp. 515–19 above for additional details on the development and popularization of Darwin's theory.) The term *Darwinism* is used here inclusive of the Neo-Darwinian Theory (NDT). NDT (as identified in common usage with the modern evolutionary synthesis) is a modification of Charles Darwin's theory of evolution, undertaken from 1937 to 1950. It holds that positive random mutations are able to take over a population through the process of natural selection, and that ultimately all variety and richness in nature is a manifestation of this mechanistic process accumulated over millions of years.

*** It should be noted that so-called theistic evolutionism sees no conflict between the two models. Proponents of theistic evolution equate the progressive historical self-organization of matter with the action of God, thus essentially confusing the Creator with His creation. Such confusion could be understood a hundred years ago, when the evolutionary theory was being tested, the organization of life on genetic and biochemical levels was largely a mystery, and knowledge of the paleontological record was still very incomplete. Today, when Darwinism and the idea of progressive evolution remain the principal scientific and societal paradigms not by the virtue of irrefutable facts but "by the default of all opposing theories" (Ernst Mayr, *Toward a New Philosophy of Biology* [1988], p. 192), acceptance of theistic evolution seems incomprehensible. See more on this on pp. 606–9 above.

When it comes to an open debate between the proponents of the two models, those who believe in the self-development of matter maintain that the truthfulness of their model has been established by purely scientific means (i.e., observation and experiment). At the same time they argue that the idea of a supernatural creation is an irrational religious belief. The logical consequence of this dichotomy is the presentation of the evolutionary model to society as the *scientifically proven way* by which our world, including ourselves, has come to be. It is treated not as a model but as a *fact*, as factual as gravity, the revolution of the Earth around the Sun and the formation of ozone in the stratosphere, which any intelligent person ought to accept. The model of Creation, on the other hand, is relegated to private opinion, and any attempts to present arguments supporting this model alongside the traditional Darwinist arguments are viciously resisted, and its proponents are scorned.*

As evidenced by the examples of Isaac Newton, Louis Agassiz, Niels Bohr, Mikhail Lomonosov, James Clerk Maxwell, Gregor Mendel, Ivan Pavlov, Louis Pasteur, Blaise Pascal, Dmitry Mendeleyev and a multitude of other scientists in modern and previous times, one can perceive Creation as a *fact* using the same observations that are currently used to defend the evolutionary model. In the eyes of a believer in God the tiniest living being loudly “declares the glory of God” and “proclaims His handiwork” (cf. Ps. 18:1). An unbeliever needs to explain how all this “handiwork” has come to be on its own. In doing so he may consciously (as in the case of Richard Dawkins)** or unconsciously undermine the faith of those who believe. The result is a conflict, for, in the words of St. Hilarion Troitsky,***

* See, for example, a story about a failed attempt to introduce the mere mention of the possibility of a non-materialistic origin of life in a high school in Pennsylvania, USA (*Newsweek*, Nov. 28, 2005), and an open letter protesting a similar attempt in St. Petersburg, Russia, published by a group of Darwinists in a Russian newspaper (*Izvestiya*, March 20, 2006).

** Richard Dawkins (born 1941), is a British ethologist, evolutionary theorist, popular science writer, and ardent proponent of atheism.

*** Holy Hieromartyr Hilarion, Archbishop of Verey (1886–1929). See pp. 799–801 above.

Unbelief wars against faith, or, it is better to say, these two faiths war relentlessly against each other—faith in Christ and faith in antichrist—and each of them appeals to science for help. When a man believes in Christ, then science together with him offers worship to Christ. When a man believes in antichrist, he puts the antichristian yoke on science as well.²

This conflict takes place both between individuals and within one's own soul. Its outcomes are often not in favor of believers, for, as noted by Colin Brown: "By far the most potent single factor to undermine popular belief in the existence of God in modern times is the evolutionary theory of Charles Darwin."³ This factor was broadly, aggressively, and successfully used in Russia during Soviet times as a part of the anti-Church campaign.

While many Orthodox believers are comfortable with believing in Creation simply by "holding fast" to what they have been given by the Church (cf. 2 Thes. 2:15, 2 Tim. 1:13, Apoc. 2:25, 3:3, 3:11), those who decide to delve into the problem need to be equipped so that their faith is not challenged in the process. Material presented in *Genesis, Creation, and Early Man* asserts that the model of evolution according to Darwin can hardly be called a scientific theory but is rather a brand of materialistic philosophy. In the present appendix, some of the principal scientific arguments against Darwinism presented by Fr. Seraphim and Phillip Johnson earlier in the book are elaborated on and presented in greater detail (e.g., the lack of support for the evolutionary theory in the paleontological record). Other points, dealing with such well-known misconceptions of Darwinism as the "law of recapitulation," are only briefly mentioned. Issues covered only scantly or not at all elsewhere in this book, such as molecular and genetic evidence against evolution, are developed here in detail based on the current state of knowledge in the relevant fields of science.*

* The present article was completed in 2010 for inclusion in the second edition of this book, whereas Phillip Johnson's introduction was completed thirteen years earlier for the first edition. Thus, this article incorporates newer scientific findings.—ED.

2. *The Theory of Evolution*

The term “evolution”* is often used with two prefixes: “micro” and “macro.” Microevolution refers to the expression of genetic diversity that occurs within populations, or more precisely genomes, and is manifest in small-scale phenotypic variation. Examples of microevolution are artificial selection, development of drug-resistance in bacteria, salt-tolerance in plants, and historical divergence of segregated populations into *ring species* or *sister species*.** All known microevolutionary processes lead to partitioning, rearrangement, and/or *loss* of genetic information. They are directly observable and their mechanisms are studied by molecular and population geneticists. Macroevolution (sometimes called *aromorphosis*) refers to the hypothetical emergence of major morphological features and whole body plans that would require concurrent comprehensive reorganization of all functional systems of the organism. An example of macroevolution would be the transformation of fish into amphibians, reptiles into birds, or terrestrial mammals into cetaceans.

Drawing his analogy mostly from artificial selection, Darwin believed that entirely new body plans can emerge via “gradations in the perfection of any organ or instinct” acted upon by “a struggle for existence,”⁴ i.e., natural selection. Inspired by such an idea, his followers infer macroevolution from microevolution. However, a clear mechanism that could link micro- and macroevolution has yet to be demon-

* For an expanded definition of the term *evolution*, see the introduction by Phillip Johnson, pp. 91–92 above.

** A *ring species* is a connected series of neighboring populations, often classified as species, that can interbreed, but for which there are at least two “end” populations too distant to interbreed. Often such genetically connected populations coexist in the same region, making thereby a “ring.” The best example of a ring species is the seven species of large gulls (genus *Larus*) that breed around the Arctic Circle, thus creating a “ring.” By *sister species* are understood morphologically and genetically very similar species with adjacent or slightly overlapping distributions that probably derive from a single stock population but no longer interbreed. Good examples of sister species are flycatchers (birds) of the genera *Empidonax* and *Ficedula*.

strated. To use examples of observable microevolutionary processes as proofs of macroevolution simply confuses the two issues. To avoid any confusion in this appendix, the term *evolution* will mean strictly *macroevolution*. *Microevolution* will be more appropriately described by such terms as variation or adaptation.

3. What Is a Scientific Theory?

Although a clear demarcation line between science and pseudoscience remains to be found,⁵ usually when we speak of a scientific theory we imply not a speculation but a logical system thoroughly grounded in empirical data. A scientific theory should also be able to generate falsifiable predictions, which can be tested through controlled experiments. To quote R. Feynman,* “Experiment is the sole judge of scientific ‘truth.’”⁶ Natural phenomena generally consist of *processes* and *patterns* linked by *mechanisms*. In a mountain stream the *process* of water flow will form a *pattern* of sediment, sand, and gravel on the stream bed such that, all else being equal, the size of sediment particles will be related to current velocity. One may observe that different streams have different sediment patterns. Knowing something about the law of gravity, one can formulate a simple theory describing this phenomenon: water flow forms a sediment pattern via the *mechanism* of current velocity. An experiment designed to test this relationship would start with a homogenous mixture of sediment particles of different sizes. Equal amounts of the sediment would be subjected to standing water, slow current, and fast current. If the average size of particles remaining in sediment increases with the increased water velocity, this will support the theory about the relationship between the *process* of water flow and the sediment *pattern* via the *mechanism* of current velocity. In the words of Karl Popper,** “Every ‘good’ scientific theory is

* Richard Phillips Feynman (1918–1988) was an influential American physicist known for his studies on the theory of quantum electrodynamics and particle theory.

** Karl Raimund Popper (1902–1994) was a British philosopher best known for advancing empirical falsifiability as the criterion for distinguishing scientific theory from non-science.

a prohibition: it forbids certain things to happen. The more a theory forbids, the better it is.”⁷

In this example, the theory forbids small sediment particles to be unaffected by increased current velocity. Such prohibition is a cornerstone of scientific methodology, as it allows for falsification of alternative hypotheses (plausible theories). One can sum up all this by saying that the main, generally accepted criterion of the scientific status of a theory is its falsifiability or testability. It is precisely for this reason that empirical science has long prided itself on objectivity and immunity from subjective influences.

The diversity and organization of life we observe around us is a pattern. This pattern spans several levels of complexity, from molecules to genes to tissues and organs, and then to individuals, populations, species, and ecosystems. It is so marvellous, exquisite, and intricately interwoven that we have hardly made a beginning in properly describing, let alone understanding it. Defenders of Darwin's theory proclaim that the diversity of life in itself proves the fact of evolution. However, as has been pointed out time and again (see the introduction by Phillip Johnson for more details), such statements are nothing but demagoguery reflecting a particular *belief*, unless it can be shown that the process of evolution can form the pattern of diversity of life via an explicit, observable mechanism.

Evolutionary biologists claim that the primary mechanism of evolution is natural selection acting upon random* changes (mutation and recombination) in population genomes (or “descent with modification,” in Darwin's original words). Thus, the same mechanism that brings out existing genotypic variation in the coloration of butterflies or the bill shape of finches is presented as if also explaining how the butterflies and finches have come to be in the first place.⁸ It is rarely acknowledged that small-scale genetic and phenotypic variability does not make or break the theory of Darwin.⁹ It is precisely the evidence for a mechanism that could effect *major* evolutionary changes that can do that. To this day, such evidence is nonexistent. As euphemistically expressed in scientific publications, “Mechanisms that account for the

* *Random* means occurring strictly by chance.

transformation and diversification of species are still very much under investigation.”¹⁰

4. What Does the Theory of Evolution Predict?

Being a keen observer, Darwin recognized three fundamental properties of organisms. First, species are not immutable and can form *varieties*; second, species differ in the degrees of similarity among themselves; and third, in the fossil record there is a general pattern of increase in organism complexity from lower to upper sediment layers.

While he was trying to devise a theory that would account for these initial observations, Darwin’s thinking was strongly influenced by observations of the relative ease with which domestic varieties of plants and animals could be developed under artificial selection. Assuming that, since small changes can emerge and be selected, so too can large changes, he stated:

There is no obvious reason why the principles which have acted so efficiently under domestication should not have acted under nature.... These individual differences are of the highest importance to us, for they are often inherited,... and they thus afford materials for natural selection to act on and accumulate, in the same manner as man accumulates in any given direction individual differences in his domesticated productions.¹¹

Darwin believed that nature *creates* useful variability on which natural selection can act, advancing better adapted forms, and that this mechanism explains both the distribution of different life-forms in the fossils and the existing diversity of life. Darwin saw gradual differentiation among domestic varieties, and what he called natural varieties and subspecies, as a process that differed quantitatively but not qualitatively from the processes that could lead to the emergence of more complex forms of life from simpler ones. The same idea was reasserted by the founders of the Neo-Darwinian Theory (NDT):

The evolution of higher categories has been by means of the same

processes which have brought about the evolution of races and species.¹²

However, both Darwin and his followers have failed to understand and/or admit the critical difference—in fact, the unbridgeable gap—between variation within species and transformation from one life-form to another. The former is a manifestation of existing genetic variability in a species or population, and it is governed by the objective laws of molecular and population genetics. The latter requires the introduction of completely new genetic information, new blocks of genetic material, leading to increased complexity. The latter does not follow from the former.

The so-called *allopatric* and *sympatric* modes of *speciation*, whereby geographically or ecologically isolated populations with time become incapable of interbreeding, and thus are designated as separate species, do not lead to increased complexity. In fact, they decrease genetic diversity, due to fragmentation of the gene pool present in the original population.¹³ Galápagos finches, studied by Darwin, are an example of allopatric speciation but not of an evolutionary event that involves the emergence of novel structures or functions. The same can be said about numerous other direct observations of speciation, such as those in plants and marine invertebrates.¹⁴ Such observations are irrelevant when it comes to inferring origins of life-forms differing in degree of complexity.

While today it is becoming clear that Darwin's theory is unverifiable* and extremely difficult to test directly,** originally it could have been viewed as a genuine scientific theory, albeit a weak one because of

* This means that we cannot directly reproduce and/or observe any of the events claimed by Darwinists to have occurred in the past.

** To test the theory directly, we would need to make a prediction about the emergence of a novel trait in a population due to a particular selective pressure and then subject the population to the strong selective pressure. For example, a population of bacteria incapable of active motion could be subjected to selection in favor of active movement, i.e., flagellum development. If the population acquired the genetic material needed to support this new feature, the theory of Darwin would be unassailable. No such thing ever happens. However, it is always possible to say that more time is

its inherent difficulties in testing. This is because from it followed several important falsifiable predictions, which, if upheld, could provide circumstantial supporting evidence. They are

1. a common ancestor of all living things and common ancestors of major taxonomic groups, as well as innumerable transitional forms linking them to modern organisms, must have existed;
2. there should have been linear series demonstrating progressive development of complex biological features;
3. a random and spontaneous genetic mechanism capable of increasing the complexity of living organisms, i.e., of generating new genetic information, must exist;*
4. since evolution is a blind, trial-and-error process, in genomes of living organisms there should have accumulated numerous errors that track their evolutionary history.

The first two of these predictions were formulated by Darwin when he wrote:

Lastly,... if my theory be true, numberless intermediate varieties, linking most closely all the species of the same group together, must assuredly have existed; but the very process of natural selection constantly tends ... to exterminate the parent forms and the intermediate links. Consequently, evidence of their former existence could be found only amongst fossil remains....

If it could be demonstrated that any complex organ existed, which could not possibly have been formed by numerous, successive, slight modifications, my theory would absolutely break down.¹⁵

The last two predictions follow from the NDT,¹⁶ since for natural

needed, thus making the theory almost impossible to test decisively. See Michael J. Behe, "Reply to My Critics: A Response to Reviews of *Darwin's Black Box: The Biochemical Challenge to Evolution*," *Biology and Philosophy*, no. 16 (2001), pp. 685–709.

* For simplicity, we will define a unit of genetic information as a gene or a complex of genes that encodes a particular biochemical, physiological, anatomical, or morphological structure or function.

selection to cause an evolutionary change in a trait, variation in the trait must be genetically heritable. Also, among the natural properties of genomes there must be a capacity to generate, accommodate, and sustain both a functionally meaningful change and a benign error.

5. “Facts” of Evolution; or, Can the Predictions Be Upheld?

1. *Lack of clear common ancestors and transitional forms.* The first and most obvious place to look for facts supportive of the Darwinian view is the paleontological record. Darwin himself was keenly aware of this, and saw the absence of transitional forms in the paleontological data available at his time as “the most obvious and serious objection” to his theory.* Yet, he believed that the problem was not fatal due to the imperfection of the fossil record. The general progression from less to more complex organisms in the fossil record was evident, and only forms linking these distinctly different organisms needed to be found.

As pointed out in the introduction (pp. 96–97 above), after 150 years of sifting through soil and cataloguing millions of fossil organisms, several persistent and striking properties of the paleontological record have emerged. One is the simultaneous appearance of nearly all known phyla (phyla represent major body plans), known as the Cambrian Explosion, which Darwinists estimate took place 540 million years ago. Others include the sudden as opposed to gradual appearance of most distinct life-forms, their temporal stasis (lack of change in any particular direction) over the period of their existence in the fossil record, and their sudden disappearance.¹⁷ Referring to this pattern, Niles Eldredge** once remarked: “It [evolution] never seems to happen.”¹⁸

Essentially no new phyla have appeared in the purported half-billion years after the Cambrian Explosion. Those life-forms that have been found in the fossil record below the Cambrian layer—the so-called

* See p. 525 above.

** Niles Eldredge (born 1943) is a renowned American paleontologist, who, along with another prominent evolutionist, Stephen Jay Gould, proposed the theory of punctuated equilibrium in 1972. (See pp. 53, 53n, 96–97, 381–82, 381n, 382nn above.)

Ediacaran biota¹⁹—have little if anything in common with the Cambrian fossils, and their appearance and disappearance is likewise a mystery.²⁰ If we consider that the emergence of a body plan would represent a major evolutionary event, absence of transitional links between Ediacaran and Cambrian life-forms is inconsistent with gradual Darwinian evolution. With respect to the abrupt appearance of unique body plans during the Cambrian Explosion, it has been noted that

the traditional version of the theory of common descent apparently does not apply to kingdoms,... to many if not all phyla, and possibly also not to many classes within phyla.^{21*}

And that

microevolution provides no satisfactory explanation for the extraordinary burst of novelty during the late Neoproterozoic-Cambrian radiation ..., nor the rapid production of novel plant architectures ... during the Devonian ... followed by the origination of most major insect groups.²²

Contrary to some claims,²³ at finer taxonomic levels the picture is no different. No unambiguous transitional forms are known for most classes of vertebrates. *Archaeopteryx*, for example, still touted as an important proof of evolution, has been long considered as an odd mosaic.^{24**} The reason for this is that its features are not truly transitional. Rather, the creature possessed perfectly developed feathers as do modern birds, along with such reptilian features as a long spinal tail and ribs without uncinate processes. Moreover, as Jeong Yul Kim and co-authors have reported, “a remarkably diverse avifauna,” including “shorebird-like” and “perching type” birds, has been found in geologi-

* Our use of direct quotations from respected members of the scientific community here and below does not imply that the quoted authors necessarily reject the Neo-Darwinian Theory. Rather, it is to illustrate the sorts of problems that inevitably arise when evolutionary beliefs are forced upon observable data.

** See p. 526n above.

cal layers classified as “lower Cretaceous,” i.e., immediately adjacent to the layer with *Archaeopteryx* fossils (upper Jurassic).²⁵ There would have been no time for these birds to “evolve,” had *Archaeopteryx* been indeed a transitional form.

Within orders of vertebrates, no clear transitional forms are evident either. In the amphibians there is “a lack of fossils that represent plausible ancestors” of the current three orders (Diego San Mauro et al.).²⁶ A similar picture is in the class of reptiles, where for example the order of turtles represents “a classic evolutionary problem: the appearance of a major structural adaptation [turtle shell]. The place of turtles amongst the other amniote groups is a classic question in systematics, due to the ‘instantaneous’ appearance of this evolutionary novelty” (S. F. Gilbert et al.).²⁷ A recent discovery in China of an ancient turtle named *Odontochelys*²⁸ only added to the confusion about the evolutionary origins of the order. The original authors interpreted their finding, which lacked the hard carapace, as an “intermediate step” toward the evolution of the modern turtle morphology. However, others²⁹ argued exactly the opposite, namely, that the *Odontochelys*’ morphology “is not primitive but instead a specialized adaptation.”³⁰

Among the thirty-two orders of the class of mammals, none can be connected by undisputed transitional forms to a common ancestor. This means that the earliest fossils that can be unambiguously assigned to each order appear abruptly in the fossil record at the so-called Cretaceous-Tertiary boundary:³¹ the time of the abrupt disappearance of most dinosaurs. The gradual evolution of such morphologically unique and structurally complex orders as chiropterans (bats) and cetaceans (whales and dolphins) would require a tremendous number of “steps” from a common ancestral form. Both were mentioned by Darwin in *The Origin of Species* as difficult questions. And both difficulties were discounted by him as having “very little weight.”^{32*} Darwin simply used his imagination to concoct a series of fanciful steps by which each could have “evolved.” Bats were supposed by Darwin to have

* This is from the first and second editions of Darwin’s *Origin of Species*, both published in 1859. The word “very” was removed by Darwin from later editions.—ED.

evolved from something akin to a flying squirrel. However, a century and a half later there is not a sign in the fossil record of the gradual development of the flying apparatus of bats, or, for that matter, of any flying animal: bird, reptile, or insect. In a review of bat "evolution," John R. Speakman wrote that, due to the sudden appearance of completely developed bats in the fossil record, "any attempts to reconstruct the manner by which their traits evolved are necessarily intellectual leaps in the dark."³³

Similarly, speculating about whale evolution, Darwin wrote:

In North America the black bear was seen ... swimming for hours with widely open mouth, thus catching, like a whale, insects in the water. If the supply of insects were constant, and if better adapted competitors did not already exist in the country, I can see no difficulty in a race of bears being rendered, by natural selection, more and more aquatic in their structure and habits, with larger and larger mouths, till a creature was produced as monstrous as a whale.^{34*}

The story of whale "evolution" is another example of a series of intellectual leaps unsupported by convincing fossil evidence. Initially an extinct animal *Mesonyx*, thought to be a carnivore, was suggested as a terrestrial mammalian predecessor of whales. However, ancient whales** were found in the same layers as *Mesonyx*, implying that the animal belonged to a "parallel line." More recently, however, it was reported that "paleontological information is grossly inconsistent with" molecular data,³⁵ and that the interpretation of the relationship between whales and *Mesonyx* is particularly unstable. Subsequently, supposed whale progenitors were assigned to the order of Artiodactyla (even-hoofed ungulates).³⁶ Presently two hypotheses on the relation-

* This is from the 1859 editions of *The Origin of Species*. The text "If the supply ... as a whale" was removed by Darwin from later editions.—Ed.

** *Basilosaurus*—an extinct whale with miniature hind-legs that presumably functioned to support sexual organs—is presently the closest there is to a transitional form between whales and some other animal; for details, see J. Gatesy and M.O. O'Leary, "Deciphering Whale Origins with Molecules and Fossils," *Trends in Ecology & Evolution*, 16 (2001), pp. 562–70.

ship between whales and ungulates prevail. The first hypothesis suggests that Artiodactyla is an independent evolutionary line parallel to that of whales (including ancient whales) and mesonychians. The second one suggests that Artiodactyla actually includes the whales and their sister-taxon of Hippopotamuses.³⁷ It is apparent that the “origin” of the cetaceans is far from being resolved.³⁸

Darwin’s impression of differences among species as a sign of an actual evolutionary transition has both made a strong impression on generations of natural scientists and invoked vivid and persistent mental images. A great deal of effort has been invested into reconstructions of such transitions by looking for so-called missing links and evolutionary sequences leading up to modern taxa. However, since the Darwinian transition is unobservable in real time, the power of imagination has played a critical role in such reconstructions. By the admission of renowned anthropologist Ann Gibbons, nowhere has it had a bigger role than in devising the human ancestral tree, where just about every new fossil “shatters preconceived notions” of human “evolution.”³⁹

One of the pioneers of such imaginative efforts was the German biologist and prominent fraud⁴⁰ Ernst Haeckel, whose drawings ostensibly illustrating parallels in embryonic development of major vertebrate classes have persisted in biology textbooks for over a century, despite having been exposed as fakes.^{41*} Being an avid supporter of Darwin and a believer in the evolution of humans from animals, Haeckel imagined a line of descent connecting humans with Asian apes via a missing link he called *Pithecanthropus*. He created the being—a hairy half-ape/half-man—on paper before any fossils were found. Subsequently the drawing literally became flesh on the handful of possibly unrelated bones found by Eugene Dubois in Indonesia in 1891.⁴² From there, *Pithecanthropus* and other similar “creatures” walked into every biology textbook. The ensuing creation of the human ancestral tree (marred by several grand forgeries and deceptions: Piltdown “Man,” Nebraska “Man”**) produced a somewhat punctuated picture,⁴³ combining extinct apes (several species of *Australo-*

* See pp. 92–93, 521–22, 521n, 633, 639 above.

** See pp. 384, 384nn, 469, 577, 577nn above.

pithecus) and humans divided into four species. But it did not contain a clear line of descent, because of numerous overlaps among different hominid fossils in the fossil record.⁴⁴

An anatomical feature that clearly separates humans from any mammal including apes is the ability to walk upright (bipedalism). This ability—along with the structure of feet, knees, and the base of the cranium—is correlated with the unique morphology of the vestibular (balance and orientation) system (inner ear). A careful analysis of fossil remains shows that the extinct apes, such as *Australopithecus*, even though some of them were labelled as *Homo*, walked on four limbs stooped forward in a manner similar to that of modern great apes. To put it simply, they had the skeleton of a modern ape. No forms with a transitional morphology of the vestibular apparatus are known.⁴⁵

As regards the different “species” of *Homo*, one might first ask: How can one possibly define an ancient piece of bone as a species if (a) skeletal tissue responds plastically to the conditions under which an organism is developing (improved nourishment, for example, results in larger and thicker bones), and (b) the main defining feature of a species is its reproductive isolation? This difference between the biological and morphological definitions of a species is a classical conundrum of paleontology and one reason why molecular phylogenies are becoming the method of choice for studying “evolutionary relationships” (see below). Here at least one knows that molecular sequences do belong to distinct species. Evidence suggests that the so-called species of humans (*Homo erectus*, *H. neanderthalensis*, and *H. sapiens*) may be but variations and/or unique races. Such evidence comes from three directions. First, it is now acknowledged that people of modern and Neanderthal races interbred. The genetic difference between *H. neanderthalensis* and modern people, based on the analysis of sequences of nuclear DNA, is the same as, for example, that between the native inhabitants of Papua New Guinea and Thailand. Second, morphologically, *H. neanderthalensis* from Yugoslavia resemble Europeans, while *H. erectus* from China and Indonesia have commonalities with Asians and Australian aborigines respectively. Third, the period of coexistence of *H. erectus* and *H. neanderthalensis* with morphologically modern people ended only twenty thousand years ago according to the evolution-

ary/uniformitarian time scale.⁴⁶ Consequently, none of them is ancestral to another. Apes have always been apes and humans have always been humans.

Other evolutionary “lines of descent,” such as the sequence from Therapsid reptiles to mammals and the famous “horse series,” are simply series of animals with similar morphologies whose bones were found in different sedimentary layers that had nothing to do with each other either taxonomically or geographically.⁴⁷ Here similarity assumed to result from common descent is used to prove common descent. In fact, if one wished to show that bulldogs “evolved” from weasels it would be easy to do so by constructing an “evolutionary row” from a weasel to a stoat to a polecat to a cat to a bulldog. Likewise, had the platypus been found in sedimentary layers before its discovery in the wild (as did happen with the *coelacanth*—see p. 526n above), it could have been easily declared a missing link between birds and mammals. In this context it becomes clear why attempts to construct evolutionary rows leading to a turtle, bat, or whale have not worked so far. There are simply no animals living or extinct that would be structurally similar to these creatures, and consequently no evolutionary series can be created.

The current state of paleontological evidence relative to Darwin’s predictions about common ancestors and transitional forms can be summed up by quoting two prominent Darwinists, Eldredge and Tattersall:

That individual kinds of fossils remain recognizably the same throughout the length of their occurrence in the fossil record had been known to paleontologists long before Darwin published his *Origin*. Darwin himself ... prophesied that future generations of paleontologists would fill in these gaps by diligent search.... One hundred and twenty years of paleontological research later, it has become abundantly clear that the fossil record will not confirm this part of Darwin’s predictions. Nor is the problem a miserably poor record. The fossil record simply shows that this prediction is wrong.^{48*}

* See also the statements by paleontologist David Raup on pp. 524–25n, 526n above.—ED.

Paleontological data are not the only source of evidence seriously undermining Darwin's theory. In recent years there has been a major upheaval and a great deal of confusion taking place in taxonomy and phylogenetics.* The upheaval is connected to the advent of sophisticated techniques allowing for comparison of the molecular and genetic makeup of organisms. Some scientists have argued that paleontological data are too fragmentary and their taxonomic status is often too vague for the reconstruction of reliable "evolutionary" scenarios. It has been suggested that genetic data from living species are the only remaining and available evidence of the last common ancestor.⁴⁹

It should be kept in mind that, in and of themselves, phylogenetic trees cannot prove biological evolution by descent because they assume it in the first place. Advancing them as "proofs" of evolution makes the reasoning perfectly circular, since an observable commonality of *design* in DNA (or morphology, behavior, or some other set of traits) is supplanted with the idea of the commonality of *descent*, which then is used as evidence of "evolutionary history." In other words, belief that commonality of design equals commonality of descent is deemed sufficient, and is the only "proof" of "evolution." Regarding such fallacious thinking, German paleontologist Oskar Kuhn wrote:

The similarity of forms is explained by evolution, and evolution in turn is proven through the grades of similarities. That here one has fallen victim to circular reasoning is hardly noticed; what one wants to prove, namely that similarity is based on evolution, is simply assumed, and then the different degrees in the gradation of the (typical) similarities are used as evidence for the truth of the idea of evolution.⁵⁰

Nevertheless, biology textbooks often hail molecular evidence both as proof of evolution and as a line of evidence corroborating evolutionary scenarios inferred from paleontological data.⁵¹ Such

* *Phylogenetics* (Greek: *phylon* = tribe, race; and *genetikos* = relative to birth) is the study of similarity among various groups of organisms based on the assumption of evolutionary relatedness.

BIOLOGICAL EVIDENCE AND THE NEO-DARWINIAN PARADIGM

claims, however, are misleading because different molecular markers produce different “evolutionary trees” and contradict morphological and paleontological data.⁵² For example, one molecular biologist wrote:

In another study, the mitochondrial cytochrome *b* gene implied a similarly absurd phylogeny of mammals, regardless of the method of tree construction. Cats and whales fell within primates, grouping with simians (monkeys and apes) and strepsirrhines (lemurs, bush-babies and lorises) to the exclusion of tarsiers. Cytochrome *b* is probably the most commonly sequenced gene in vertebrates, making this surprising result even more disconcerting.⁵³

The pattern of inconsistency among different phylogenetic trees is so widespread that among biologists one will say “true molecular phylogeny” only as a joke. The reason for this is that, as argued by Stadler and co-authors,⁵⁴ the Darwinian principle of gradual change, while applicable strictly to intra-specific variability, becomes fiction when one uses it to infer relationships among higher taxa.

Different molecular structures, just like different anatomical structures, simply display different degrees of similarity and thus project different phylogenetic relationships among taxonomic groups. Eugene Koonin writes about this phenomenon even more forcefully:

No intermediate grades or intermediate forms between different types are detectable.... The relationships between major groups within an emergent class of biological entities are hard to decipher and do not seem to fit the tree pattern that, following Darwin's original proposal, remains the dominant description of biological evolution.... In each of [the] pivotal nexuses in life's history the principal “types” seem to appear rapidly and fully equipped with the signature features of the respective new level of biological organization.⁵⁵

2. *Irreducible complexity of complex biological systems.* When confronted with data, the first two predictions of classical Darwinism fail

miserably. There are a great deal of imaginary common ancestors and purported transitional forms but little conclusive evidence for real ones above the taxonomic levels of genus and family. One reason for this is that the anatomical, physiological, and biochemical complexity and complementarity we observe in living beings simply cannot develop gradually. Complex systems exist fully functional as complete packages of interdependent features. If any feature is missing from such systems, the systems cease to function and thus confer no survival advantage on the organism that bears them (see also p. 97 above). While Darwin thought that complex traits such as eyes might develop in a series of steps, he took this idea simply from the fact that different types of eyes exist in nature, each suitable for the environment inhabited by its owner.⁵⁶ In *The Origin of Species*, he identified a variety of animals known to have eyes ranging from a simple light-sensing spot to the vertebrate eye, and suggested that the evolution of the human eye might have proceeded in a similar manner. But human eyes consist of approximately forty basic anatomical components. Each of these components needs to be present at the same time and work together in a perfectly coordinated manner in order for us to see. This means that, anatomically, eyes are irreducibly complex.⁵⁷ They could not have “evolved” gradually by a tremendous number of transitional steps with dysfunctional “barely-eyes,” “quarter-eyes,” “half-eyes,” and “almost-eyes,” which would do no good to their owners. The fact that different types of simple and more complex eyes exist in nature cannot help explain away the issue of irreducible complexity for at least three reasons. First, it is believed that different types of eyes and even similar types of eyes in different taxonomic groups “evolved” independently (the same goes for many other complex structures: wings, echolocation apparatuses, etc.).* That is, according to evolutionary constructs they are unrelated (analogous) traits, and each would have followed a unique and unknown “evolu-

* Kenneth Weiss (professor of anthropology and genetics, Penn State University) writes: “There appear to be 65 or so phylogenetically independent forms of eyes” (Weiss, “How the Eye Got Its Brain,” *Evolutionary Anthropology*, no. 11 [2002], p. 215).

tionary” path.* Second, even the simplest light-sensing organs are irreducibly complex in different ways. They are irreducibly complex not only anatomically, but—probably even more importantly—biochemically. Referring to the complicated sequence of biochemical reactions that must take place so that the light entering the eyes can become a nerve impulse, Michael Behe** writes:

Now that the black box of vision has been opened, it is no longer enough for an evolutionary explanation of that power to consider only the *anatomical* structures of whole eyes, as Darwin did in the nineteenth century (and as popularizers of evolution continue to do today). Each of the anatomical steps and structures that Darwin thought were so simple actually involves staggeringly complicated biochemical processes that cannot be papered over with rhetoric.⁵⁸

Other examples of irreducible complexity permeate every critical system and function of living creatures, including protein transport, blood clotting, the architecture and regulation of DNA, electron transport, telomeres, photosynthesis, joints, echolocation, and the flower anatomy of carnivorous plants.⁵⁹

The universal unit of life, the cell, at its basic level of organization is itself irreducibly complex. All the parts of the cell are necessary to its functioning and replication. Nothing in a cell works until everything

* In summarizing the findings of their study of arthropod compound eyes, Duke University biologists Todd H. Oakley and Clifford W. Cunningham write: “These results illustrate exactly why arthropod compound eye evolution has remained controversial, because one of two seemingly very unlikely evolutionary histories must be true. Either compound eyes with detailed similarities evolved multiple times in different arthropod groups or compound eyes have been lost in a seemingly inordinate number of arthropod lineages” (Oakley and Cunningham, “Molecular Phylogenetic Evidence for the Independent Evolutionary Origin of an Arthropod Compound Eye,” *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*, no. 99 [2002], pp. 1426–30).

** Michael J. Behe (born in 1952) is an American biochemist and intelligent design advocate. He is professor of biochemistry at Lehigh University in Pennsylvania and a senior fellow of the Discovery Institute’s Center for Science and Culture. He is noted for promoting the idea that many structures are too complex at the biochemical level to be adequately explained by mechanisms of population genetics.

works. The major macromolecules in living cells are proteins and nucleic acids. The main systems of a cell are the system of storage and transcription of information (DNA and RNA), the structural and maintenance system (enzymes and other proteins), the system of energy supply (ATP), and finally the system of homeostasis (cellular membrane). No biologically significant proteins or nucleic acids have been made by any experiments, such as those of Miller and Urey or others that followed.⁶⁰ In fact, instead of elucidating the initial steps of “prebiotic evolution,” such experiments clearly demonstrated that biologically significant macromolecules cannot self-generate outside of a living cell.⁶¹ The other critical implication of such experiments is that a cell or any of its constituent systems cannot evolve gradually. This is because, in order to work, each system of a cell requires other systems to be already present and functioning. DNA is replicated with the help of the very enzymes it encodes; proteins are encoded in DNA and are synthesised by protein complexes of ribosomes; membranes can only be synthesized on membranes, which again requires proteins and DNA encoding proteins; ATP is synthesized on membranes with the help of proteins, and its synthesis, as well as any other process taking place in a cell, requires ATP.⁶² In the words of molecular biologist Michael Denton, “The complexity of the simplest known type of cell is so great that it is impossible to accept that such an object could have been thrown together suddenly by some kind of freakish, vastly improbable, event. Such an occurrence would be indistinguishable from a miracle.”⁶³

3. *Known genetic mechanisms do not lead to evolution.* The Neo-Darwinian Theory views an evolutionary change as resulting from the spontaneous generation of genetic variation via mutations and the fixation of variants in the population through natural selection and genetic drift. Before selection can determine the fate of a new phenotype, that phenotype must first be expressed.* A heritable variation in a phenotype can only be achieved by a genetic mutation that has consequences on development. In principle, however, not

* A *phenotype* is an observable feature or trait of an organism, which results from the expression of the organism's genes and the influence of environmental factors, and from interactions between the two.

just any mutation satisfies the requirements of the Neo-Darwinian Theory. To affect development in a progressive Darwinian way, mutations must be useful (positive) and they must introduce new functionally useful information into genomes. More specifically, they must produce or at least be capable of producing new functional genes. Mutations that simply reshuffle already existing genetic material (exon reshuffling, gene duplication, retroposition, mobile element insertion, lateral gene transfer, gene fusion, and back mutation) do not qualify as such because they only deal with genetic information that already exists. They produce nothing *de novo*. Moreover, in reality such perturbations of genomes are harmless only perhaps in bacteria. In organisms that are even slightly more complex, large-scale mutations or even point mutations occurring in critical genes are always deleterious and, as pointed out by Fr. Seraphim above (p. 528), often lethal. For example, duplication of chromosome 21 in humans causes Down syndrome. In vertebrates, point mutations in Hox genes* lead to spontaneous abortions of embryos, while in arthropods mutations in these genes lead to growth abnormalities such as the famous phenomenon of antennopedia** in fruit flies.

The objection can be raised here that, in fact, a few positive point mutations have been documented. The most commonly cited examples are the development of antibiotic resistance and ability to digest artificial substances in bacteria, development of insecticide resistance in insect pests, and the sickle-cell anemia mutation in the humans inhabiting equatorial Africa. These examples, however, are thoroughly irrelevant to the NDT, the main implication of which is a gradual

* Hox genes are a particular group of genes, found in all multicellular organisms, which are responsible for patterning the body axis at the early stage of embryonic development. The Hox genes do not directly control the nature or shape of structures, but regulate the expression of a complex hierarchy of other genes that do so. By providing the identity of particular body regions, Hox genes determine where limbs and other body segments will grow in a developing foetus or larva. Although mutations in these genes are often invoked as a possible source of evolutionary novelty, in real terms mutations in Hox genes are very harmful.

** Antennopedia is a mutation in fruit flies where, instead of the flies having antennae on their heads, they have legs.

increase in structural or functional complexity and the corresponding increase in the amount of information in the genome. These mutations, although positive under certain restrictive conditions, add nothing new to the genome. In fact they do the opposite. They damage the genome and, while providing a positive effect in one respect, they cripple the mutant forms in other important ways.

The development of drug and insecticide resistance in bacteria and insects and the emergence of the ability to subsist on new substrates in bacteria have common mechanisms. The mechanisms are DNA replication or transcription defects and loss of genetic information: something one might call *devolution* as opposed to *evolution*.

In the case of drug and insecticide resistance, genes coding for specific proteins—targets of the drug or insecticide agents—become damaged, leading to a simple amino-acid substitution in the respective proteins. The altered proteins lose their specificity, i.e., their ability to bind to a specific molecule. (As an analogy, if one were to file off the head of a Phillips screwdriver it would become less specific a tool.) As a result, the drug or insecticide molecules cannot attach themselves to their target protein. Consequently they can no longer disrupt the metabolism of organisms they have been designed to act against (i.e., the screwdriver head no longer fits the screw), and thus resistance emerges.

The consumption of new artificial substances (e.g., nylon) by bacteria works in a similar way. Point mutations may damage particular genes, with the effect that the enzymes these genes encode become less specific and thus capable of digesting a broader range of substances—albeit less efficiently. Alternatively, control proteins responsible for regulating the synthesis of enzymes or the transport of substances into the cell break down and the cell literally becomes flooded with either enzyme or substrate molecules. The lack of digestive efficiency is compensated for by the sheer volume of the enzyme or of the substrate it acts on. In laboratory conditions, such mutant bacterial cells can survive on the alien substrate by making the best of a bad job. Obviously this is a very wasteful process. It would be analogous to delivering a sample of merchandise to every house on the street just to hit the target house, because the street number in the address has been deleted. Cells of living organisms do not normally operate

this way. Because a fundamental function of most enzymes is to provide specificity by limiting the number of substrates they interact with, any loss of specificity in a real functioning organism does nothing but disrupt the operation of its systems. For example, drug-resistant bacteria have depressed growth rates, while insecticide resistant pests have acquired this resistance at the cost of a more sluggish nervous system.⁶⁴ Likewise, although humans suffering from sickle-cell anemia are resistant to malaria, they have this quality at the expense of a compromised integrity of their red blood cells.

Sickle-cell anemia is found in parts of Africa where malaria is also found. This genetic ailment is caused by a point mutation in the gene, which codes for the production of hemoglobin, the oxygen-carrying pigment in red blood cells. When these cells become distorted, they can no longer operate as normal red blood cells. Patients inheriting two copies of the defective gene usually die. In heterozygous patients—i.e., those who inherit the defect from only one parent—the healthy gene from the other parent enables the person to escape the more serious effects of this condition. People with sickle-cell anemia are resistant to malaria because, when invaded, their atypical blood cells collapse, destroying the developing parasite. There is good evidence that resistance to malaria increases the probability of survival and the propagation of one's genes in areas afflicted by this disease—that is, the trait is being selected for. Nevertheless, it is a defect, not an increase in complexity or an improvement in function.

These examples and the absence of examples to the contrary⁶⁵ suggest that random mutations cannot add novel information to a genome. A survey of publications in leading scientific journals over the past fifteen years by a Russian biochemist, A. N. Lunnyy, revealed that

in most cases genes that are called *new* are formed only from preexisting coding sequences ...; as an extremely rare exception, [they are formed] from non-[protein] coding sequences of coding genes.^{66*}

* In some sense, the distinction between coding and non-coding sequences in the genome is becoming more and more irrelevant. This is evolutionist terminology,

This led the author to the following conclusion:

The emergence of ... complex and extensive genomes in the process of progressive macroevolution—accompanied by the spontaneous (although controlled by natural selection) augmentation of genetic information via the modification and amplification of already existing information—must, from the perspective of information theory and even simple logic, be deemed improbable.⁶⁷

Not only do random mutations fail to add functional information in practice; they are also incapable of adding it in principle. This is illustrated by the simple analogy of a fully functional instruction manual or computer program, to which one cannot add information by randomly replacing letters, words, or pages in the text or computer code. Such additions will only make the manual confusing and cause the program to crash—as indeed happens with living organisms when their genetic code experiences mutations. Computer simulations also demonstrate that a simple genome cannot be made more complex via random mutations of nucleotides. German chemist and computer scientist Royal Truman ran computer simulations to test the possibility that random mutations can explain the emergence of novel information in a simple genome. He remarked:

Several factors would limit the possibility for random mutations in very small biological genomes to produce novel, complex functions.... Extrapolating to biologically reasonable settings suggests that Neo-Darwinian theory is incapable of explaining more than rather inconsequential changes in cellular processes.⁶⁸

Examples of such “inconsequential changes in cellular processes” have been mentioned already: they include drug-resistance in bacteria

which is misleading because it implies that some (or in fact most) sequences in the genome serve no function, but are a by-product of evolution. The truth is that practically every sequence in the genome is *functional*, whether or not it expressly codes for proteins. See more on this on pp. 850–53, 852n below, where the problem of so-called junk DNA is discussed.

or malaria-resistance in people. Indeed, the only conceptually possible way to improve a perfectly functioning manual or program would be to add a subset of instructions in some coordinated fashion so that it would not interfere with already existing functional information. By analogy, the only way to “improve” a perfectly functioning organism would be to add a (modular) package of useful genes.⁶⁹ Obviously, such additions cannot work by single, random base-pair substitutions in the DNA, for they would have to perfectly match what is already in the genome. Such events would require a tightly coordinated coming into being of not one but dozens and hundreds of new functional genes, together with the genes coding for the associated biochemical infrastructure.

On the level of phenotypic expression, the changes would have to match the environment of the new organism. Considering the plethora of intricate and often mutualistic ways in which many species depend on each other in the real world,⁷⁰ if evolution were true, such additions would have occurred jointly among species locked in tight ecological relationships. Yet what we observe is the absence of gradual transitions not only among taxa but also among whole ecosystems.*

In the face of these inescapable patterns, attempts have been made to explain the origins of complex organismal systems in such a way that bypasses point mutations altogether.⁷¹ Suggestions have been made that major evolutionary events such as the Cambrian Explosion were achieved by large-scale genomic rearrangements such as the duplication of whole genomes (polyploidy) or of particular genes, especially those regulating development (Hox genes). These suggestions, however, are untenable. First, they do not address the cornerstone issue of how the purportedly duplicated genes emerged in the first place.

* The authors of a recent publication on ancient ecosystems state that “studies of plant and animal assemblages from both the terrestrial and the marine fossil records reveal persistence for extensive periods of geological time, sometimes millions of years” (W. A. DiMichele, A. K. Behrensmeyer, T. D. Olszewski, C. C. Labandeira, J. M. Pandolfi, S. L. Wing, and R. Bobe, “Long-term Stasis in Ecological Assemblages: Evidence from the Fossil Record,” *Annual Review of Ecology, Evolution, and Systematics*, no. 35 [2004], pp. 285–322).

(For example, describing the “evolution” of Hox genes, R. L. Carroll simply wrote that their origin was a unique phenomenon.) Second, genome duplication requires the preexistence of sophisticated biochemical pathways, which also have to appear somehow. Third, the pattern of hypothesized gene (genome) duplication does not match the pattern of morphological radiation. The authors of a recent article wrote:

Many have argued that genome duplication is a dominant factor in the evolution of complexity and diversity. However, a clear correlation between a genome duplication event and increased complexity and diversity is not apparent.... A causal link between any specific genome duplication event and increased species diversity remains elusive.⁷²

The conclusion that random mutations cannot add functional genetic information is sound on empirical and theoretical grounds. As far as we can tell, genomes have always been degrading because of the accumulation of mutations. In humans, for example, due to the high rate and only very slightly deleterious effect of the majority of mutations, natural selection is incapable even of neutralizing the resultant degradation, let alone reversing it.⁷³ This process makes a major contribution to cancer, aging, and various heritable ailments.

Furthermore, it is a basic tenet of information theory that information only comes from an intelligent source. The existence of information implies both meaning and purpose. It implies that there is a source of information, a code, a language, and finally a receiver of information. This is the opposite of chance, which is the key underpinning assumption of naturalistic materialism in general and of Darwinism in particular.

Information is not the same as orderliness: a system may increase in order (such as in the transition from a liquid to a solid phase) but gain zero information. Although information, just like life in general, does not contradict physical and chemical laws, at the same time it cannot be deduced from them. The content of a book does not follow from the physical and chemical properties of the paper and ink. Likewise, the unique properties of DNA as a template of life do not follow

from the physical and chemical properties of its nucleotides. They follow exactly from the information-rich message it encodes.⁷⁴ The message written in the language of nucleotide sequences is so precise that it not only provides for a perfect co-functioning of all systems in the organism but also allows for a harmonious coexistence of multitudes of different organisms in biomes, ecosystems, and ultimately in the world at large. To quote the former director of the German Federal Physics and Technology Institute, Professor Werner Gitt:

A coding system always entails a nonmaterial intellectual process. Physical matter cannot produce an information code. All experiences show that every piece of creative information represents some mental effort and can be traced to a personal idea-giver who exercised his own free will, and who is endowed with an intelligent mind. *There is no known law of nature, no known process, and no known sequence of events which can cause information to originate by itself in matter.*⁷⁵

If random mutations can only damage genomes, thereby increasing genetic entropy,⁷⁶ the inevitable conclusion is that evolution is not happening now and we are instead witnessing devolution and degradation, and that genomes as we see them now are not the product of the hypothesized mechanism of evolution. If evolution is not happening now, how can one infer its occurrence in the past? If its mechanism was different from what can be directly observed now, how can one invoke genetic mechanisms and processes observable in present-day populations to explain the emergence of new body plans or complex organs aeons ago?

Had the accumulation of functional complexity in living creatures been random, we would be witnessing around us a system in the state of flux and disarray. It would be nothing like the world most of us cherish so much: a masterpiece of harmonious, beautiful, and marvelously intricate interactions. Harmony and aesthetic beauty, just like information, cannot be produced by a random process.⁷⁷

4. “*Junk DNA*” is not junk. Probably the strongest indirect argument presented by Darwinists in support of evolution, which until re-

cently appeared watertight, was the argument of non-coding DNA. Most eukaryotic (i.e., possessing a nucleus) genomes consist primarily of different types of repetitive DNA and so-called pseudogenes that do not code for proteins (up to 97% in humans). This DNA is often described as evolutionary junk: sequences that are hypothesized to have played a role in the “evolutionary” past of an organism but have lost their coding ability and thus their usefulness due to genetic damage. So-called junk DNA is also thought to include partially reproduced genes that were non-functional to begin with, i.e., copying errors. For example, in a recent apology for human evolution D. J. Fairbanks described “junk DNA” as follows:

Apparently they [repetitive DNA sequences] are just along for the ride, and most have been riding for a very long time. It is tempting to think of them as millions of ancient but now mostly benign parasites trapped within our genome. Some scientists have even called them “junk DNA,” implying that they are useless and, currently, harmless relics of evolution.⁷⁸

How is “junk DNA” thought to have accumulated? Evolutionary scientists think of coding DNA as a document and “junk DNA” as marks left on the paper in the process of the document replication. Imagine a thousand photocopies of the original document, each taken from one another in sequence. Specks of dust, pieces of hair, and other neutral junk leave marks on photocopies and are transcribed in the process of multiplication. Once a piece of junk is photocopied, the mark becomes fixed on the copy and is passed along. These marks are not parts of the message, it is argued, for they code no information; but by looking at them one can tell the sequence in which the photocopies were produced.⁷⁹ Now, if this analogy is applied to living organisms—for example, humans and chimpanzees—that have similar non-coding DNA or “pseudogene” sequences in identical positions within their genome, one might assume that they have inherited them from a common ancestor. Thus, by comparing different pieces of this so-called evolutionary junk in genomes of modern organisms, it is argued, one can learn something about their evolutionary history. It can

also be reasonably argued that an organism loaded with various “useless and, currently, harmless relics of evolution” is unlikely to have been created by an intelligent agent.⁸⁰

Recent research, however, demonstrates that the view of the repetitive DNA as “junk” is outdated and misguided, and that the photocopier analogy is most certainly false. What some evolutionary biologists refer to as “junk DNA” appears to be an integral and constituent part of the message encoded in the DNA and not something added by chance. After studying repetitive DNA in detail, one molecular biologist remarked:

Repetitive DNA acts like software insofar as it is encoded in the DNA sequence and is utilized by the cell many times to carry out defined routines.... Like software, repetitive DNA can control operations involving different data files. On the other hand, repetitive DNA also forms part of essential cellular machinery.... Indeed, we may come one day to regard erstwhile “junk DNA” as an integral part of cellular control regimes that can truly be called expert.... All structural varieties of repetitive DNA play significant roles in one or more categories of genomic tasks.^{81*}

Specifically, non-coding DNA plays numerous critical functions in genomic information management, organization, and architecture. This includes chromosome packaging and regulation of gene expression during embryonic development,⁸² in which the non-coding DNA's functions are in many ways analogous to the table of contents, page numbers, index, and bookmarks in a book.

Even more critically, “junk DNA” may be the key to encoding biological complexity.⁸³ Protein-encoding genes—which make up approximately equal amounts of DNA code in creatures as different as

* More recent data indicate that the genome contains very little unused sequences and is, in fact, a complex, interwoven network. In this network, genes are just one of many types of DNA sequences that have a functional impact (“New Findings Challenge Established Views on Human Genome,” *NIH News*, June 13, 2007). See the ENCODE Project Consortium, <http://www.genome.gov/10005107>, and Jonathan Wells, *The Myth of Junk DNA* (2011).

humans, domestic chickens, pufferfish, mosquitoes, and the *Arabidopsis* plant—may not at all be what biologically differentiates humans from fish, and vertebrates from worms and mollusks. Rather, biological complexity increases with the amount of non-coding DNA in the total genome.⁸⁴ Upon closer examination, the “junk DNA” argument is nothing but a reenactment of the long-dead argument of vestigial organs. The question of how superbly intricate and complex arrangements of protein-coding and non-coding DNA—which translate into algae, flies, fish, and people—has emerged, and how it does what it does, remains unanswered. What does seem clear, however, is that “Darwinian evolution,” ostensibly driven by natural selection, has had little or nothing to do with it.*

6. Conclusions

Summarizing the material presented above, three conclusions can be drawn:

1. Common ancestors and transitional forms between major taxonomic groups exist only on paper or in one’s imagination. Living creatures do not evolve in the Darwinian sense (gradually), nor is there a mechanism or even a plausible hypothesis describing how a major evolutionary transition could take place. In the absence of such understanding, writes professor of anthropology and genetics Kenneth M. Weiss, “any evolutionary reconstructions really are just-so stories in important ways,” since “we can always find a plausible adaptive explanation for any observation we make today.”⁸⁵
2. The observation of similarity among living beings—genetic, biochemical, or morphological—is trivial. It would be difficult not to expect of creatures that breathe the same air, drink the same water, and consume the same basic nutrients to have a lesser or greater degree of similarity at all levels of biological organization. The pattern of this

* Extended arguments about the impotency of natural selection are presented in David Berlinski, *The Devil’s Delusion: Atheism and Its Scientific Pretensions* (2008), pp. 193–98; and David Stove, *Darwinian Fairytales: Selfish Genes, Errors of Heredity, and Other Fables of Evolution* (2007), pp. 77–114.

similarity tells us nothing about their purported evolution if we do not assume evolution in the first place.*

3. It is true that populations of species are not immutable: they indeed can and sometimes do change with time, adapting to environmental alterations. People have known about this plasticity of plants and animals for millennia and have utilized it in the process of artificial selection. Any such change, however, happens only to a limited degree, and this change involves a loss (not gain!) of genetic complexity. Genomes are not free to evolve (that is, degrade) endlessly. There are impregnable genetic constraints on the extent of changes that can occur in the genome and can be expressed phenotypically before the organism breaks down.⁸⁶

Despite the glaring contradictions between the Neo-Darwinian Theory and empirical data,⁸⁷ Darwinism in its modern form continues to thrive, being presented to society and taught in schools and universities worldwide as the explanation of how this world has come to exist. The latest editions of biology textbooks and the latest reviews on the state of knowledge in the area of evolutionary synthesis claim that “the basic tenets” of Darwinism have not merely survived but “are as vibrant and robust as they ever were.”⁸⁸ This belief in Darwinian evolution does not seem to be shaken even by a number of recent discoveries which are bizarre and perplexing from the evolutionary perspective. For example, the age of the maternal line of humankind determined by *direct* calibration of a molecular clock appears to be only 6,500 years,⁸⁹ and dinosaur bones that are thought to be 70 million years old contain elastic soft tissue and remnants of blood vessels and cells.^{**} Such discoveries and numerous other disagreements of the theory with the data are simply

* An excellent essay on this topic, “The Evolution of the Long-Necked Giraffe (*Giraffa camelopardalis* L.)—What Do We Really Know?,” has been written by W.-E. Lönnig (<http://www.weloennig.de/Giraffe.pdf>).

** Mary Schweitzer and co-authors reported in a 2005 issue of *Science* that they have discovered well-preserved soft tissue in a 70 million-year-old *Tyrannosaurus rex* leg bone found in Montana. The researchers believe that this elastic soft tissue may contain remnants of blood vessels and cells. The fact that any soft tissue survived without becoming mineralized is attributed to an as-yet-unknown process of fossilization. (M. H. Schweitzer, J. L. Wittmeyer, J. R. Horner, and J. K. Toporski,

ignored,⁹⁰ explained away,⁹¹ or, if that is not possible, labelled “problems” and “biological errors.”⁹²

*7. Kicking against the Pricks**

Israeli biophysicist Lee M. Spetner once remarked that Darwinists routinely postulate historical events that cannot possibly be verified. It seems, in fact, that all the key arguments that would prove their theory valid are based on postulating events that are inherently not observable. Such unique, once-in-history events include but are not limited to the very emergence of life (i.e., the formation of the first prokaryotes); the emergence of eukaryotes; the development of canonical and noncanonical genetic codes; the appearance of photosynthesis and mitochondria; the origin of vascular plants; the beginning of sexual reproduction; the appearance of Hox genes; the Cambrian Explosion of phyla; the radiation of all the major classes and even orders of the animal kingdom; and finally the phenomena of human morals, intelligence, and psychology. Because of their uniqueness, all these events—with their mechanisms and the conditions under which they took place—by default fall outside of the realm of science. This is because, to quote the judge in a recent evolution-versus-intelligent-design court trial in Pennsylvania,

science is limited to empirical, observable and ultimately testable data. Anything that can be observed or measured is amenable to scientific explanation.^{93**}

When it comes to ideas about the ultimate origins of living things

“Soft-tissue Vessels and Cellular Preservation in *Tyrannosaurus rex*,” *Science*, vol. 307, no. 5717 [March 25, 2005], pp. 1952–55).

* Cf. Acts 9:5, 26:14.—ED.

** Ironically, the quoted definition was used as a pretext to block an optional introduction to intelligent design from a high-school biology program on the grounds that the material was unscientific. At the same time, the judge and plaintiffs remained completely blind to the fact that the same definition also places evolutionism in general and Darwinism in particular outside of the field of scientific explanation.

on the planet, one can call them hypothetical, theoretical, probable, possible, or anything else, but that does not change the fact that they can be neither observed nor replicated. Empirical scientists, who are 100 percent committed to a naturalistic explanation of the origins of life in all its diversity, cannot but admit that anything we can now learn by trying to model major evolutionary events in the laboratory or on living species can be only *vaguely comparable* to what might have happened originally. Thus, any “knowledge” or “facts” about origins is necessarily a conjecture if not pure fantasy. In this context, the philosopher Eric Voegelin very pointedly observed:

Biological theorists don't know that Kant has analyzed why one cannot have an immanentist theory of evolution. One can have empirical observation but no general theory of evolution because the sequence of forms is a mystery; it just is there and you cannot explain it by any theory. The world cannot be explained. It is a mythical problem, so you have a strong element of myth in the theory of evolution.^{94*}

We can only study and explain phenomena which are either directly observable or for which a clear mechanism exists. Population genetics—which deals with changes in allele frequencies, gene flow, genetic drift, trait (gene) fixation, and point mutations in natural or laboratory populations of plants and animals—does just that. It has identified and studied in depth the mechanisms regulating how existing genetic diversity is doled out among populations, how it affects their fitness and adaptability to the environment, and how it gets degraded by mutations and lost as isolated populations decline in size. Molecular genetics has done the same by looking at the organization, maintenance, and expression of genetic information within individuals. However, these mechanisms have decidedly nothing to do with the origins of these organisms *per se*. One cannot explain the origin of a car

* Eric Voegelin (1901–1985) was a German philosopher who subsequently immigrated to the United States. He worked in the areas of the philosophy of politics, history, and consciousness.

by investigating how fuel passes from the tank into the combustion chamber and what the molecular structure of the body paint is.

Trying to explain patterns that transcend the boundary of direct observation and experimentation, Darwinism in its current form has become a semi-religious, if not a fully religious, belief. Over the years it has been adjusted and readjusted so many times that it has reached the stage at which any—even diametrically opposed—observed patterns are touted in support of evolution.*

As mathematician and philosopher David Berlinski has noted, the NDT has been made so bendable as to seem to be able “to confront any contingency with unflagging success.”⁹⁵ Indeed, to an evolutionist (in the words of evolutionary biologist Theodosius Dobzhansky), “Nothing in biology makes sense except in the light of evolution.”⁹⁶ The only unfortunate detail is that the emperor of evolution is naked, for it has no materialistic mechanism. Historically, having failed the original falsifiable predictions, the theory has been simply adjusted *ad hoc* to escape refutation as new observations have accumulated. Thus, evolution as a theory has become unfalsifiable at the expense of its scientific status, following in this respect in the footsteps of Marxism and Freudianism.⁹⁷

“Evolution is a fact”: this mantra is repeated often enough to make one wonder if those who repeat it are actually trying to convince themselves.** One can only wonder why this is done despite all the opposing evidence. The attractiveness of Darwinism as an explanatory framework has become so great that its ideas have penetrated virtually

* For example, the universal genetic code once was presented as the best proof of evolution. Today, when it has become clear that other, so-called noncanonical codes exist, this too has been attributed to evolution. See details in R. D. Knight, S. J. Freeland, and L. F. Landweber, “Rewriting the Keyboard: Evolvability of the Genetic Code,” *Nature Reviews, Genetics*, 2001, no. 2, pp. 49–58.

** A lot of such perplexingly self-delusional pomp, where critical questions are answered simply by rewriting them as statements, can be found in Richard Dawkins, *The God Delusion* (2006). For example: “Darwinian evolution proceeds merrily once life has originated. But how does life get started? The origin of life was a chemical event.... However improbable the origin of life might be, we know it happened on Earth because we are here” (2008 ed., pp. 164–65).

every branch of science, including sociology and psychology. An editorial in *The Economist*, covering the triumph of Darwinism, stated:

Of the three great secular faiths born in the nineteenth century—Darwinism, Marxism and Freudianism—the second died swiftly and painfully and the third is slipping peacefully away. But Darwinism goes from strength to strength.⁹⁸

Commenting on the attempt to squeeze human origins into the Procrustean bed of neo-Darwinism, British moral philosopher Mary Midgley has written:

Evolution is the creation myth of our age. By telling us our origins it shapes our views of what we are. It influences not just our thought but also our feelings and actions in a way which goes far beyond its official function as a biological theory.⁹⁹

One could think that this universal propagation of a clearly mythical idea is simply a classical situation between successive scientific paradigm shifts. After all, for a long time scientists believed that adult mice evolve from dirty laundry and wheat placed in a dark storeroom. According to Thomas Kuhn,* contrary to popular conception, typical scientists are not objective and independent thinkers.¹⁰⁰ ** Rather, they are conservative individuals who accept what they have been taught and apply their knowledge to solving the problems that their theories dictate. Perhaps today individual scientists cannot extricate themselves from the prevailing evolutionist worldview (at least not without great personal difficulty and intellectual struggle), and so they continue in-

* Thomas Samuel Kuhn (1922–1996) was an American intellectual who wrote extensively on the history of science and developed several important notions in the philosophy of science. He presented the idea that science does not progress via a linear accumulation of new knowledge, but instead undergoes periodic revolutions which he called “paradigm shifts,” in which the nature of scientific inquiry within a particular field is abruptly transformed.

** On the role of biased modes of thinking in science, see p. 666n above.—ED.

terpreting everything within the established framework, despite the facts. However, considering the surge of excited tribute to Darwin in the mass media in recent years, together with successful attempts to thwart presentation of any opposing ideas in public education, the answer may lie not so much with the attitudes of the scientific community as with the condition of the society at large. As Mary Midgley has very perceptively noted:

In our own culture, where many people officially have no religion at all, and those who have can chop and change, new faiths have much more scope.... They are hungrily seized on by people whose lives lack meaning.¹⁰¹

To make sure that this meaning is never found in anything other than banal materialism, Darwinism is aggressively advertised and pushed down people's throats from the school bench without allowing for any alternatives. The geneticist Richard Lewontin has been extremely forthright about this faith in materialism:

Our willingness to accept scientific claims that are against common sense is the key to an understanding of the real struggle between science and the supernatural. We take the side of science *in spite* of the patent absurdity of some of its constructs ... *in spite* of the tolerance of the scientific community for unsubstantiated just-so stories, because we have a prior commitment, a commitment to materialism.... Moreover, that materialism is absolute, for we cannot allow a Divine Foot in the door.^{102 *}

Putting a Christian perspective on societal attitudes toward "scientific knowledge"—or rather on attempts of the scientific establishment to monopolize the very meaning of life, man, and the world—St. Hilarion Troitsky, Archbishop of Verey, pointedly remarked:

When questions concerning our very life are dealt with, science can-

* See more of this quotation on p. 101 above.—ED.

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not be independent and free. It only gives people the answer they wish to hear.¹⁰³

Apparently, today human society has reached a stage of moral “evolution” at which it wants to hear that it consists of mere intelligent animals, and consequently that it has the right to behave as such. How sad—for, indeed, “man, being in honor, did not understand; he is compared to the mindless cattle, and is become like unto them” (Ps. 48:21).

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Glory be to God for all things!

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APPENDIX FOUR

The Age of the Earth and the Rate of Geological Processes

By Alexander Lalomov, Ph.D.

1. Introduction

FROM the middle of the nineteenth century, the Earth sciences came to be dominated by the opinion that geological processes have occurred at a very slow rate over long geological periods. The first estimations of the age of strata were obtained by dividing the visible thickness of strata by the sedimentation rate of modern analogues. By this method dates of millions of years were obtained, which was later confirmed with radioisotopic analyses.

Many people believe that all the available geological data unequivocally specify an ancient age for the rocks that compose the planet Earth. Hence, the position of evolutionist geology is considered singularly scientific and authentic, and the supporters of evolution try to present the geology of catastrophism and of a young Earth as the vestige of a pre-scientific period in geology.* Does this point of view have a real basis in modern science?

Why, to begin with, must geological age be emphasized when considering evolution? Charles Darwin himself wrote: "The belief that species were immutable productions was almost unavoidable as long as the history of the world was thought to be of short duration."¹ In short, if Darwin's contemporary Charles Lyell had not advocated the

* Although many geologists in recent decades have embraced neocatastrophism, the basic assumption of uniformitarianism, together with the evolutionary-uniformitarian time scale of billions of years, continues to prevail.—ED.

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assumption of an Earth-age much greater than some thousands of years (as had previously been accepted), no one would have even begun to consider biological evolution. Thus, a great Earth-age is a prerequisite for entertaining the possibility of biological evolution. On the other hand, if the young-Earth theory is authenticated, the theory of biological evolution becomes nothing more than a series of speculative, theoretical constructions that have no relation to reality.

Have the conclusions of Charles Lyell been scientifically proved today, after geologists have collected many field and experimental data?

The conventional scientific view expressed today is that the Earth is close to 4.6 billion years old and the universe about 14 billion years old. These estimates are based primarily on the ratio of different radio-isotopes in the Earth's rocks and in meteorites, and on the implications of stellar and cosmological models.

2. Radioisotope Dating

For the purpose of dating rocks, geologists refer to the effect of the radioactive decay of unstable isotopes. What is the nature of this method?

Many chemical elements have two forms: stable and radioactive. The second form exists for a limited time and changes into another (stable) form. The time span during which half of the atoms change is called the "half-life period." The initial isotopes are called "parent," and the final ones "daughter."

There are two main methods of isotope dating. The first one is based on the transformation of the radiogenic isotope carbon-14 into stable nitrogen-14. ^{14}C has a half-life period of about 5,500 years. The carbon-14 method, which is used for dating organic materials, cannot be applied to old samples (older than 50–60 thousand years), so it is not relevant to our subject of old-Earth dating.

The second set of methods is based on metal isotopes, such as uranium-thorium-lead, rubidium-strontium, rhenium-osmium, potassium-argon, and some other systems. These isotopes have very long half-life periods (up to billions of years); therefore, the dating of very old samples appears possible.

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This set of methods is based on the following suppositions:

1. We know the initial value of the “parent” and “daughter” isotopes.
2. The rate of decay is known and constant during the period under consideration.
3. The minerals represent closed systems, i.e., no elements escaped or entered the minerals.

If all three conditions are taken into account and the present-day content of the “parent” and “daughter” isotopes is measured, it is possible to calculate the time that has passed from the formation of the mineral. In most cases, the results of such methods of dating rocks provide extremely long ages—millions or billions of years. Followers of evolutionary theory often invoke these methods as proving the ancient age of the Earth and its strata. But is the “radioisotope age” the same as the real age of the rocks? This depends on the correctness of the assumptions. How do we check the assumptions?

3. Checking Radioisotope Dating

The best and most certain way of checking any instrumental method of measurement is to compare the results with samples whose values are known. For example, in checking scales we should put on them weights of known values. If we put on one gram but the scales show us one ton, we have grounds to think that something is wrong here in spite of guarantees from the producer of the scales.

Hence, for an indubitable check of radioisotope dating we need to test rocks whose age is known for certain. The problem, however, is that there are no such samples of rocks millions and billions of years old—the age of historically registered rocks (for example, the lavas and tuffs of the Vesuvius volcano that fill the ancient Roman cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum) does not exceed a few thousand years. Therefore, there is no possibility of directly checking radiometric dating within the million/billion-year time scale.

What about checking the method with young rocks of known ages? The conventional K-Ar (potassium-argon) dating method was applied to the 1986 dacite flow from the new lava dome at the Mount St. Helens

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volcano. The different mineral concentrates of this 10-year-old rock gave "ages" of from 0.34 to 2.8 million years.² Apparently, the rock contains much more of the daughter isotope Ar than could have appeared as a result of radioactive decay during the span of 10 years. What is the reason for the excess Ar? The K-Ar method presupposes that the gas Ar evaporates from liquid lava (similar to bubbles in an opened bottle of mineral water); therefore, all the Ar that is found in the lava is supposed to be of radiogenic origin. Apparently, it is not a true assumption that there was a zero content of the daughter isotope Ar in the lava when it became solid. One is led to conclude that the initial content of Ar was not zero, but was dependent on the depth at which the minerals were formed. Thus, the real age of the lava is significantly younger, and the "radioisotope age" is a function not of age but of thermodynamic conditions. This fact should be taken into account with K-Ar dating, especially of recent volcanic rocks: samples with millions of years of "radioisotope age" could be tens or hundreds of years old in reality.

So we see that, at the very least, sometimes the assumption of a known initial value of isotopes is not true. This effect of excess Ar in modern volcanic rocks is forgotten, however, when great ages are necessary for the concept of evolution. For example, the dating of a skeleton of *Australopithecus afarensis* (an ancient ape which has been proposed as our ancestor) at about 3.5 million years by means of K-Ar dating of the overlying volcanic tuff layer is supposed to determine the real age of the fossil ape. If we take into account that this age could be overestimated by many orders of magnitude (as in the case of the lava dome of the Mount St. Helens Volcano), the ape could be seen to have lived hundreds or thousands of years ago, and the fanciful nature of the evolutionary conception of man descending from apes will be obvious even for laymen.

Sometimes we can check isotope dating when the real, absolute age is unknown but the relative age is obvious. For example, the Grand Canyon of the Colorado River has a complex of different rocks.* Everyone agrees that the Precambrian metamorphic rocks buried below

* See the figures in Steven A. Austin, ed., *Grand Canyon: Monument to Catastrophe* (1994), pp. 13, 73, 126.

the Canyon floor are the oldest. Most conventional geologists believe that the Precambrian rocks are more than 600 million years old and are probably closer to 2,000 million years old. These rocks contain the diabase sills and Cardenas Basalts. The next rocks to be deposited were the Palaeozoic and Mesozoic sandstones, shales, and limestones that now compose the Canyon walls. Later (from 70 to 40 million years ago according to the conventional view) the Colorado Plateau rose and the present erosion period began; and about 1 million years ago the present depth of the Canyon was reached. The Quaternary lava flows of the Uinkaret Plateau constitute the youngest igneous deposit. They came from a volcano that erupted after the Canyon had acquired its modern appearance, spilling over the north rim of the Canyon and even blocking the Colorado River. This was not more than 5,000–10,000 years ago. Thus, by a comparison of the radioisotope ages of the oldest and youngest formations (Precambrian and Quaternary), we can test the reliability of radioisotope methods.

The diabase sills and Cardenas Basalts were dated by the K-Ar and Rb-Sr (rubidium-strontium) methods at 800–1,370 million years old, which roughly agrees with the supposed age (see Table). Most interesting is the dating of the basaltic rocks of the Uinkaret Plateau. While the K-Ar “age” varies from 0.01 to 117 million years, the Rb-Sr “age” is 1,270–1,390 million years. The “more accurate” isochron age was reported to be 1,340 million years by the Rb-Sr method and 2,600 million years by Pb-Pb (lead-lead) method.³ So, the youngest Grand Canyon rocks (the Uinkaret basalts) and the oldest (the diabase sills) are of the same radioisotope “age.”

Conventional geologists explain these extremely old “ages” of recent lavas by appealing to the origin of the lavas, which were melted from the old magma source material. Hence, the assumption of a zero content of daughter isotopes at the moment of the formation of the studied rock is again incorrect. When the real (or relative) age of the rock is known, a reasonable explanation of the discrepancy will be proposed; however, if the isotope dating is the single source of information about the real age, it will be considered as reliable.

The special isochron method is called upon to eliminate errors of both the unknown initial content of the isotopes and the migration of

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Table. Checking radioisotope dating

Rocks and minerals	Known or supposed age	Radioisotope age (million years)		
		K-Ar	Rb-Sr	Pb-Pb
Grand Canyon, Colorado (Austin, <i>Grand Canyon: Monument to Catastrophe</i>, 1994)				
Quaternary basalts of Uinkaret Plateau	Not more than 10,000 years	0.01–117	1270–1390	2600
Precambrian Cardenas Basalt	More than 600 million years *	791–853	980–1100	
Precambrian diabase sills	More than 600 million years *	914–954	850–1370	
Lava Dome of Mount St. Helens Volcano (Austin, "Excess Argon within Mineral Concentrates from the New Dacite Lava Dome at Mount St. Helens Volcano," 1996)				
Porphyritic dacite	1986	0.35		
Feldspar-glass concentrate	1986	0.34		
Amphibole concentrate	1986	0.9		
Pyroxene concentrate	1986	2.8		
Lava flows of Mount Ngauruhoe, New Zealand (Snelling, "The Cause of Anomalous Potassium-Argon 'Ages' for Recent Andesite Flows at Mount Ngauruhoe," 1998)				
Andesite lava	1949, 1954	0.27–3.5		

* According to the conventional geological time scale

chemical elements in the rock after their formation. But as we see in the case of Uinkaret basalts, this method can result in considerable errors.

Such discrepant data are widespread in geological research. Conventional geologists realize the defects in radioisotope dating. As the Russian geologists Khomichev and Sidoras observe:

The defects of isotopic-radiometric dating are clearly seen in the analysis of available dating of objects whose geological age is reliably established.... Geologists should not blindly trust results that are unfortunately widespread now. Geological supervision and rea-

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soning should manage the process of the interpretation of isotope dating. A critical attitude to the results of isotopic-radiometric research is obligatory.⁴

What is implied by “geological supervision and reasoning”? Potassium-argon isotope dating of the Jurassic rocks of the Caucasus Mountains varies from 18 to 278 million years; the Rb-Sr isochron method provides ages of 18–55 million years,⁵ but the “correct” age of these rocks, 170–205 million, years was determined on the basis of fossils found nearby. The conventional age of the fossils corresponds to the assumptions of evolution.*

A reference cut (stratotype, sample slice) of Riphean strata in the Ural Mountains (the stratigraphic age of these rocks is about 1,500 million years) was dated with the K-Ar method at 400 million years. Because this “age” is too young for evolutionary theory (Riphean rocks contain fossils of unicellular organisms only, but evolutionists affirm that 400 million years ago fishes had already appeared), the K-Ar dating was considered wrong and was explained as the result of a metamorphic event that changed the ratio of the parent and daughter isotopes.⁶ Thus, the concept of evolution is given much more significance than isotope dating.

The well-known Russian geologist Sergei V. Meien writes:

Quite often the radiometric “absolute” time scale is represented as an external scale in relation to a sequence of layers. It is impossible to agree with this ... not only because of the technical imperfections of “absolute” dating, but also because dates are considered only if they do not conflict with the temporal relations of actual geological bodies.⁷

Thus, radioisotope dates are considered “correct” only if they do not conflict with evolutionary paleontological dating or with the principle of superposition (in the case of inviolate strata, the lower layer is

* On how evolutionary assumptions influence the dating of geological strata, see also pp. 371–72n, 523n, 530n above and pp. 878–80 below.—ED.

older than the overlying one). “Wrong” dates, on the other hand, usually fall outside the scope of even technical papers.

4. Possible Reasons for Large Concentrations of Daughter Isotopes

However, even if radioisotope dating very often looks like a “random-number generator,” in which anyone can find suitable data, the total quantity of daughter isotopes is too large for rocks which, according to the Biblical chronology, appeared only thousands of years ago—too large, that is, if one assumes (1) that there was a zero content of these daughter isotopes in the beginning, and (2) that the decay rates have been constant. An examination of these two assumptions can help us to explain the conflict between the Bible and the conventional geological chronology.

Constancy of the decay rates

Most scientists believe that decay rates did not change through the ages, in spite of the impossibility of knowing this for certain.

It is hypothesized by the RATE* group that at some time in the past much higher rates of radioisotope decay have occurred, leading to the production of large quantities of daughter products in a short period of time. It has been suggested that these increased decay rates may have been associated with the rock-forming processes on the early Earth, and are possibly one of the results of God’s judgment upon man following Creation.⁸

In studying the diffusion of helium (He) that had been produced through nuclear decay in mineral zircon, the RATE scientists determined helium diffusion rates through minerals under various conditions. Their data indicated that the amount of helium in rocks today would not be as high as it is if the helium had been produced by nuclear decay over millions of years. If, on the other hand, the helium had been produced within the last several thousand years, it would be

* RATE is an acronym applied to a research project investigating radioisotope dating, sponsored by the Institute for Creation Research and the Creation Research Society. It stands for Radioisotopes and the Age of The Earth.—ED.

expected to be retained in the rocks as observed. The high retention of helium suggests to us and many other creationists that the helium has not had time to diffuse out of the zircons—that accelerated nuclear decay produced over a billion years worth of helium only thousands of years ago. Such accelerated decay could reduce the radiometric time scale from gigayears down to months.

The RATE group also conducted a literature search for evidence and models of accelerated nuclear decay and adapted it to a creationist worldview when appropriate. They found increasing evidence that nuclear decay can vary radically in response to changes in cosmological “constants” and environmental effects. They associated other likely effects with Biblical statements and observational data.

When the RATE group studied isochron discordance, they found that, although significant discordance exists between the K-Ar, Rb-Sr, Sm-Nd, and Pb-Pb radioisotope methods, each method appears to yield concordant “ages” internally between whole rocks and minerals. It is argued, therefore, that only changing radioisotope decay rates in the past could account for these discordant isochron “ages” for the same geologic event.

The Ukrainian physicist Olkhovsky⁹ has observed that values of 10–20 billion years for the age of the universe and of 5–10 billion years for the age of the Earth have been obtained by the nuclear-chronometry method with reference to long-living α (alpha)- or β (beta)-radioactive nuclei-chronometers, considering the decay of radioactive nuclei only from their ground states. It is known, however, that during the nucleo-synthesis processes not only the ground states but also the excited states of nuclei-chronometers are being formed. From the excited states these radioactive nuclei are decaying by several (α -, β -, γ [gamma]- etc) channels, and the half-life periods of any of them are by many orders of magnitude less than billions of years (up to 10^{-13} – 10^{-9} sec). Therefore, consideration of only the ground states of radioactive nuclei in the nuclear-chronometry method gives only the upper limits of all possible measurements, which can be very far from the reality. More correct estimations of the age of the universe and the Earth (after the end of the formation of nuclei-chronometers) can perfectly well give more modest values (not even more than

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around 10,000 years) instead of the usually cited values of several billion years.

The initial content of parent and daughter isotopes

When a parent isotope decays into a daughter isotope, the initial concentration of the daughter isotope may affect the estimate of time since the process started. As we see in dating the lava dome at the Mount St. Helens Volcano and the Uinkaret basalts, the assumption of a zero content of the daughter isotope at the time of the solidification of the rock is not true, so the age is overestimated by many orders of magnitude.

Snelling¹⁰ reported on obtained K-Ar model ages for recent (less than 60-year-old) andesites collected from Mount Ngauruhoe in New Zealand.* Dates younger than 0.27 to 3.5 million years could not be obtained, even from splits of the same samples from the same flow, the explanation being variations in the radiogenic ^{40}Ar content in excess of the "zero-age" amount. It was concluded that this excess ^{40}Ar had been inherited by these magmas during their genesis in the upper mantle.

From these studies it may be possible to infer how mixing occurs in a magma chamber, and to demonstrate that the radioisotopic composition of crustal rock may reflect characteristics of the magma sources in the mantle rather than the ages of the intrusion.

Very often the original isotopic content of the rock is determined according to the evolutionary model of the formation of the solar system and the Earth, which allegedly condensed from a primordial cloud. Hence, meteorites and cosmic dust are seen as examples of the makeup of the Earth's initial material. The difference in the isotopic content of meteorites and Earth rocks is considered to be the result of radioisotopic decay. For example, the method of radioisotope dating proposed by Holmes and Houtermans is based on the assumption that any lead (Pb) consists of the sum of the radiogenic and original isotopes. At the same time, the content of the original lead in Earth rocks

* These andesites were formed from lava flows at Mount Ngauruhoe, which is an active volcano.—ED.

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is believed to be equal to the lead content of iron meteorites—the least radioactive rock of the solar system.¹¹ Thus, the main assumption of the dating method is based on the evolutionary model. Therefore, it is no wonder that the dating does not contradict the concept of evolution.

If we propose that the solar system and the Earth are not of naturalistic origin, but were suddenly created with their present-day ratio of isotopes, any isotope dating would lose meaning. Thus, the basis of old-Earth dating is rooted in the fields of philosophy and worldview.

Do other geological data correspond to isotope dating?

5. The Rate of Sedimentation Processes

Radioisotope dating provides very old ages of geological strata, measured in millions and billions of years. Very often it contradicts sedimentological data.

There are many facts about the speeds of sedimentation and other features of the deposition process in the monograph of the Russian geologist Sergei I. Romanovsky, *Physical Sedimentology*.¹² He writes that geologists try to resolve the controversy between “absolute dating” and sedimentological data with the hypothesis of latent gaps in sedimentation which did not make marks in the sedimentary sequence:

Even in monotonous limestone thickness there are latent gaps in sedimentation (diastremes). A significant part of the time responsible for the formation of the sequence belongs to these gaps. However, having no opportunity to give even approximate estimates of time for these gaps of sedimentation, geologists are compelled to shut their eyes to this problem.¹³

In oceans, the significant part of time belongs to gaps in sedimentation.... Erosion cannot be considered as the main reason for the incompleteness of the sequence, though other reasons cannot be determined either. Submarine geologists have thought up a successful detour around this difficult problem, having called these time gaps “non-sedimentation periods.” Thus the geological record ...

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fixes short intervals of activity divided by considerably longer intervals of inactivity.¹⁴

Thus, the real time represented in the geological record, which can be the object of scientific research, is an insignificant part of the age interval attributed to the strata by a geochronological time scale. All the rest of the time consists of gaps in sedimentation. Moreover, sometimes geological evidence for the gaps is completely absent.

What is the quantitative estimate of the ratio of periods of gaps to periods of deposition? Romanovsky writes:

Let a series correspond with ... 3–3.5 million years. The series includes 1,000 elementary cycles of turbidites.... If the formation of one cycle takes 20–30 hours, the entire series is formed in 30–40 months. The pure time of sedimentation is only 0.0001% of the stratigraphical time for the formation of the series. It follows that the entire series was deposited, geologically speaking, instantly.¹⁵

The opinion of Romanovsky is corroborated by another well-known Russian geologist, the above-mentioned Sergei Meien:

Because of the wide development of latent gaps,... in conditions of shallow seas, for example, quite often an insignificant part of the total time of sedimentation (0.01–0.001%) is documented.... Huge latent gaps are also marked in deep-water ocean deposits.¹⁶

In short, the real features of sedimentary strata which are visible and available for research constitute evidence of brief and intensive deposition. Significant gaps in sedimentation, which exceed the duration of deposition by thousands and millions of times, are in a category of the invisible and intangible, and are beyond the limits of scientific research.

Using the inferred ratio of hiatuses to periods of deposition, we obtain the real time of sedimentation: the age of the Earth as documented in sedimentary layers. Inasmuch as the time of sedimentation is approximately one millionth (0.0001%) of the time represented by

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the strata according to the uniformitarian time scale, we may infer that the real age is about one millionth of the uniformitarian age (i.e., a few thousand years). This is precisely what the Biblical chronology and young-Earth catastrophists affirm.

On the one hand, diligent and qualified researchers (Meien and Romanovsky being undoubtedly among of them) mark the fast, catastrophic character of observable sequences of sedimentary rocks. On the other hand, the duration of strata deposition according to the uniformitarian geological time scale is measured in many millions of years. Being strict adherents to an ancient age for the Earth and observing this discrepancy, modern geologists are compelled to resort to hypotheses about the existence of huge “non-sedimentation periods.” But how can something invisible and not observable, which has no marks in the geological record, be the object of scientific research?

There are numerous examples of the discrepancy between the actual sedimentation duration of deposition and the stratigraphic “age” based on radioisotope dating. Based on the analysis of tidal cycles, Kulyamin and Smirnov established that the pure deposition period of Cambrian-Ordovician sandstones in the Baltic region is surprisingly short (approximately 170 days), whereas the stratigraphic time interval of the sequence is believed to be 20–30 million years.¹⁷ Study of analogous sediments in the adjoining St. Petersburg district also showed that the pure deposition time of the formation did not exceed 100–200 years.¹⁸ The reconstruction of the paleohydraulic conditions of Jurassic conglomerates in the Crimean Peninsula (Black Sea) leads to the conclusion that the 800-meter sequence was deposited during a time interval not longer than 24 months.¹⁹

It is possible to continue to list such examples, but even these are enough to show that sedimentary data very often contradict radioisotopic “age.”

6. The Rate of Formation of Mineral Resources

The basic applied task of geology is prospecting for mineral deposits; therefore, many theoretical constructions are most important from the perspective of their advantage for prospecting purposes. The au-

thentic reconstruction of geological history (and the definition of the velocities of geological processes in particular) allows the construction of a correct prospecting technique. Conversely, an incorrect representation of the history of the Earth can entail negative economic consequences.

Let us consider the rate of the formation of various types of mineral deposits in light of the latest scientific data.

Placer deposits

Placer mineral deposits are concentrations of heavy minerals (gold, platinum, zircon, minerals of titanium, diamonds, etc.) in modern sediments and consolidated sedimentary rocks. Sometimes it is possible to calculate the time of the formation of the deposits on the basis of the rate of modern processes (the main principle of the modern geological method is "The present is key to the past"). This research demonstrates that the necessary time for the formation of the coastal marine placers (concentrations of heavy minerals in sedimentary rocks) of northeastern Asia is a few thousand years, which contradicts the evolutionary time scale but agrees with a post-Flood duration according to creationist dating.

In some cases there is an opportunity to study the quantity parameters of the placer-forming processes and to estimate the time of the placer's formation. Such work was done for the Val'kumei submarine tin placer.

The placer is located in the coastal zone of Chaun Bay—a shallow gulf of the East Siberian Sea, closed from three sides. The source of tin is confined to the Val'kumei granite intrusion, which is taking place directly in a coastal zone. According to the evolutionary time scale, the exposure of the granites on the surface and the erosion of the tin veins began in Miocene times (about 25 million years ago), and modern marine environments appeared about 5 million years ago. Knowing the volume of tin in the deposit, the rate of erosion and the content of tin within the source, and also making a correction for the crushing of particles and the dispersion of part of the metal from the zone of the placer (these losses are insignificant, as the reservoir has weak wave dynamics and practically a closed contour), we can calculate the time

necessary for the formation of the placer. Generally, this task is similar to defining the time needed to fill a pool, if the pool's volume and the flow-rate of water into the pool are known.

The calculations have shown that, according to modern parameters, the top (coastal submarine) part of the placer could have been generated in 2–4 thousand years rather than 5 million.²⁰ The specification of the data, entered into account, can entail some change in the received sizes, but the distinction (by three orders of magnitude) between the real and the stratigraphic age of the placer can hardly be overcome. The assumption that during the formation of the placer the velocity of the processes or the content of the tin in the source could have varied considerably does not find confirmation in actual geological material.²¹

Iron-manganese nodules (IMN)

At the bottom of modern seas and oceans there are rounded balls or crusts composed of oxides of iron, manganese, and many other metals. Now the extraction of these minerals has only begun, but their overall volume is huge, and it is supposed that in the future IMN will have a considerable role in the economy of our planet.

The determination of the rate of IMN formation is interesting not only with regard to theoretical positions, but also from the practical point of view: the economic estimation depends on the rate of growth of the nodules. How it is possible to measure the velocity of their formation?

Frequently IMN are formed on fragments of shells, teeth of sharks, and microscopic particles of meteoric substance: these are the centers (nucleuses) on which layers of oxides and hydroxides of metals, contained in sea water, begin to accrue. If we determine the age of the nucleus of a nodule, and then divide the thickness into this age, we can estimate the rate of growth of the nodule (in cases where this process occurs continuously rather than at regular intervals).

Originally, estimations of the growth rate of IMN were made on the basis of the application of the isotope ^{224}Ra , which was contained in fragments of shells inside the nodules. Using this method, a growth rate of about 1 mm in 1,000 years (0.001 mm per year) to 1 mm per

100,000 years was obtained.²² The application of paleontological data (the dating of teeth of sharks and other fossils contained in the nucleuses of the nodules) has given comparable results, as the data of the same radiometric analyses underlie the dating of fossils.

At the same time, due to rare and unique finds, the opportunity has arisen to measure the growth rates of the nodules not indirectly (through paleontological radiometric dating), but directly: during the study of bottom sediments nodules were found that had formed on splinters of artillery shells from the First and Second World Wars.²³ In these cases the growth rate was measured from 0.6 up to 1 mm per one year, that is, 3–5 orders of magnitude higher than the rate received by the indirect route.

Research by Russian geologists revealed nodules that had grown on a screw made of stainless steel or on a cap of a bottle of the Finnish beer "Karjala."²⁴

All these data allow the determination of the real growth rate and correspondingly the age of IMN. Since the maximum size of the nodules usually does not exceed 30 cm in diameter, the real age is not more than few thousand years.

In the artificial reservoirs of Siberia the registered rate of IMN growth is not less than 1.7–1.8 mm per year; in the lakes of the Karelian Isthmus the rate is up to 5 mm per year. In laboratory experiments, iron bacteria form the micronodules during a few weeks.²⁵

It is quite probable that the growth rate of IMN is not uniform everywhere in the world's oceans: in each case it depends on the basic nodule-forming components in the water above the floor or within the deposit, and also on the electrochemical and, probably, biological properties of the surfaces on which the deposition of oxides of iron and manganese occur. But thus it is necessary to note that the direct methods of measurement specify significant growth rates; indirect radiometric and paleontological methods essentially underestimated these parameters, which occurred owing to an overestimate of the age of the nodules.

This implies that the "absolute" geochronological scale constructed on radioisotope dating and associated paleontological data does not reflect the real age of the deposits and overestimates it by a few orders of

magnitude. It results not only in a wrong reconstruction of the geological history of our planet, but also in mistakes in the economic estimation of deposits: the new data allow us to assume that the deposits of IMN are dynamic and renewable resources, which can be formed or restored during a short time. The high rate of IMN formations and their limited distribution testify to the youth of these formations (no more than several thousand years) on the ocean floor.

Petrol and gas

There is no need to explain the importance of issues related to petroleum. Both policies and economies in the second half of the twentieth and the beginning of the twenty-first century are defined by this word. As the technology of controlled nuclear fusion (thermonuclear synthesis) is now only in the developmental stage (in the opinion of Zhores Alferov, winner of the Nobel Prize in physics, industrial thermonuclear power stations could appear not earlier than in the middle of the century), and other alternative methods for energy production hardly play an essential role in the power balance, hydrocarbons will remain the main source of energy for our civilization for many years to come. In this light, it is clear that the question of the velocity of oil generation goes far beyond the limits of simple scientific curiosity.

The “organic” theory of the origin of petroleum now prevails. According to this point of view, petroleum and gas have a biogenic origin. They were formed from the remains of dead organisms which were subsumed through geological processes into Earth’s crust. Subsequently, the formed fluid oil and gas moved and collected in geological structures called traps. According to this view, the formation of hydrocarbon deposits requires a time interval of millions of years or more.

The first problem with the theory of “ancient hydrocarbon deposits” is the presence of strata pressure in hydrocarbon-bearing deposits. In real conditions, practically all sedimentary rocks have porosity and fissuring. It is possible to assume that, over millions of years, even with the most insignificant allowance for the factor of filtration, hydrocarbon fluid and gas should have moved to overlying formations with smaller pressure by filtration. In natural conditions, oil and gas usually

are under high pressure right up to their intensive flowing from wells. This is an argument for the young age of hydrocarbon deposits.

Experts in petrol prospecting specify the impossibility of the creation of an effective search model under the assumption of the long and slow generation of oil over millions of years.²⁶ In their opinion, as long as we base models on the standard millions-of-years stratigraphic geochronological scale, we will search for petroleum by means of a random grid of wells. The creation of an effective model of hydrocarbon formation is possible only on the basis of the assumption of its fast and recent origin.

In recent years, facts have been amassed which put in doubt the great age of petroleum deposits. First of all, there are numerous examples of a high rate of natural renewal of stocks of petroleum and gas, in places where deposits have been exploited over the last 10–50 years.²⁷ Secondly, there is the presence in oil of the radioactive isotope ^{14}C , which could not have been retained in detectable quantities longer than 60,000 years.²⁸

If the formation of petroleum and gas deposits really occurred over tens or hundreds of millions of years, it would be impossible to notice the natural renewal of the extracted stocks during two or three decades, as takes place in practice. On the contrary, the fact of the increase of these stocks, and also the detection in the oil of short-lived cosmogenic isotopes, is evidence that the hydrocarbon deposits have begun to be formed rather recently (no more than 40,000 years ago), and continue to be formed now.

7. Paleontology and Stratigraphy

The theory of evolution is so closely bound with paleontology and stratigraphy that quite often these disciplines support each other without any external criteria. Sometimes it is extremely difficult to understand: either the theory of evolution is based on the sequence of fossils fixed in the geological record, or the geological layers are dated on the basis of an evolutionary biostratigraphic time scale. Thus, it is necessary to define what is primary in science, and to what it testifies.

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What does modern stratigraphy tell us? The geologist Sergei Meien comments:

Because of the latent gaps, there is a phenomenon of “stratigraphical condensation,” when one layer contains fossils of different stages.²⁹

Comparison of local scales ... reveals identical events located in an identical sequence. The events forming ... different sequences are rejected.³⁰

Depending on what stratigraphic features we involve in the analysis, we can find both convertibility and irreversibility in any sequence of events.³¹

Numerous cases are known when dating by means of ammonites has led to such contradictions relative to other groups of fossils that they were neglected completely.... Similar sins are behind every single large stratigraphic group of organisms.³²

Thus, the paleontological data (as with “absolute” dating, as noted above) are taken into consideration only if they correspond to the theory of biological evolution or the principle of superposition. The data that contradict these criteria are ignored.

Many creation geologists believe there is an order to the fossils in the sedimentary sequence, but in contrast to evolutionists they attribute such distribution of fossils mainly to ecological factors. While opponents have made the accusation that such arguments are unscientific, modern stratigraphy has established that, in the words of Meien,

moments of occurrence and the disappearances of taxons in the history of the Earth are essentially imperceptible.... In fact, all paleontologically established borders cannot therefore be considered as “evolutionary.” Their paleontological substantiation is in fact ecological.³³

In light of all of the above, the next conclusion is very logical:

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It is especially surprising that its union with biology has not prevented stratigraphy from developing.... This union is the reason for the chaos in many stratigraphic conclusions, for, when the debatable rules of biology have been transferred to stratigraphy, they have usually been transformed into doctrines.³⁴

We have no right to found the entire methodology of stratigraphy on such a shaky basis as the theory of evolution.³⁵

It is remarkable that these words belong not to a creationist but to a well-known Russian uniformitarian geologist. Thus, since evolution without stratigraphy is an unscientific fiction, at present it is possible to conclude that the theory of evolution is based on an ideological foundation to an extreme degree.

In continuing to develop scientific ideas, the geologists Meien and Romanovsky go further and recognize the necessity to acknowledge (as a minimum) a right of existence to the creation-catastrophic approach in geology. Based on obvious evidence for extremely fast sedimentation in the geological history of the Earth, Romanovsky poses a question:

Does this mean the revival of the long-forgotten scientific theory of geological catastrophism? It is impossible to revive it in its previous form, but in any case we should recognize that the theory has a reasonable foundation.³⁶

Professor Meien expresses his point of view even more categorically:

However, it is surprising but necessary to recognize that the creation-catastrophic doctrine* did an absolutely helpful service for stratigraphy. It is difficult to imagine the way of development of stratigraphy if from the very beginning it had been based on Darwin's transformism.³⁷

* I.e., the creation-catastrophe model that prevailed before the general acceptance of the evolutionary-uniformitarian model of Darwin and Lyell.—ED.

Thus, conscientious investigation of sedimentary strata leads the researcher to recognize a foundation for a catastrophic history and young age of the Earth. Despite the fact that neither Meien nor Romanovsky reject the uniformitarian doctrine of an old Earth, their particular conclusions contradict their foundational assumptions.

8. Conclusion

Summarizing all of the above, it is possible to say:

1. studies of the velocity of sedimentation and of the formation of mineral deposits provide evidence for a very fast (incompatible with millions and billions of years) deposition of layers;
2. “absolute” radioisotope dating does not give us authentic results;
3. old-age dating of the Earth and the universe is based on the philosophical assumptions of the concept of evolution.

Thus, numerous data on the velocity of the formation of sedimentary strata and mineral deposits indicate the discrepancy between the existing standard geochronological scale and the real results of the study of natural objects. Therefore, not only do we see a distorted picture of the past of our planet, but, in being tied to erroneous conclusions about the prevalence in the past of slow geological processes, the science of mineral deposits does not always have adequate models for carrying out its basic tasks.

The principles on which the modern stratigraphic scale was created, as has been shown by experimental research in sedimentology,³⁸ require essential reconsideration. They no longer answer a modern level of geological knowledge and are atavisms, introduced from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries. This conclusion follows both from the numerous sedimentological facts as a whole and from the science of mineral deposits in particular. The prevailing long-ages geochronological scale is closely connected with the evolutionary hypothesis concerning the origin of the universe, the solar system, and the life and biological variety on our planet. If the time scale is shortened, the hypothesis of evolution will lose a major factor: the millions

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and billions of years that are so necessary for spontaneous transformations “from a molecule of hydrogen up to a man” to appear plausible.

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Suggested Resources

By the editor

Bibliographical information on all the materials listed below can be found in the bibliography. In cases where an article or book is available both in printed form and online, references to the printed version are listed below, while references to both versions appear in the bibliography. In cases where an article is available only online, references to the online version are to be found both below and in the bibliography.

I. PATRISTIC SOURCES

WHEN WRITING on the Patristic understanding of Genesis and creation, Fr. Seraphim had to translate many Patristic sources from existing Russian translations. Since his repose in 1982, several of these sources have been published in English translation, including the works on Genesis by Sts. Ephraim the Syrian and John Chrysostom. English-speaking disciples of the Holy Fathers now have at their disposal a wealth of material by which to deepen their understanding of the origin of man and the universe.

As initial reading, we would recommend the following Orthodox Patristic commentaries on Genesis, all of which are now available in English:

1. *Hexaemeron* by St. Basil the Great (FC, vol. 46; and NPNF, 2nd series, vol. 8);
2. *Hexaemeron* by St. Ambrose of Milan (FC, vol. 42; and NPNF, 2nd series, vol. 10);
3. *Commentary on Genesis* by St. Ephraim the Syrian (FC, vol. 91); and
4. *Homilies on Genesis* by St. John Chrysostom (FC, vols. 74, 82, 87).

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The continuation of St. Basil's *Hexaemeron*, entitled *On the Origin of Man*, has also been published in English translation since Fr. Seraphim's repose, and can be found in *St. Basil the Great: On the Human Condition* (St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, Popular Patristics Series, vol. 30, 2005). This work treats not only the creation of man, but also the condition of man and the world prior to the primordial fall.

Among other Patristic writings related to Genesis which have been published in English translation following Fr. Seraphim's repose, we cite the following as being especially pertinent:

1. *Genesis 1–11*, Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture: Old Testament, vol. 1 (2001). A valuable contribution to the study of Patristic teaching on Genesis, this volume presents a verse-by-verse commentary on the first eleven chapters of Genesis, quoting passages of various Christian writings from the first ten centuries after Christ. Edited by an Orthodox priest and Patristic scholar, Fr. Andrew Louth, under the general editorship of Thomas C. Oden, the book quotes from many authors who are saints of the Orthodox Church, others who are respected Church writers but not venerated as saints, and yet others whose teachings have been condemned as heretical by the Church. (The Orthodox reader, of course, will do well to note these distinctions.) In the book's introduction, the editors acknowledge their debt of gratitude to the “massive labors” of Fr. Seraphim Rose in presenting the Patristic interpretation of Genesis, since his work directed them to Patristic passages they “otherwise would have bypassed” (p. lii).

2. St. John Chrysostom, *Eight Sermons on the Book of Genesis* (2004). This short work comprises the homilies that St. John Chrysostom gave on Genesis during Great Lent in A.D. 386. (The larger series of sixty-seven homilies—the *Homilies on Genesis* mentioned above—was delivered later, in 388 or 389.)

3. *Questions on Genesis* by Blessed Theodoret, in *Theodoret of Cyrus: The Questions on the Octateuch*, vol. 1 (2007). This work provides detailed answers to many questions related to the Genesis narrative.

4. *The Homilies* of St. Gregory Palamas (2009). Homilies 16 and

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31 are of special interest to those studying the Patristic interpretation of Genesis, since they deal at length with the entrance of death (both spiritual and bodily) that resulted from the fall of man, and show the inextricable connection between this and the redemption of the world through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

5. *On the Cosmic Mystery of Jesus Christ: Selected Writings from St. Maximus the Confessor* (St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, Popular Patristics Series, vol. 25, 2003). This selection of chapters from St. Maximus' *Ambigua*, *Ad Thalassium*, and *Opuscula* contains reflections on the beginning and end of all things, as well as on the consequences of the fall of man.

6. St. John Chrysostom, *On Virginity*, in *On Virginity, Against Remarriage* (1983). St. Chrysostom here provides further illumination on the state of mankind before the fall.

Many more Patristic writings related to Genesis, published both before and after Fr. Seraphim's repose, are listed in the bibliography of the present book, where the names of saints of the Church are highlighted in boldface type. Those wishing to undertake further study of the Patristic sources may also refer to the bibliography in *Genesis 1–11*: the aforementioned first volume of the Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture series.

One important Patristic source related to Genesis was translated and compiled by Fr. Seraphim himself: *The First-Created Man* by St. Symeon the New Theologian (originally published in 1979 under the title *The Sin of Adam and Our Redemption*). In his endeavor to confirm his contemporaries in the true teaching on the beginning and final aim of human existence, Fr. Seraphim included those writings of St. Symeon which dealt with the state of Adam in Paradise, his transgression, the redemption of mankind through Jesus Christ, and the future transfiguration of the world. As Fr. Seraphim pointed out in his introduction:

Orthodox Christians today all too often have rather vague notions of the future age of blessedness which is the goal of our Christian life on earth; various chiliastic heresies and ideas, promising some kind

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of “paradise on earth,” are very much in the air today and exert much influence, often unconsciously, on Christians who are not fully aware of their Faith and its goal. Bound up with this, and often largely to blame for it, is a poor knowledge of the *beginnings of man* and the universe—the creation, the first-created world, Adam and his fall; the agnostic and atheistic philosophies of beginnings so common today have done much to confuse in this regard even well-meaning Orthodox Christians.

The authentic Orthodox Patristic view of man’s beginning and end is thus sorely needed to put in order the disarray of private opinions about these matters. St. Symeon’s Homilies are one of the primary sources of this view.

And yet, St. Symeon speaks with such boldness and assurance on these subjects that one may stop and ask: how does he know all this? We have become used to a “knowledge” based on speculation and guesses, particularly on subjects as remote from ordinary experience as the first-created world and the future age. Today’s scientists make their speculations on the beginnings of man and the universe based on uniformitarian projections from their present fragmentary discoveries and imperfect knowledge; today’s “theologians” (even many who are Orthodox) usually make just as speculative projections based on their imperfect reading of the book of Genesis and perhaps some Holy Fathers or some poorly assimilated scientific information. But this is all the sphere of imperfect human wisdom, a mixture of knowledge and ignorance; how, then, does St. Symeon give us the teaching which is authentically Christian, and not a mere result of speculation and guessing?

St. Symeon speaks from divine revelation. First, his basis is always scriptural—but we are astonished to see a depth of meaning in his use of scriptural quotations which we would never have seen by ourselves. And this is because, second, he speaks *from personal experience*.

After relating how Orthodox Holy Fathers such as St. Symeon were able to speak about the beginning and end of all things through prophetic Divine vision, Fr. Seraphim goes on:

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St. Symeon is one of the Church’s great seers of these treasures of faith; he speaks of them with such certainty precisely because he has seen them. His profound homilies on Adam and the future age are of special value to Orthodox Christians because they give the theological foundation of the Christian life of struggle: the original state of man from which Adam fell tells us of our deepest nature, of which our present fallen nature is a corruption that is to be overcome; and the future state of blessedness is the goal to which our Christian struggle is aimed, and to which we can attain, by God’s grace, even despite our fallen state.

Fr. Seraphim’s translation of St. Symeon’s homilies might be regarded as a companion volume to the present book.*

Together with the primary Patristic sources, we recommend the valuable study *Irenaeus on Creation: The Cosmic Christ and the Saga of Redemption* by Hieromonk Irenaeus (M. C. Steenberg) (2008). In a detailed, penetrating manner, this book explores the second-century teaching of St. Irenaeus of Lyons on creation and on the first eleven chapters of Genesis. The author reflects on St. Irenaeus’ protology as an intrinsic part of his Christocentric vision, and at the same time discusses the teaching on creation of even earlier Fathers, such as St. Justin Martyr and St. Theophilus of Antioch.

For an overview of the Orthodox theology of creation, we recommend *Orthodox Dogmatic Theology* by Protopresbyter Michael Pomazansky (chapter 3, “God and the Creation”), and *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church* by Vladimir Lossky (chapter 5, “Created Being,” and chapter 6, “Image and Likeness”). Both these books are noted for their faithful presentation of Patristic teaching.

* Fr. Seraphim translated and made selections from the 1890–1892 Russian edition of St. Symeon’s homilies, which in turn had been translated by St. Theophan the Recluse from the Greek edition of 1790. The latter is a compilation of passages by St. Symeon, primarily from his *Ethical Discourses* and *Catechetical Discourses*, sorted according to various themes and translated into eighteenth-century Greek by Hieromonk Dionysios Zagoraios. Both the *Ethical Discourses* and *Catechetical Discourses* are now available in their entirety in the English language (see the bibliography).

II. SCIENTIFIC SOURCES

The materials listed in this section are the work of scientists and thinkers associated with the intelligent design (ID) and creation science movements,* as well as Orthodox Christian scientists and thinkers who adhere to the Scriptural-Patristic view of origins.

The most helpful intelligent design websites are those of the Access Research Network (www.arn.org) and the Discovery Institute (www.discovery.org). Among the many creation science websites, those of Creation Ministries International (www.creation.com) and the Institute for Creation Research (www.icr.org) have the best selection of archival and up-to-date material. Many of the books and DVDs listed in this section are available from the above websites. On Russian websites, see pp. 894, 907–8 below.

1. Critiques of Biological Evolutionism

1. *Biological Evolutionism* by Constantine Cavarnos (2nd edition, 1987). This book by a contemporary Greek Orthodox thinker places evolutionism in its historical context and includes a refutation of it by the twentieth-century luminary St. Nectarios of Pentapolis.

2. *Unlocking the Mystery of Life* (DVD, 2002). This hour-long film is highly recommended as an introduction to the scientific aspect of the creation/evolution debate. It chronicles the beginning of the ID movement, and also tells the revealing story of how Dr. Dean H. Kenyon of San Francisco State University—one of the world's leading chemical evolution theorists and co-author of a best-selling textbook on the chemical origin of life—came to disbelieve in evolutionary theory through an honest examination of mounting evidence from molecular genetics. With the help of computer animation, the film explores

* The ID movement, as we have noted, limits its position to stating that living things show the empirical marks of intelligent design, while creation science takes the broader position of upholding the Biblical understanding of creation and history, including the age of the earth. See the editor's preface, pp. 47–49, 54–60, 59n, 62, 72–75, 73n above.

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the amazing inner workings of the living cell, and demonstrates unmistakable evidence of intelligent design in the densely packed and elaborately detailed assembly of information in the DNA molecule. It is truly awe-inspiring to contemplate in this way the wondrous biological machines and information processing systems that God has created within living creatures.

3. *Not by Chance! Shattering the Modern Theory of Evolution* by Lee Spetner (1997). This important work by an Israeli biophysicist presents powerful evidence against evolutionism from the hard science of molecular genetics. Dr. Spetner demonstrates that, contrary to neo-Darwinian claims, mutations acting together with natural selection cannot produce a man from a molecule over any length of time, since mutations do not increase functional genetic information but rather result in a loss of such information. He then goes on to posit that the variations which do occur within each kind of organism are the result of “triggers” or “cues” which a “biological Engineer” (i.e., God) built into organisms to enable them to adapt to different environments.

4. *Genetic Entropy & the Mystery of the Genome* by J. C. Sanford (3rd edition, 2008). Dr. Sanford, professor of plant genetics at Cornell University, is one of the most accomplished geneticists in the world. His book takes up where Dr. Spetner’s leaves off. He shows that, not only is the neo-Darwinian mechanism of mutation and selection unable to create functional genetic information, but it is unable to stop the net loss of information. Having given evolutionary theory every benefit of the doubt in examining the genetic evidence, Sanford writes (p. 139):

We have reviewed compelling evidence that, even when ignoring deleterious mutations, mutation/selection cannot create a single gene within the human evolutionary time scale. When deleterious mutations are factored back in, we see that mutation/selection cannot create a single gene, *ever*. This is overwhelming evidence against the Primary Axiom [of neo-Darwinian theory]. *In my opinion, this constitutes what is essentially a formal proof that the Primary Axiom is false.*

By analyzing the rate of human genetic decline due to mutations,

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Dr. Sanford not only refutes evolutionary theory, but also provides powerful evidence for the Bible's time scale of human history. His book comes highly recommended by an Orthodox Christian doctor of molecular biology, Anna Radovic, who presented his findings at the "Orthodox Interpretation of the Creation of the World and Contemporary Science" conference in Moscow in 2008. Also of interest is the film *The Mystery of Our Declining Genes* (2009), in which Dr. Sanford summarizes the contents of his book and points to avenues of further research.

5. *Signature in the Cell: DNA and the Evidence for Intelligent Design* by Stephen C. Meyer (2009). This book by a leading ID theorist contains a thoroughgoing examination of how the immensely complex and exquisitely functional chemical structure of DNA might have originated. As the author points out (p. 14):

When Watson and Crick discovered [in 1953] the structure and information properties of DNA, they did indeed solve one mystery, namely, the secret of how the cell stores and transmits hereditary information. But they uncovered another mystery that remains with us to this day. This is the DNA enigma—the mystery of the origin of the information needed to build the first living organism.

Dr. Meyer points out the flaws in each of the competing naturalistic explanations for the origin of biological information that have been advanced thus far, and shows why intelligent design offers the best solution. Having won the praise of a number of professors of science and philosophy, *Signature in the Cell* was included among Britain's *Times Literary Supplement Books of the Year* for 2009. It comes recommended here by an Orthodox Christian doctor of zoology, Yuri Zharikov (see appendix 3). Also recommended is a follow-up book edited by David Klinghoffer, *Signature of Controversy*, which gathers essays written by scientists and philosophers in response to Meyer's evolutionist critics.

6. *Darwin on Trial* by Phillip E. Johnson (3rd [20th anniversary] edition, 2010). Although more scientific evidence against neo-Darwinism has been brought to light since it was first published in 1991, this book, with its careful reasoning and sober-minded logic, remains one of

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the best refutations of evolutionism. Called “the book that makes evolutionists furious,” it helped catalyze the ID movement in the early 1990s. Molecular biologist Michael Denton, whose own writings on evolutionism inspired Professor Johnson to take up the subject, has called this book “unquestionably the best critique of Darwinism I have ever read.” The twentieth anniversary edition includes a new foreword by biochemist Michael Behe, which explains how scientific findings since the book’s first publication have only served to reinforce Johnson’s arguments. (Johnson has furthered his critique of evolutionary naturalism in his subsequent books: *Reason in the Balance* [1995], *Defeating Darwinism by Opening Minds* [1997], *Objections Sustained* [1998], *The Wedge of Truth* [2000], *The Right Questions* [2002], and *Against All Gods* [with John Mark Reynolds] [2010].)

7. *Creation: Facts of Life* by Gary Parker (revised edition, 2006). While *Unlocking the Mystery of Life*, *Signature in the Cell*, and *Darwin on Trial* serve as a good introduction to the work of the ID movement, *Creation: Facts of Life* provides a helpful starting-point for understanding the work of the creation science movement. Gary Parker, who holds a doctorate in biology with a cognate in geology, presents a well-informed overview of many themes relevant to creation science, including the origin of the genetic code, mutations, biological variation, natural selection, fossils, and the geologic column. Fr. Seraphim read the first edition of this book, published in 1979, and recommended it (see p. 378 above). The new edition has been updated to take into account the latest scientific findings.

8. As of 2010, the most up-to-date defense of the Christian teaching of Divine creation against evolutionist claims is *The Greatest Hoax on Earth? Refuting Dawkins on Evolution* by Jonathan Sarfati (2010). This topical work is a rejoinder to the latest book by atheist apologist Richard Dawkins, *The Greatest Show on Earth: The Evidence for Evolution* (2009). In his previous works, Dawkins says, he had assumed evolution to be true; in his latest title he sets out to present the actual *evidence* for it. Creation scientist Jonathan Sarfati (PhD, physical chemistry) answers Dawkins’ challenge in a lucid, point by point manner. While Sarfati takes on the strongest arguments of the evolutionists (Dawkins’ book is purported to showcase the best that evolutionists can offer at the

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present time), he demonstrates that Dawkins has not addressed head on the most informed position of the creationists whom he so vehemently opposes, but rather resorts to straw man arguments.

2. *On “Human Evolution”*

The most complete, accurate, and current critique of human evolution from a creation science perspective is *Bones of Contention: A Creationist Assessment of Human Fossils* by Dr. Marvin L. Lubenow (revised edition, 2004).* The fruit of twenty-five years of research into human fossils, this book contains some of the most comprehensive human fossil charts to be found anywhere in the scientific literature, as well as descriptions of where and how these fossils were found, and the controversies involved in their dating and classification. Based entirely on fossils accepted unconditionally by evolutionists, it is heavily documented with recent scientific sources.

Creationist films on the alleged evolution of man include *The Image of God* (n.d.), featuring interviews with scientists on both sides of the creation/evolution debate, and *Apemen: “Missing Links” & the Bible* (2010).

A critique of the original Darwinian view of human “races” (according to which some “races” are considered more “highly evolved” than others) can be found in the book *One Blood: The Biblical Answer to Racism* by Ken Ham, Carl Wieland, and Don Batten (1999). The authors set forth the contrasting Biblical understanding of the *one* human race, and discuss the nature of biological variation within the human “kind.”

3. *On the History of Darwinism*

Helpful material on the philosophical and sociological roots of Darwinism can be found in *Evolution: A Theory in Crisis* by Michael Denton (1986), pp. 69–77; *In the Minds of Men* by Ian T. Taylor (6th

* Not to be confused with *Bones of Contention* by Roger Lewin (1987), an evolutionist and literary colleague of Richard Leakey. Lewin’s book, incidentally, is a good evolutionist treatment of the subject, for it acknowledges the vast amount of speculation and subjectivity involved in the interpretation of “human ancestor” fossils.

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edition, 2008); *The Long War against God* by Henry M. Morris (1989); *Understanding the Times* by David A. Noebel (unabridged edition, 1991); and “Did Darwin Plagiarize His Evolution Theory?” by Jerry Bergman (*Creation Ex Nihilo Technical Journal* [now *Journal of Creation*], vol. 16, no. 3 [2002]).

4. *On the Age of the Earth*

As the present book has shown, the age of the earth is relevant to a number of points of Christian doctrine. Probably the most important of these is the Scriptural-Patristic teaching that death and corruption entered the cosmos at the fall of man—a teaching which, as we have shown, has profound soteriological implications. This teaching fits only within the Biblical time frame of some thousands of years of earth history. Within the evolutionary/uniformitarian time frame of billions of years it is, on the contrary, not possible to temporally place an incorrupt condition of man and the cosmos (a condition which the Fathers saw as an actuality, existing *in time*, not merely as a potentiality), except by resorting to arbitrary and fanciful formulations.*

Although, as Fr. Seraphim says, one cannot definitively prove that the cosmos is either thousands or billions of years old—since all historical time scales involve unprovable assumptions—the reader may be interested in looking at some of the evidence for a young age.

Dr. D. Russell Humphreys provides a brief description of several natural phenomena which conflict with the evolutionary idea that the universe is billions of years old; see his article “Evidence for a Young World” (*Institute for Creation Research Impact*, no. 384, June 2005), as well as his video-recorded lecture series *Cosmos: Created and Young* (2009). A more extensive list has been compiled by Dr. Don Batten in “Age of the Earth: 101 Evidences for a Young Age of the Earth and the Universe” (June 2009, <http://creation.com/age-of-the-earth>).

While other materials focus on the age of heavenly bodies and the cosmos as a whole (see section 7 below), the book *The Young Earth* by doctor of geology John D. Morris (revised and expanded edition, 2007)

* See, for example, pp. 451n, 452n, 780–81, 781n above.

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provides the best introduction to the subject of the earth's age. Updated to include the latest geologic evidence for a young earth, the book discusses radiometric dating, archeological findings, and worldwide physical processes, and contains an illuminating account of the circular reasoning that evolutionists typically employ when dating fossils.

For further study, we recommend the writings of Dr. Alexander Lalomov, the Russian Orthodox geologist whose article is presented in appendix 4 above. Several of his valuable articles (both technical and non-technical) related to the age of the earth are available in English at www.creation.webzone.ru, and at www.creationism.org/arctur/index.htm. Here one will also find Dr. Lalomov's answers to his evolutionist/uniformitarian critics.

Also recommended are books on the RATE (Radioisotopes and the Age of The Earth) project, an eight-year research initiative of the Institute for Creation Research. The RATE scientists—geologists, geochemists, geophysicists, and physicists—analyzed many rock units from around the world by radioisotope dating techniques, and showed how each of the assumptions made in these methods is subject to failure. Further, in measuring levels of carbon-14 in coal and diamonds, as well as helium in zircon crystals, they found evidence for a young age of materials thought by evolutionists to be millions or billions of years old. These findings provide strong reasons to doubt the evolutionary/uniformitarian idea of “deep time,” and also open up new avenues of research by creation scientists.

The book *Thousands ... Not Billions* by Dr. Don DeYoung (2005) gives a summary of the RATE project on a level clearly understandable to the non-scientist. The technical papers of the project are published in the two-volume set *Radioisotopes and the Age of the Earth*, edited by Drs. Larry Vardiman, Andrew A. Snelling, and Eugene F. Chaffin (2000–2005). Orthodox Christians studying these materials might well exercise caution when speculations are made about the formation of radioactive daughter products during the Creation Week, since the Orthodox Patristic view of the radically different nature of reality during the Six Days and before the fall would indicate that scientific inquiry must stop at the threshold of the fall. Such speculations, however, are only peripheral to the subject matter of the books on the RATE project,

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and are accompanied by alternative ideas for consideration (see, for example, *Radioisotopes and the Age of the Earth*, vol. 2, pp. 759–61).

Earth's Catastrophic Past by doctor of geology Andrew A. Snelling (2009) contains a concise, up-to-date critique of radioactive dating methods (vol. 2, section 7). An earlier, more detailed critique is the technical monograph *The Mythology of Modern Dating Methods* by John Woodmorappe (1999), which cites nearly five hundred articles in the scientific literature, mostly by evolutionists who are specialists in the field.

Ian T. Taylor, in chapters 11 and 12 of his comprehensive book on Darwinism, *In the Minds of Men* (6th edition, 2008), provides a very readable overview of scientific data related to the age of the earth, and traces the historical development of the concept of “deep time.”

5. *On the Dinosaurs*

In discussions about the Biblical teaching on creation, one of the most frequently asked questions is “What about the dinosaurs?” As an introduction to dinosaurs from a Christian viewpoint, we recommend the book *The Real History of Dinosaurs* by Dr. Mace Baker (1998), as well as the video *Dragons or Dinosaurs?* (2010), which includes interviews with a number of creation scientists.

Many considerations and little-known facts about dinosaurs are covered in creationist sources, most of which provide references to the primary scientific literature:

1. Like fossils of other animals, dinosaur fossils appear suddenly in the fossil record, without evolutionary ancestors or transitional forms between kinds of dinosaurs. See “Dinosaurs and Dragons: Stamping on the Legends” by Russell M. Grigg (*Creation*, vol. 14, no. 3 [June 1992]); and “Evolutionary Troubles with the Origin and Demise of Dinosaurs” by Michael J. Oard (*Journal of Creation*, vol. 25, no. 2 [2011], pp. 8–9).

2. There are several examples of dinosaur fossils being “out-of-place” according to the evolutionary scenario, that is, not fitting the progressive order of appearance claimed by evolutionists. See *The Creation Answers Book* by Don Batten et al. (2nd edition, 2008), pp. 251–54.

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3. The fossil record shows evidence of dinosaurs attacking and eating each other (including members of their own species), as well as suffering from diseases and afflictions (cancer, gout, parasites, abscesses, etc.). The frequent evidence of fossils scarred from violent encounters indicates that the lives of the fossilized dinosaurs were exceptionally bloody. For creation scientists, this underscores the conclusion that these particular dinosaurs lived not in the “very good” world as God created it in the beginning (Gen. 1:31), when He commanded animals and man to be vegetarian (Gen. 1:29–30, cf. 9:3), but rather in the world as it became after the fall of man, when God subjected it to “the bondage of corruption (decay)” (Rom. 8:19–22). (We would add that the first evidence for this conclusion is the fact that the fossils themselves are a record of decay.) See *The Fossil Record* by John D. Morris and Frank J. Sherwin (2010), pp. 88–91; *The Creation Answers Book* by Don Batten et al., pp. 256–57; and “T-rex with Gout” (*Creation*, vol. 19, no. 4 [Sept. 1997]).

4. Dinosaurs typically do not rest in the fossil record as if they had died of natural causes, but are most commonly found in positions that indicate sudden, often violent burial under layers of sediment. Many massive dinosaur graveyards, located throughout the world, have been formed by such catastrophic action. This is seen by creationists as evidence that the fossilized dinosaurs (and some unfossilized—see below) died during the Noahic Flood. For a presentation of this evidence, see *The Genesis Flood* by John C. Whitcomb and Henry M. Morris (1961), pp. 279–81; *That Their Words May Be Used against Them* by Henry M. Morris (1997), pp. 266–72; *The Real History of Dinosaurs* by Mace Baker, pp. 31–39; *Dinosaurs by Design* by Duane T. Gish (1992), pp. 8–9; *The Great Dinosaur Mystery Solved* by Ken Ham (paperback edition, 2000), pp. 65, 158–59; and the video *The Footsteps of Leviathan* (1996).

5. The discovery by Dr. Mary Schweitzer (North Carolina State University) of fresh (unfossilized) *Tyrannosaurus rex* and hadrosaur bones—with soft, pliable tissue, proteins, blood vessels, and red blood cells—provides strong evidence the dinosaurs could not have died out sixty-five million years ago, as evolutionists claim. See “Sensational Dinosaur Blood Report” by Carl Wieland (*Creation*, vol. 19, no. 4 [Sept. 1997]); “‘Schweitzer’s Dangerous Discovery’” by David Catchpoole

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and Jonathan Sarfati (July 2006, <http://creation.com/schweitzers-dangerous-discovery>); “Hadrosaur Soft Tissues Another Blow to Long-Ages Myth” by Brian Thomas (May 2009, <http://www.icr.org/article/4621/>); “Dinosaur Soft Tissue and Protein—Even More Confirmation” by Carl Wieland (May 2009, <http://creation.com/dinosaur-soft-tissue-and-protein-even-more-confirmation>); and “Dinosaur Soft Tissues: They’re Real!” by Brian Thomas (Aug. 2009, <http://www.icr.org/article/4819>).

6. Since, according to the creationist view, the fossil record mostly represents creatures which died due to the Noahic Flood, the question of whether any dinosaurs survived the Flood via the Ark cannot be answered from a study of fossils. Rather, we must turn to ancient literature and the earliest accounts of human history after the Flood.

Since evolutionists believe that dinosaurs became extinct millions of years before the dawn of man, they do not have a plausible explanation for the records of “dragons” found in ancient cultures from all over the world, many of which describe specific features of animals we now know as dinosaurs. (Dinosaur fossils did not begin to be analyzed and pieced together until 1822, and the term “dinosaur” was not invented until 1841.) Creationists, who believe that dinosaurs have lived contemporaneously with man, explain that these accounts simply describe creatures that people have seen and encountered throughout history.

The Old Testament mentions dragons/dinosaurs (*tannim* in Hebrew, *drakon* in Greek) twenty-one times. The most important reference is in the book of Job, chapters 40–41, where one finds a detailed description of a great sauropod-like creature that “moves its tail like a cedar tree.” For a discussion of dinosaurs in the Bible, see *The Real History of Dinosaurs* by Mace Baker, pp. 41–49; and *The Biblical Basis for Modern Science* by Henry M. Morris (1984), pp. 350–59.

Creationists have amassed a great deal of evidence from historical literature and art that indicates that dinosaurs have coexisted with humans. Unfortunately, all this material has not yet been anthologized in a single work, and so it must be gleaned from a number of sources. These include “Dinosaurs and Dragons” by D. L. Niermann (*Creation Ex Nihilo Technical Journal* [now *Journal of Creation*], vol. 8, no. 1 [1994]); “Dinosaurs and Dragons: Stamping on the Legends” by Rus-

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sell M. Grigg; *Dragons: Legends & Lore of Dinosaurs* by Bodie Hodge and Laura Welch (2011); *That Their Words May Be Used against Them* by Henry M. Morris, pp. 251–61; *After the Flood* by Bill Cooper (1995), pp. 130–61; “The Early History of Man, Part 1: Living Dinosaurs from Anglo-Saxon and Other Early Records” by Bill Cooper (*Creation Ex Nihilo Technical Journal*, vol. 6, no. 1 [April 1992]); *The Real History of Dinosaurs* by Mace Baker, pp. 51–62, 86–88; *The Great Dinosaur Mystery Solved* by Ken Ham, pp. 31–39, 136–40, 161–62; “Messages on Stone” by Dennis L. Swift (*Creation*, vol. 19, no. 2 [March 1997]); *The Creation Answers Book* by Don Batten et al., pp. 244–46; “Angkor Saw a Stegosaur?” by David Catchpoole (*Creation*, vol. 29, no. 4 [Sept. 2007]); “Bishop Bell’s Brass Behemoths” by Philip Bell (*Creation*, vol. 25, no. 4 [Sept. 2003]); “Australia’s Aborigines ... Did They See Dinosaurs?” by Rebecca Driver (*Creation*, vol. 21, no. 1 [Dec. 1998]); “Thunderbirds” by Bill Johnson (*Creation*, vol. 24, no. 2 [March 2002]); the video *The Great Dinosaur Mystery*; and the web page www.christiananswers.net/dinosaurs/questions.html.

Especially interesting for Orthodox readers is a treatise written by St. John Damascene in the eighth century, *On Dragons*.* In this work St. Damascene affirmed that dragons are real, living creatures, having been among the animals named by Adam in Paradise; and at the same time he refuted various myths that had grown up around them. As evidence that they are real creatures, he cited a text from ancient history which recounts the killing of a 120-foot-long dragon by the Roman army. Although St. Damascene’s entire work has not been published in English, it is quoted at length in the online article “St. John Damascene on Dragons” by the Russian Orthodox priest Fr. Timofey Alferov (<http://www.creationism.org/crimea/engl/al1.htm>).** The same article appeared in slightly abridged form in *Creation* magazine under the title

* The original Greek text of this treatise is found in *John Damascene: The Complete Works*, vol. 5, pp. 306–11, and in PG 94.1600–1601. A Russian translation by Priest Maxim Kozlov is found in *John Damascene: Works—Christological and Polemical Treatises* (Moscow, 1997).

** The text for this article has been translated from Fr. Timofey Alferov’s Russian-language book *The Orthodox Worldview and Contemporary Natural Science*, pp. 344–48 (on this book, see p. 910 below).

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“Dragons … Animals, Not Apparitions” (*Creation*, vol. 22, no. 3 [June 2000]).

In the early twentieth century, St. Barsanuphius of Optina also affirmed that dragons (dinosaurs) have lived contemporaneously with man. Among other things, St. Barsanuphius wrote: “The tales of the Chinese and Japanese about the existence of dragons are not at all fantasies or fables, although the learned European naturalists, and ours along with them, deny the existence of these monsters. But, after all, anything can be denied, simply because it does not measure up to our understanding.” See Victor Afanasiev, *Elder Barsanuphius of Optina* (2000), pp. 232–33.

As Fr. Seraphim Rose pointed out in a talk, accounts of dragons in the Orthodox Lives of Saints describe either apparitions of demons (which appear as other terrifying animals as well) or encounters with real creatures.* In the latter category, of special interest is the Life of St. Donatus, Bishop of Euroea in Epirus (+387, commemorated April 30), which is contained in *The Ecclesiastical History* by the Church historian Sozomen (ca. 400–ca. 450). Sozomen describes “a dragon of enormous size,” which “devoured sheep, goats, oxen, horses, and men.” The dragon expired when St. Donatus made the sign of the Cross over it, after which “the people of the country yoked eight pair of oxen to transport the body to a neighboring field, where they burnt it, that it might not during the process of decomposition corrupt the air and generate disease” (*Ecclesiastical History* 7.26, NPNF, 2nd series, vol. 2, pp. 394–95).

7. The question of how dinosaurs (presumably young ones) could have been accommodated aboard the Ark has been answered by Russell M. Grigg in his article “Dinosaurs and dragons: Stamping on the Legends”; by John Woodmorappe in *Noah’s Ark: A Feasibility Study* (1996), pp. 4, 67–68; by Mace Baker in *The Real History of Dinosaurs*, pp. 28–29; and by Don Batten et al. in *The Creation Answers Book*, pp. 247–50.

8. Evolutionists have long debated the cause of the worldwide ex-

* See Fr. Seraphim Rose, “The Theological Writings of Archbishop John,” *The Orthodox Word*, nos. 175–76 (1994), pp. 150–53.

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tinction of dinosaurs. Creation scientists generally agree that the primary cause of the dinosaurs' eventual extinction after the Flood was the drastic change between the pre-Flood and post-Flood environments. For a discussion of this and other causes, see *The Creation Answers Book* by Don Batten et al., pp. 252–54; *Dinosaurs by Design* by Duane T. Gish, pp. 76–77; *The Real History of Dinosaurs* by Mace Baker, p. 57; *The Great Dinosaur Mystery Solved* by Ken Ham, pp. 67–68; and *Dinosaurs, the Lost World, and You* by John D. Morris (1999), pp. 33–34.

6. On the Flood

The Genesis Flood by Drs. John C. Whitcomb and Henry M. Morris is the classic creation science textbook on the Flood. Called “the book that catalyzed the creation science movement,” it was studied, appreciated and recommended by Fr. Seraphim. Since this book came out in 1961, much more scientific investigation and research has been done in the field of Flood geology, and a number of books and videos are now available. The most up-to-date overviews can be found in *Earth’s Catastrophic Past* by Dr. Andrew A. Snelling (2009) and *Flood by Design* by Michael J. Oard (2008).* For further study we recommend the book *Grand Canyon: Monument to Catastrophe* by doctor of geology Steven A. Austin (1994), together with the videos *Grand Canyon: Monument to the Flood* (2002) and *Geological Evidences* (2003), which explain the deposition of sediments and the erosion of the canyon according to the Flood model. Also recommended is the book *Footprints in the Ash* by John D. Morris and Steven A. Austin (2003), which describes the rapid formation of geologic structures such as rock layers, canyons, and log deposits during the 1980 eruption of Mount St. Helens, Washington, and explains the significance of this for understanding what occurred during the global Flood.

* See also Oard’s review of Snelling’s book (“Excellent Summary of Scientific Evidence for Creation and the Flood, but Controversial in Some Areas,” *Journal of Creation*, vol. 25, no. 1 [2011], pp. 33–40), which discusses the healthy debate taking place among creation scientists concerning certain details of Flood geology.

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Several technical monographs on Flood geology are available from the Institute for Creation Research, including *The Frozen Record* by Michael J. Oard (2005), *Ice Cores and the Age of the Earth* (1993) and *Sea-Floor Sediments and the Age of the Earth* (1996) by Dr. Larry Vardiman, and *Studies in Flood Geology* by John Woodmorappe (1999). Other technical papers, covering some of the latest advances in Flood geology, are contained in *Proceedings of the International Conference on Creationism*, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2003, and 2008.

The following books will be of interest to those wishing to make a study of what happened after the Flood and the dispersion of the peoples: *After the Flood* by Bill Cooper (1995); *They Came from Babel* by S. A. Cranfill (1994); *The Puzzle of Ancient Man* by Donald E. Chittick (3rd edition, 2006); and *The Biblical Basis for Modern Science* by Henry M. Morris, chapters 15–16.

7. On Astronomy and Cosmology

The big bang theory, along with nebular accretion models of the origin of heavenly bodies, is today the standard naturalistic, evolutionary model by which to explain the beginning and history of the cosmos. This theory has a number of features which are at variance with the Scriptural-Patristic cosmogony. First of all, the evolutionary model runs counter to the Scriptural-Patristic view of God's instantaneous creation of the earth and the heavenly bodies; secondly, it contradicts the order of creation as described in the Bible and understood by the Holy Fathers, which has the earth and even its vegetation created before the heavenly lights;* and finally, unlike the Bible and the Holy Fathers, it posits a vast age of the earth and the cosmos, which leaves no place for an original incorrupt condition of creation and thus has a corrosive effect on traditional Christian soteriology.

Creationist astronomers and physicists have provided a number of valuable resources which point out the known scientific problems connected with the reigning evolutionary cosmogony, highlight indicators of Divine creation and intelligent design in the universe, and discuss

* See pp. 135, 135n, 167–73, 168n, 169n, 171n, 375–76 above.

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the many lines of evidence for a young universe (the “faint young sun paradox,” the recession of the moon from the earth, the magnetic fields of planets and moons in our solar system, the existence of short-period comets in the solar system, the spiral structure of galaxies, etc.). Of these resources, we would recommend the books *Taking Back Astronomy* (2006) by Jason Lisle (doctor of astrophysics), *Universe by Design* (2004) by Danny Faulkner (professor of astrophysics, University of South Carolina in Lancaster), and *Dismantling the Big Bang* (2005) by Alex Williams (former consultant to the United Nations’ International Atomic Energy Agency) and John Hartnett (professor of physics, University of Western Australia in Perth); the articles by D. Russell Humphreys (doctor of physics, researcher at Sandia National Laboratories) and Don Batten mentioned in section 4 above; and the videos *The Young Sun* (2009), *The Heavens Declare* (2009), *Created Cosmos* (2007), *Astronomy: What Do We Really Know?* (2005), *Big Problems with the Big Bang* (2005), *Creation & Cosmology* (2007), and *What You Aren’t Being Told about Astronomy*, vol. 1: *Our Created Solar System* (2009). The book *Dismantling the Big Bang* is notable for its valuable discussion of how belief systems shape scientific theories, including theories of cosmology (chap. 2). It concludes by reproducing an “Open Letter to the Scientific Community,” signed by over two hundred secular scientists who reject the big bang model based on its inability to account for many astronomical observations, and who object to the fact that research into alternative models is severely hindered by funding agencies which do not tolerate dissent from the reigning paradigm (the letter, first published in *New Scientist*, May 22–28, 2004, is posted with addenda at www.cosmologystatement.org).

For the Biblical model of a creation only thousands of years old, the question arises of how starlight from galaxies millions of light years away could have reached the earth. While creationists recognize this as a challenging question, sometimes referring to it as the “light travel-time problem,” they rightly point out that the big bang theory has the equivalent of a light travel-time problem of its own, known as the “horizon problem”—namely, that the temperature of the universe could not have reached its current homogeneity even within the approximately 14 billion years allowed by the big bang theory. To deal with this anomaly in

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their model, big-bang theorists have introduced the concept of an early inflation of the cosmos at a rate much faster than the speed of light. This, however, is only a conjecture with no supporting evidence, and hence is referred to as a “hypothetical entity” and a “fudge factor” in the above-mentioned “Open Letter” from dissenting scientists.

In recent years, Protestant creationists have been working on a number of scientific cosmological models within the Biblical framework, the most prominent being those of the above-mentioned doctors of physics D. Russell Humphreys and John Hartnett.* Starting with the theory of relativity and the concept of an expanding universe—both of which are accepted by evolutionists—Humphreys and Hartnett have also assumed a spherical universe with the earth near the

* Dr. Humphreys presented his first attempt at a creationist cosmology in his 1994 book *Starlight and Time*, and subsequently developed a new cosmological model with many of the same features. His new cosmology is presented on a technical level in “New Time Dilation Helps Creation Cosmology” (*Journal of Creation*, vol. 22, no. 3 [2008], pp. 84–92), and on a popular level in Larry Vardiman and D. Russell Humphreys, “A New Creationist Cosmology: In No Time at All” (*Acts & Facts*, vol. 39, no. 11 [Nov. 2010], pp. 12–15; vol. 40, no. 1 [Jan. 2011], pp. 12–14; vol. 40, no. 2 [Feb. 2011], pp. 12–14), as well as in the video series *Cosmos: Created & Young*, disc 4. Dr. Hartnett has set forth his cosmology in the book *Starlight, Time and the New Physics* (2007) and in a video of the same title (2010). See also the video *Distant Starlight—A Forum* (2011), which features both physicists.

It is noteworthy that, before developing his cosmologies, Dr. Humphreys produced a theory of planetary magnetic fields which successfully predicted their present strengths based on the idea that the planets were created some thousands rather than billions of years ago. In 1984, knowing that the Voyager 2 spacecraft was expected to pass by Uranus and Neptune, Humphreys published predictions of the strengths of their magnetic fields, and pointed out that the Voyager’s measurements of these strengths would be a good test of the creationist vs. the evolutionist theories. When Voyager 2 passed by the two planets in 1986 and 1989 respectively, its measurements of their magnetic fields fell right in the middle of Humphreys’ predictions but were 100,000 times greater than evolutionist predictions. See Humphreys, “The Creation of Planetary Magnetic Fields,” *Creation Research Society Quarterly*, vol. 21, no. 3 (Dec. 1984); Carl Wieland, “Creation in the Physics Lab: An Illuminating Interview with Physicist Dr. D. Russell Humphreys,” *Creation*, vol. 15, no. 3 (June 1993), pp. 20–23; and Humphreys, “Mercury’s Magnetic Field Is Young,” Aug. 2008, <http://creation.com/mercurys-magnetic-field-is-young>.

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center. This latter assumption is rejected by secular cosmologists not on experimental but on philosophical grounds, since, presupposing a naturalistic origin of the cosmos, they cannot regard the earth as having a “special” place and are thus obliged to believe that the universe has no edge and no center. Humphreys and Hartnett, having abandoned the evolutionists’ chosen starting point of an unbounded universe, have found solutions of the relativistic field equations which depict the mechanics of the cosmos quite differently from the big bang model and potentially solve the creationists’ “light travel-time problem.” Their models also provide possible answers to some of the problems that big bang theorists have not resolved; for example, both of them (especially Hartnett’s) obviate the need for invisible, undetectable “dark matter” and “dark energy”—two other “hypothetical entities” and “fudge factors” pointed out in the “Open Letter to the Scientific Community”—to account for astronomical data, and both offer a straightforward explanation for the observed anomaly known as the “Pioneer effect” (see D. Russell Humphreys, “Creationist Cosmologies Explain the Anomalous Acceleration of Pioneer Spacecraft,” *Journal of Creation*, vol. 21, no. 2 [Aug. 2007], pp. 61–70).

Admittedly, the creationist cosmologies have unverifiable “fudge factors” of their own. This, however, illustrates the nature of all scientific cosmological models, which, because they enter the realm of origins or historical science (as distinct from operational or observational science), are especially reliant on untestable assumptions and therefore must be regarded as, at best, merely tentative. Drs. Humphreys and Hartnett, as well as honest secular cosmologists, will readily admit this. As one of the leading secular theorists in cosmology, George F. R. Ellis, has said: “People need to be aware that there is a range of models that could explain the observations.... For instance, I can construct you a spherically symmetrical universe with Earth at its center, and you cannot disprove it based on observations.... You can only exclude it on philosophical grounds. In my view there is absolutely nothing wrong in that. What I want to bring into the open is the fact that we are using philosophical criteria in choosing our models. A lot of cosmology tries to hide that” (W. Wayt Gibbs, “Profile: George F. R. Ellis,” *Scientific American*, vol. 273, no. 4 [Oct. 1995], p. 55).

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Although the work of Protestant creationists in the field of cosmology can be seen as nothing more than provisional, we, in agreement with several Orthodox Christians holding doctorates in mathematics and the natural sciences (physics, cosmology), find it to be of potential value to Orthodox believers, for it shows that astronomical data *can* be interpreted scientifically in a way which conforms to the Biblical time scale, and which at the same time fits some observations better than does the big bang model. This consideration underlines the fact that different cosmological models which are equally scientific can be derived on the basis of different belief systems or worldviews, and that the currently prevailing big bang model is by no means an inescapable construct dictated by observation and reason.*

For the Orthodox Christian, however, a difficulty arises in accepting, even tentatively, *any* scientific model which includes speculations about what occurred at the creation of the cosmos. By virtue of being scientific, such models must apply the current laws of physics when trying to understand cosmological origins. The aforementioned models of Drs. Humphreys and Hartnett are no exception. In light of the Scriptural-Patristic teaching on the miraculous, supernatural events of the Six Days, Orthodox Christians are apt to have reservations when Protestant creationists attempt to describe, according to current laws, the fashioning of the universe with its heavenly lights. As Fr. Seraphim wrote, “By their very nature the events of these days are miraculous, are not subject to the laws of nature that now govern the world, and we cannot understand them by projections from our present experience.”** Not only can we not scientifically examine the creation of the heavenly bodies, which God made “to give light upon the earth” (Gen. 1:15), we cannot even know what they and their light were like between the time of their creation and the fall of man. In the words of St. Barsanuphius of Optina, “We don’t know what kind of moon there

* For these insights we are especially indebted to Silviu Podariu, a Romanian Orthodox doctor of cosmology. Dr. Podariu has researched the creationist cosmological models mentioned above as well as others, has discussed them with other Orthodox Christian scientists, and has provided us with helpful scientific evaluations of them.

** See p. 138 above.

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was then, what kind of sun, what kind of light.... All of this changed after the fall.”*

If, as Drs. Hartnett and Humphreys postulate in their models, the solution to the “light travel-time problem” lies in what occurred during the Six Days of Creation, for an Orthodox Christian this can only mean that it is ultimately beyond the scope of scientific inquiry. This conclusion has been at least partially acknowledged by the Protestant astrophysicists Danny Faulkner and Jason Lisle, who, while welcoming scientific attempts to solve the “light travel-time problem” such as those outlined above, say it is wrong to simply assume that a scientific solution can be found. As Dr. Faulkner observes: “Instead of majoring on the [light travel-time] problem, perhaps we should realize that only an unbelievably powerful Creator could make such a large universe while at the same time enabling us to see it all. Instead of a problem, it could be one of the most remarkable testaments of God’s creation” (Faulkner, *Universe by Design*, p. 104; see also Lisle, *Taking Back Astronomy*, pp. 46–48).

8. For the Education of Young People

A number of Orthodox Christian science textbooks for middle and high school students have been published in Russian, the most important of which is *General Biology* by Sergei Y. Vert’yanov (see p. 71 above and p. 909 below).

In the English language, a number of resources for young people—books and DVDs—have been produced by scientists associated both with the ID and creation science movements.

Defeating Darwinism by Opening Minds, by ID founder Phillip E. Johnson, was written on a high school level with the specific purpose of teaching young people how to see through the deceptive arguments for Darwinian evolution, especially by focusing on the alleged mechanism for grand-scale biological change.

Of Pandas and People by Percival Davis and Dean H. Kenyon (2nd edition, 1993) is a biology textbook for high school students, written

* See p. 709 above.

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and reviewed by scientists associated with the ID movement. Careful and restrained in its presentation of evidence for intelligent design, this book comes highly recommended by the above-mentioned zoologist, Dr. Yuri Zharikov.

Those parents and educators wishing to go beyond the limited scope of the ID position can make use of the many valuable creation science materials produced for young people from pre-school to high school. (See www.creation.com, www.icr.org, and www.answersingenesis.com for a list of these materials.) In doing so, Orthodox parents and educators might keep in mind the caveat about Protestant creation science mentioned above, with regard to its tendency to view the creation events and prelapsarian world according to current natural laws. This tendency can sometimes be seen visually in Protestant creationist books for young people, where illustrations show a “this worldly” portayal of Adam and Eve in Paradise that is quite different from what one finds in Orthodox icons.

The best dinosaur books for children from a creationist perspective are *Dinosaurs by Design* by Dr. Duane T. Gish, and *The Great Dinosaur Mystery and the Bible* by Paul S. Taylor (revised edition, 1998). (The above-mentioned video by Paul Taylor, *The Great Dinosaur Mystery*, is also suitable for children as well as adults.) Junior-high and high school students interested in dinosaurs can refer to *The Real History of Dinosaurs* by Mace Baker and *Dragons of the Deep: Ocean Monsters Past and Present* by Carl Wieland (2005).

Home-schooling parents are encouraged to look into Apologia Educational Ministries, a creation-based science curriculum specifically designed for the home school, kindergarten through grade 12 (www.apologia.com). Written by a former university professor and home-schooling parent, Apologia’s courses provide college-preparatory science, with clear, readable text and interesting experiments. Orthodox parents and young people who use this course speak very highly of it.

III. SOURCES IN RUSSIAN

The website of the Russian Orthodox Missionary Center “Shestodnev” (www.shestodnev.ru) features many scientific and theo-

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logical articles in Russian, including translations of some of Fr. Seraphim's writings on creation and evolution. The websites of the Moscow Society of Creation Science (www.creation.webzone.ru, www.creatio.orthodoxy.ru) have scientific articles in both Russian and English, by both Orthodox and non-Orthodox authors.

The following is a partial list of Russian-language books by Orthodox authors which discuss the creation/evolution issue from a Scriptural-Patristic perspective.* Several of these books are available for download online (see the bibliography).

The Orthodox Interpretation of the Creation of the World and Contemporary Science, edited by Archpriest Constantine Bufeyev. These proceedings from the annual conferences sponsored by the “Shestodnev” missionary center in Moscow form the most full and diverse compendium of contemporary theological and scientific articles on the subject in the Russian language (see pp. 67–70 above). Volumes have been published for the years 2005–2009.

Orthodox Doctrine and the Theory of Evolution by Archpriest Constantine Bufeyev (2003). An in-depth study of the Patristic doctrine of creation as it interfaces with the modern secular worldview. The author, who is the founder of “Shestodnev” and holds both theological and scientific degrees, considers this work to be a continuation of Fr. Seraphim’s study. The book includes numerous quotations of the Holy Fathers, as well as critiques of various “Orthodox evolutionist” teachings in contemporary Russia.

Chronicle of the Beginning by Deacon Daniel Sysoyev (1999). This work by a well-known Russian Orthodox missionary and apologist deals with both theological and scientific issues related to the doctrine of creation.

The Hexaemeron vs. Evolution, edited by Deacon Daniel Sysoyev (2000). An important anthology of articles by Fr. Constantine Bufeyev, Fr. Daniel Sysoyev, and other authors.

“Who Is Like God?” or, *How Long Did a Day of Creation Last?* by Priest Daniel Sysoyev (2003). A theological investigation of creation and evolution, and an analysis of the attempts to reconcile them. Con-

* Transliterated Russian titles are given in the bibliography.

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tains many Patristic citations, from the first to the twentieth centuries, on the Six Days of creation.

The Origin of Life: Facts, Hypotheses, Evidence by Sergei Vert'yanov (4th edition, 2007). An introductory book covering a broad spectrum of scientific issues related to the creation/evolution debate, including biological variation, interpretation of the fossil record, and the age of the earth. At the end is a section of pertinent passages from the writings of the Fathers. This is the best-selling Orthodox book on the subject in Russia.

General Biology by Sergei Vert'yanov (2nd edition, 2006). Written as a high school textbook and conforming to Russian educational standards, this volume provides a much more extensive treatment of the material in *The Origin of Life*. Reviewed by a committee of scientists from Moscow State University, it presents an overview of the biological sciences while adhering to the Scriptural-Patristic view of creation and history (see p. 71 above.)

The Law of God, vol. 1: *The Biblical History of the Old Testament* by Sergei Vorob'yëv (2009). Tracing the events of the Old Testament beginning with the creation of the world, the author is uncompromisingly faithful to the Patristic reading of Biblical history. He intersperses the teachings of the Fathers with findings of historical and scientific research which confirm and illuminate the Biblical record. (Not to be confused with works by other authors which also bear the title *The Law of God*.)

Fundamentals of Contemporary Natural Science: An Orthodox View by Vitaly Il'ich Nedel'ko and Andrei Giorgievich Khundzhua (2008). A scientific work intended for a wide readership, recommended by the Moscow Patriarchate's Department of Religious Education and Catechesis. Both authors are doctors of physics and mathematics.

Orthodox Natural-Science Apologetics by Priest Yevgeniy Porfir'yev (2006). A complex but rewarding examination of the findings of modern science in light of the Holy Scriptures and the writings of the Holy Fathers.

Evolution or Corruption? by Priest Timofey [Alferov] (1997). A theological/Patristic comparison of creation and evolution, this short study was the first traditional Orthodox book on the subject to appear

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in Russia after Fr. Seraphim's letter to Alexander Kalomiros was published in Russian translation. The author frequently refers to Fr. Seraphim's previous work.

Natural History by Priest Timofey [Alferov] (2001). A natural science textbook for children in Orthodox middle schools and Sunday schools.

The Orthodox Worldview and Contemporary Natural Science by Priest Timofey [Alferov] (2004). A scientific textbook for Orthodox high school students, covering a broad range of topics, from the origin of biological information to dinosaurs and Noah's Ark.

Introduction to Natural Science by Elena Morozova (2001). A textbook written by an Orthodox educator for use in middle schools and high schools, this historical/scientific study discusses the basic Christian approach to knowledge of the surrounding world.

The World—God's Creation by Nikolai Kolchurinsky (2000). This work by an Orthodox catechist consists of discussions between the author and young people at a monastery near Suzdal, Russia. The author answers science-related questions from an Orthodox Patristic perspective.

Divine Revelation and Contemporary Science, Almanac, vols. 1 and 2, edited by Priest Daniel Sysoyev and Nikolai Kolchurinsky (2004, 2005). An anthology of scientific and theological articles, including the writings of St. Theophan the Recluse and St. Justin (Popovich) of Celije.

Creation, Almanac of the Moscow Society of Creation Science, vols. 1 and 2, edited by Alexander Lalomov (2002, 2006). Includes scientific articles from many different disciplines.

Saints and Early Church Writers Cited in the Present Book

(Arranged by date of repose)

Entries not enclosed in brackets were written by Fr. Seraphim for an appendix to the English edition of Orthodox Dogmatic Theology by Proto-presbyter Michael Pomazansky (1983). Entries enclosed in brackets have been added by the editor of the present book.*

St. JUSTIN Martyr, the Philosopher

A.D. 103–165

The leading Christian apologist of the second century; his writings depict the conversion of the best representatives of the pagan world to Christ. He wrote two *Apologies* against the pagans and the *Dialogue with Trypho, a Jew*. An early account of his martyrdom (the official court proceedings) has survived; he is commemorated on June 1.

ATHENAGORAS of Athens

†after 177

An eloquent Christian apologist, his attitude to pagan literature was similar to St. Justin's. He wrote *A Plea for the Christians* to Emperor Marcus Aurelius, defending from reason the Christian idea of the resurrection of the body.

St. THEOPHILUS of Antioch**

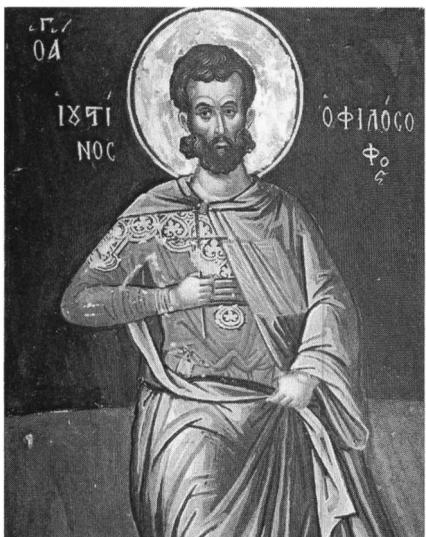
ca. 115–181

The sixth Bishop of Antioch, he was converted in mature years from paganism and wrote apologetic works defending Christianity against pagan objections. He used the New Testament Scriptures

* Saints glorified by the Church after Fr. Seraphim wrote these entries have been designated as such in the present section.—ED.

** He is absent from the Greek *Synaxaria* (Lives of Saints) but is commemorated as a saint in the Slav collections. His memory is celebrated on December 6.—ED.

SAINTS AND EARLY CHURCH WRITERS



St. Justin Martyr, the Philosopher.
*Fresco by Monk Theophanes the Cretan,
Stavronikita Monastery, Mount Athos,
1545–1546.*



St. Irenaeus of Lyons.
*Wall painting from the Sts. Peter and Paul
Church of the Optina Monastery
Metochion in Moscow, 2004.*

much more than earlier apologists, and was the first to speak clearly of their Divine inspiration.*

St. IRENAEUS of Lyons

ca. 130–202

A disciple of St. Polycarp of Smyrna,** he heard through him of St. John the Theologian, and thus was directly linked to the Apostolic age. Coming to the West, he succeeded St. Pothinus as Bishop of Lyons and

* St. Theophilus' only surviving work, *To Autolycus*, contains an in-depth discussion of the early chapters of Genesis, as well as the first known attempt by a Christian writer to determine the age of the world and a chronology of events based on the Biblical account.—ED.

** St. Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna (69–156), was a disciple of St. John the Theologian, and was placed in his see by the Apostles. His martyrdom is set forth in the earliest detailed account of a single martyr, giving an excellent picture of his noble Christian character. His *Epistle to the Philippians* describes the doctrine, organization, and Christian charity of the Church in about A.D. 130. Commemorated February 23.—AUTH.

gained a reputation as a peacemaker in the Church. His chief work is *Against Heresies*, a defense of Orthodox Christianity against the Gnostics, using both human reason and Sacred Scripture and Tradition. Although this book is marred by his chiliastic teaching,* it is the most important Orthodox theological work of the second century and is an important witness of the Church traditions of that time. He is commemorated as a hieromartyr on August 23.

CLEMENT of Alexandria

ca. 150–ca. 215

A convert from paganism, he traveled through many lands seeking instruction from Christian teachers. He finally became the disciple of the Christian philosopher Pantaenus in Alexandria and succeeded him as head of the school of catechumens there, being ordained presbyter. Together, they were the founders of the “Alexandrian” school of Christian theology, which emphasized a speculative and allegorical investigation of the Christian revelation. As distinct from earlier Christian writers, whose aim was chiefly to defend and justify Christianity, Clement was the first to try to systematize Christian knowledge and define its relation to ancient pagan culture, which he knew well. His chief work is a trilogy: *Exhortation to the Greeks* (aimed at converting pagans), *The Instructor* (giving instruction in Christian life), and the *Stromateis* (discussing mainly the relation of Christianity to secular learning).

TERTULLIAN of Carthage

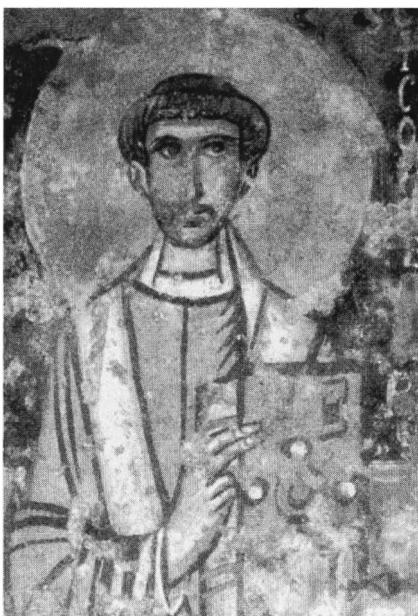
ca. 155/160–ca. 223

A pagan lawyer in Rome, after his conversion he used his talents to defend Christian faith, rites, and life against heretics (especially the Gnostics) and pagans. His early writings contain much information on early Christian teaching and practices, including the only detailed pre-Nicene work on a Christian Sacrament (*On Baptism*). He was very passionate by temperament, and all his writings are polemical in nature; he had little tolerance for pagan culture (“What has Athens to do with Jerusalem?”) and does not use it in defending the Faith (“I believe

* As noted above (p. 34n), the error of chiliasm was formally condemned by the Church much later, at the Second Ecumenical Council in 381.—ED.



St. Hippolytus of Rome.
*Fresco from Staro Nagoricane Monastery,
Kumanovo, fourteenth century.*



St. Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage.
*Fresco from the Catacomb of St. Callistus,
Rome, sixth century.*

because it is absurd"). In his later years (after 207) he joined the Montanist heresy, which followed "spirit-filled prophets" rather than the Church hierarchy, and became extremely rigoristic and "sectarian" in his views (no forgiveness for sins after Baptism, against art, against remarriage, etc.). He also taught the chiliastic heresy.

[St. HIPPOLYTUS of Rome

ca. 170–236

A disciple of St. Irenaeus of Lyons, he was a priest in Rome renowned for his learning, eloquence, and zeal in defending the Faith. His major work, *The Refutation of All Heresies*, deals with a broad range of false systems, including those of pagan philosophers, magicians, astrologers, and Gnostics. Among his other surviving writings is an important treatise on the events preceding the end of the world, *On Christ and Antichrist*; as well as several exegetical works, the best pre-

served of which is his *Commentary on the Prophet Daniel*. His *Chronicle*, which treats the whole period from the creation of the world to his own time, formed the basis for many later works of chronography by Church writers. During the persecution of Emperor Maximinus, he was exiled to Sardinia and died as a martyr. Commemorated January 30.]

[JULIUS AFRICANUS

ca. 160–ca. 240

At one time a soldier and a pagan, he studied at the Christian catechetical school in Alexandria. He knew Greek (in which he wrote), Latin, and Hebrew, and as a Christian produced works of Scriptural exegesis, history, science, and mathematics. According to the Church writer Eusebius, it was under Julius' direction that the city of Emmaus in Palestine was restored and called Nicopolis. Along with Sts. Theophilus and Hippolytus, Julius is considered a founding father of Christian chronography. His *Five Books of Chronography* trace the history of the world from its creation, assigning dates to both Biblical and extra-Biblical events.]

ORIGEN of Alexandria

ca. 185–ca. 254

The son of Christian parents, he headed the catechetical school in Alexandria at the age of eighteen; in his last twenty years he founded and presided over the school of theology in Caesarea of Palestine. He suffered in the persecutions of Decius shortly before his death. A brilliant thinker who attracted many by his philosophy, he strove to harmonize Christian teaching with pagan Greek thought; the influence of Plato over him (especially in his teachings on the preexistence of human souls and universal salvation), together with his allegorical interpretations of Scripture, led to heated controversies over his teaching, ending in the condemnation of his errors by the Church in the sixth century. Because of his errors many of his works have not survived.

St. CYPRIAN, Bishop of Carthage

†258

A convert from paganism, he was elected Bishop of Carthage shortly before the persecution of Decius (250), when he fled from Carthage. He



The Martyrdom of St. Methodius.
Fresco by the Cretan iconographer Tzortzis,
Dionysiou Monastery, Mount Athos, 1547.

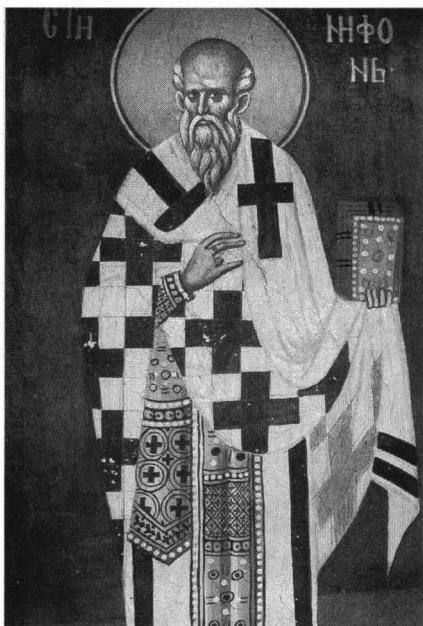


St. Alexander, Archbishop of Alexandria.
Fresco from Staro Nagoricane Monastery,
Kumanovo, fourteenth century.

died a martyr, being beheaded for the Faith in 258, and is commemorated on August 31. The chief influence on his theology was the Orthodox writings of Tertullian. His own writings are all on practical subjects of Christian life and discipline: prayer, almsgiving, his own conversion, how to reconcile to the Church those who fell away during the persecutions, an *Exhortation to Martyrdom*, *On the Unity of the Church*. He is one of the most authoritative of the early Fathers of the Church.

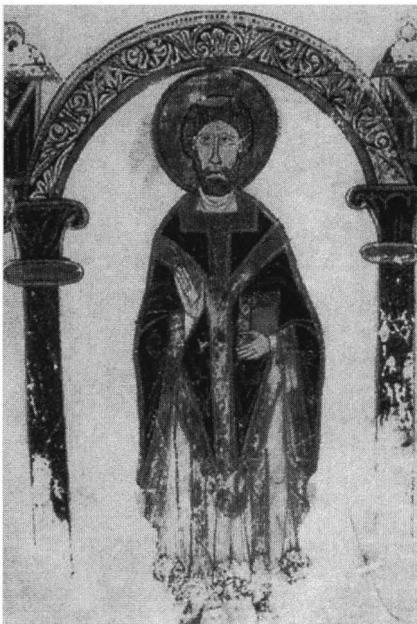
St. METHODIUS, Bishop of Olympus (or Patara) †ca. 311

He died a martyr; commemorated June 20. A highly educated theologian, he refuted Origen's teaching of the preexistence of souls and his spiritualistic concept of the resurrection of the body. His chief remaining works are dialogues: *The Banquet* (on virginity) and *Discourse on the Resurrection* (against Origen).



St. Niphon, Bishop of Constantia
on Cyprus.

*Fresco from Gracanica Monastery,
Kosovo, Serbia, 1321–1322.*



St. Hilary of Poitiers.
*Eleventh-century illumination for the Life
of St. Hilary by St. Venantius Fortu-
natus, Bishop of Poitiers (ca. 605).*

LACTANTIUS

†*after 317*

A native of Africa, he became a Christian and an apologist for the Faith, and was called in his old age (317) by Emperor Constantine to be the tutor of his son in Gaul. His *Divine Institutes* is the first Latin attempt at a summary of Christian teaching.

St. ALEXANDER, Archbishop of Alexandria

ca. 250–328

Archbishop of Alexandria from 312; commemorated May 29. It was during his episcopate that the Arian controversy arose. He first tried fatherly persuasion on Arius, then called a council (321), where the heresy was condemned. His epistles were the only written protests against Arianism before the First Ecumenical Council (325), where he took a leading part. He died after many struggles in defending Orthodoxy.



St. Ephraim the Syrian.
*Fresco from Vatopaidi Monastery,
Mount Athos.*



St. Athanasius the Great.
*Fresco by Monk Theophanes the Cretan,
Stavronikita Monastery, 1545–1546.*

[**St. NIPHON, Bishop of Constantia on Cyprus**

†before 367

He was brought up in Constantinople at the court of a great commander, but renounced the world and became a monk. For four years he was tormented by the devil, who ceaselessly said to him, "There is no God!"—but Christ appeared to him in a vision and delivered him. He had many other visions of the heavenly world, conversed with angels, discerned the thoughts of men, and was granted knowledge of the future. According to a revelation from above, St. Alexander, Archbishop of Alexandria, consecrated him as bishop of Constantia.* St. Niphon was visited by St. Athanasius the Great, then a deacon, and

* Known from ancient times as Salamis, the city was destroyed by earthquakes and rebuilt under the reign of Emperor Constantius II (337–361), whence it was given the name Constantia.—ED.

Saints and Early Church Writers

after his repose he was seen by Athanasius, his face shining like the sun.
Commemorated December 23.]

St. HILARY, Bishop of Poitiers ca. 315–ca. 367

A native of Gaul and a convert from paganism, he was one of the chief defenders of Orthodoxy in the West against the Arian heresy, for which he suffered exile. His chief work is *On the Trinity*. Commemorated January 13.

St. EPHRAIM the Syrian ca. 306–373

Repenting for the sins of his youth, he led a life of true Christian asceticism and love. He was ordained deacon by St. Basil the Great, but refused the rank of priest and (later) of bishop. Commemorated January 28. Praised by the Fathers of the fourth century for his erudition and wisdom, he was renowned especially for his commentaries on Scripture, his writings against heresies, his Church hymns, and above all for his writings on repentance, which (together with his famous Lenten prayer) are read in Orthodox churches during Great Lent.

St. ATHANASIUS the Great ca. 295–373

After a pious childhood, he was ordained deacon in 319 and accompanied St. Alexander to the Council of Nicaea in 325, succeeding him as Archbishop of Alexandria in 328. He was the great defender of the faith of Nicaea against the Arians, suffering exile five times for this. Commemorated January 18 and May 2. Besides his many anti-Arian writings, he wrote a classic exposition of the Christian doctrine of redemption (*On the Incarnation of the Word*) and a *Life of St. Anthony* that not only began a new genre of Christian literature, but was also a primary inspiration for the spread of the monastic ideal in the West as well as the East.

St. BASIL the Great 329–379

After receiving a brilliant classical education in Athens, he was baptized at about thirty years of age and then traveled to the East to see the monastic way of life. Returning to his home in Asia Minor, he retired to the desert and hoped to live there quietly. However, he was made Archbishop of Caesarea, where he became known for his works of



St. Basil the Great.
*Fresco by Monk Theophanes the Cretan,
Stavronikita Monastery,
1545–1546.*



St. Macrina the Younger.
*Wall painting from the Monastery of the
Protection of the Mother of God,
Bussy-en-Othe, France, 2004–2007.*

charity, and was placed in the center of the battle against Arianism and other heresies, suffering exile for his Orthodoxy. Commemorated on January 1 and (together with St. Gregory the Theologian and St. John Chrysostom) as one of the great “Three Hierarchs” of the Church on January 30. His writings include monastic rules and other ascetic texts, refutations of Arianism, homilies on Genesis (the *Hexaemeron*) and other books of Scripture, numerous letters, and the text of the Liturgy used even up to now in the Orthodox Church (together with the shorter version by St. John Chrysostom).

[St. MACRINA the Younger

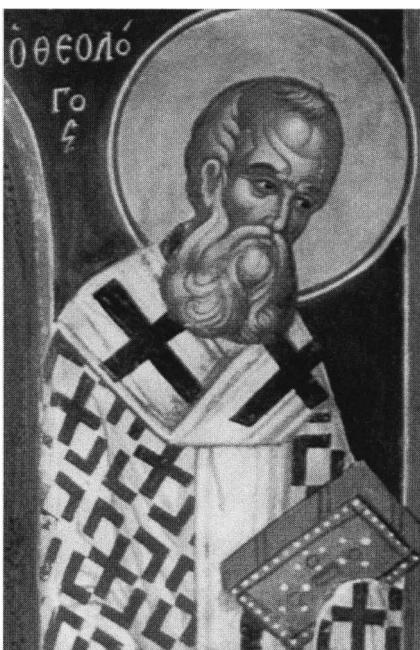
324–379

The granddaughter of St. Macrina the Elder and the daughter of St. Emilia, she was the eldest of ten children, including five others who be-

SAINTS AND EARLY CHURCH WRITERS



St. Cyril, Archbishop of Jerusalem.
Fresco from the Church of the Mother of God, Skopje, fourteenth century.



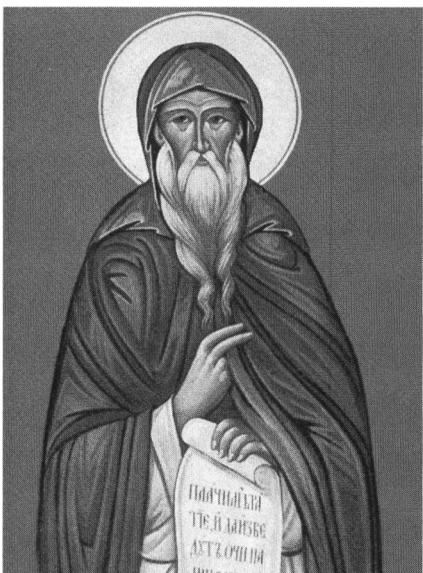
St. Gregory the Theologian.
Fresco by Monk Theophanes the Cretan, Stavronikita Monastery, 1545–1546.

came saints of the Church: Sts. Basil the Great, Naucratius, Peter of Sebaste, Gregory of Nyssa, and Thesebia. After her father died, she and her mother established a monastery at their family home in Cappadocia, where she was to all a model and teacher of the virtues. During a famine in the region, the monastery's grain reserves were miraculously replenished through her prayers and were distributed to the local inhabitants. St. Gregory of Nyssa went to visit her shortly after St. Basil's repose, only to find her near death herself. They conversed at length on the future life, and St. Gregory recorded her words in his treatise *On the Soul and the Resurrection*. Commemorated July 19.]

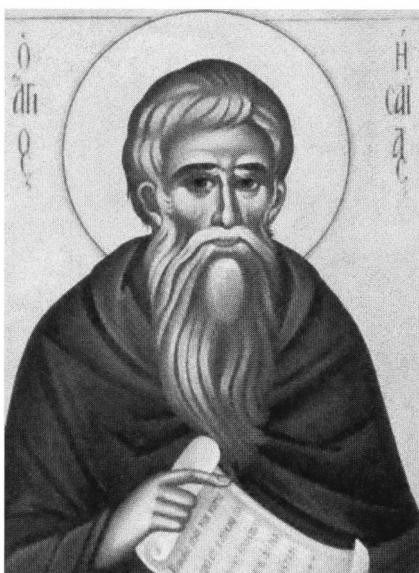
St. CYRIL, Archbishop of Jerusalem

ca. 315–386

Banished from his see three times for his confession of Orthodoxy against the Arians, he took an honored part in the Second Ecumenical



St. Macarius the Great.
*Icon by Archimandrite Cyprian, Holy
Trinity Monastery, Jordanville, New York.*



St. Isaiah the Solitary.
Contemporary Greek icon.

Council (381). Commemorated March 18. He is chiefly known for his *Catechetical Lectures*, setting forth the Orthodox Faith for catechumens, and the *Mystagogical Lectures*, concerning the Holy Mysteries.

St. GREGORY the Theologian (of Nazianzus)

ca. 329–389

A fellow student of St. Basil in Athens and his lifelong friend, he used his broad learning in the service of theology. He was one of the leaders in the Orthodox battle against Arianism, especially in the years he served as Archbishop of Constantinople (379–381), culminating in the Second Ecumenical Council (381), over part of which he presided. His *Five Theological Orations* delivered in these years gained him the title of “Theologian.” His other works include orations on feast days and saints, poems, and letters. With St. Basil and St. Gregory of Nyssa, he is one of the three great Cappadocian Fathers. Commemorated on January 25 and 30.

St. MACARIUS the Great

300–390

One of the great Egyptian desert fathers at the dawn of monasticism, he was famous for his spiritual wisdom as well as his many miracles. His *Fifty Spiritual Homilies* are a basic textbook of the principles of Orthodox spiritual and ascetic life. Commemorated January 19.

[St. ISAIAH the Solitary]

fourth century

Egyptian by birth, he withdrew to the desert of Scetis in the time of St. Macarius the Great. Studying the Holy Scriptures day and night, he authored many profitable discourses on the spiritual life. Extracts from these discourses are found in the Greek *Philokalia*, and all his extant writings are included in the Russian *Philokalia (Dobrotolyubiye)*. Commemorated July 3.]

St. GREGORY, Bishop of Nyssa

ca. 335–394

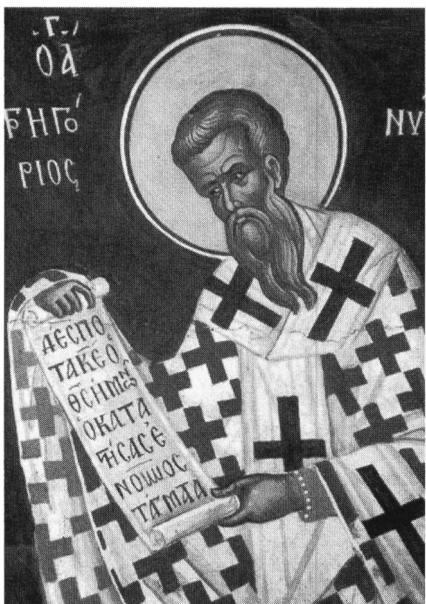
The younger brother of St. Basil the Great, he was educated chiefly by him and joined him in his monastery after giving up a worldly career. He took a prominent part in the Second Ecumenical Council. Commemorated January 10. He wrote dogmatic works (the *Great Catechism*), commentaries on Scripture (*The Making of Man*, *The Life of Moses*, etc.), ascetic treatises, apologetic works against the Arians and others, a *Life of Macrina* (his sister), orations, and letters. Known as a speculative theologian, he erred in accepting Origen's teaching of universal salvation* (while rejecting Origen's other errors).

St. AMBROSE, Bishop of Milan

ca. 333–397

When still a provincial governor and catechumen, he was raised by popular acclaim in eight days to the rank of bishop. He was a leader in the West of the battle against Arianism and paganism. Commemorated December 7. One of the greatest Fathers of the Church, he wrote

* This teaching—that every human being who ever lived, as well as the devil and all the demons, will eventually be saved—was formally condemned by the Church only after St. Gregory of Nyssa's repose: first at a local council in Constantinople in 543, and again at the Fifth Ecumenical Council, held in Constantinople in 553. See Richard Price, ed., *The Acts of the Council of Constantinople of 553*, vol. 1, p. 338; and vol. 2, pp. 123, 270–86.—ED.



St. Gregory of Nyssa.
*Fresco by Monk Theophanes the Cretan,
 Stavronikita Monastery,
 1545–1546.*

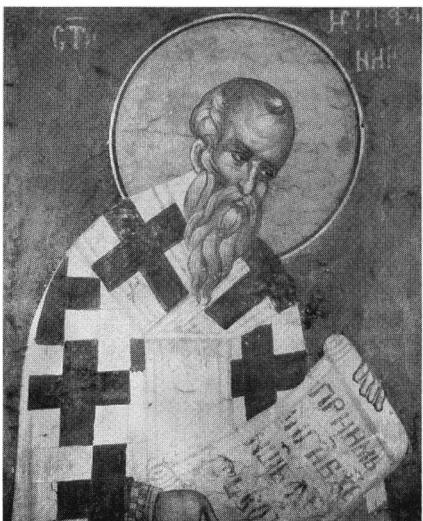


St. Ambrose, Bishop of Milan.
*Mosaic from the Chapel of St. Victor
 "of the Golden Sky," Milan, Italy,
 fifth century.*

many commentaries on Scripture, dogmatic works, books on the Sacraments and the duties of the clergy, and writings on monastic and moral life. He introduced antiphonal singing and other liturgical influences from the East into the West, and himself wrote hymns.

St. EPIPHANIUS of Salamis (Constantia) on Cyprus ca. 315–403

An enthusiastic supporter of monasticism, he founded a monastery near Gaza where he was abbot for thirty years, until being elected Metropolitan of Cyprus (367). He was suspicious of classical learning and was a special enemy of Origen. His chief works, *Ancoratus* (*The Well-anchored Man*) and *Panarion* (*The Medicine Chest*), are directed against heresies and contain the most detailed early description of them. Commemorated May 12.



St. Epiphanius of Salamis.
*Fresco from Gracanica Monastery,
Kosovo, Serbia, 1321–1322.*

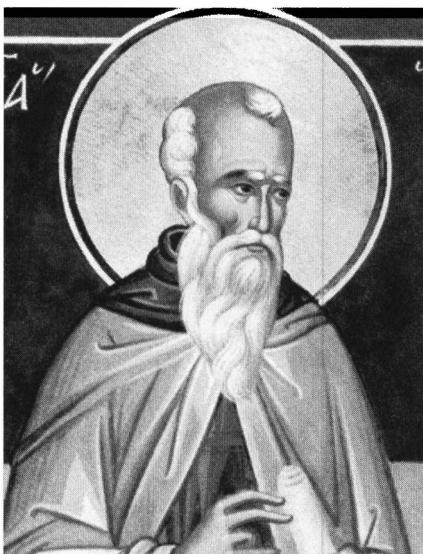


St. John Chrysostom.
*Fresco by Monk Theophanes the Cretan,
Stavronikita Monastery, 1545–1546.*

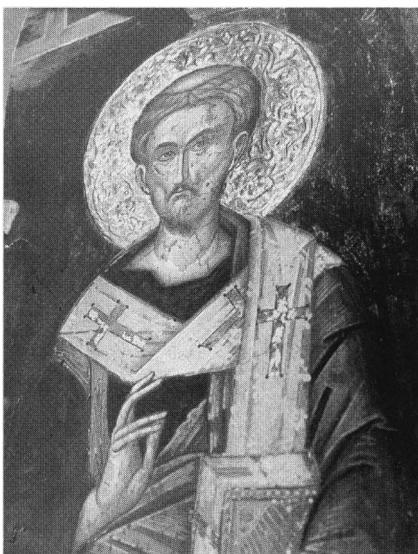
St. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

347–407

Born of Christian parents in Antioch, he received a good religious upbringing and secular education and began life as a lawyer. Being drawn by the monastic life (which he led for two years in a cave in the desert), he soon plunged into the study of Holy Scripture. After being ordained a priest, he attracted multitudes to hear his eloquent and inspired sermons, which gained for him the title of “Golden-mouth” (Chrysostom). In 398 he was raised to the post of Archbishop of Constantinople, where he was a zealous preacher of Orthodoxy and an accuser of the vices of those in high places, which led to his fall from imperial favor. On the way to his second place of exile he died. Commemorated November 13 and January 27 and 30. The largest part of his writings are sermons on Scripture, most notably the Epistles of St. Paul; his other works include *On the Priesthood*, writings on the ascetic and monastic life, and homilies on saints and feast days.



Blessed Jerome.
*Contemporary fresco from Simonos Petra
Monastery, Mount Athos.*



Blessed Augustine, Bishop of Hippo.
*Fresco by Monk Theophanes the Cretan,
from the Meteora Monastery of Varlaam,
Greece, sixteenth century.*

Blessed JEROME

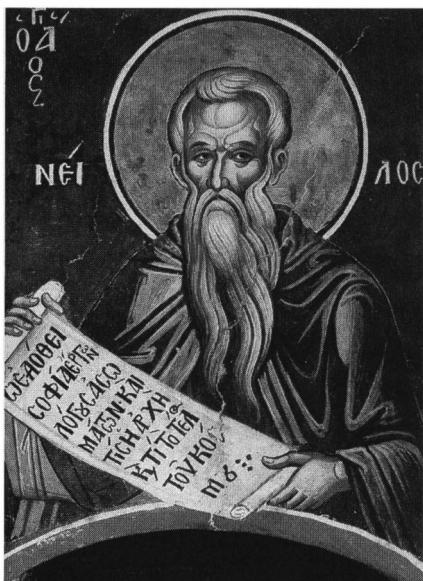
ca. 347–419

After being educated in Rome, he visited the East, where he met St. Gregory the Theologian and lived in monasteries. He returned to Rome as a priest and took part in church affairs, inspiring many of the noble Roman ladies to abandon the world. In 385 he retired to Bethlehem, where he ended his life in scholarly studies. Commemorated June 15. He translated the whole Bible into Latin (the "Vulgate"), wrote commentaries on many of its books, defended the monastic life and wrote Lives of desert fathers, and compiled brief biographies of the Christian teachers of the first four centuries.

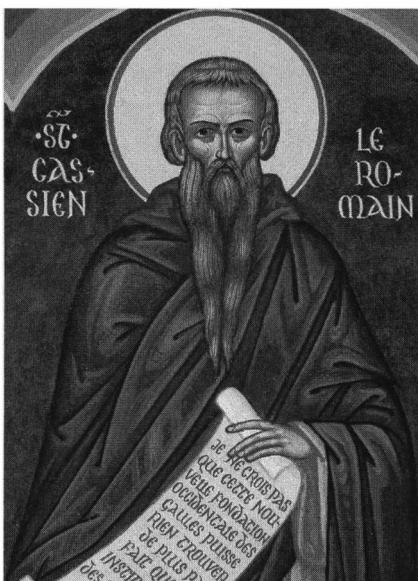
Blessed AUGUSTINE, Bishop of Hippo

354–430

After a sinful youth, he was baptized after meeting St. Ambrose and became the most renowned Christian teacher in the West. An inspired preacher, he brought many to repentance. In the East he is re-



St. Nilus of Sinai.
*Fresco by the Cretan iconographer
Tzortzis, Dionysiou Monastery,
Mount Athos, 1547.*



St. John Cassian.
*Wall painting from the Monastery of the
Protection of the Mother of God,
Bussey-en-Othe, France, 2004–2007.*

spected more for his piety and moral writings than for his theology, where, especially in his teaching on grace, his exaggerations have given rise to controversy. His writings include *The City of God* (against the pagans), *The Confessions*, *The Soliloquies*, numerous sermons and letters, and polemical works against the Manichaeans, Donatists, and Pelagians. Commemorated June 15.

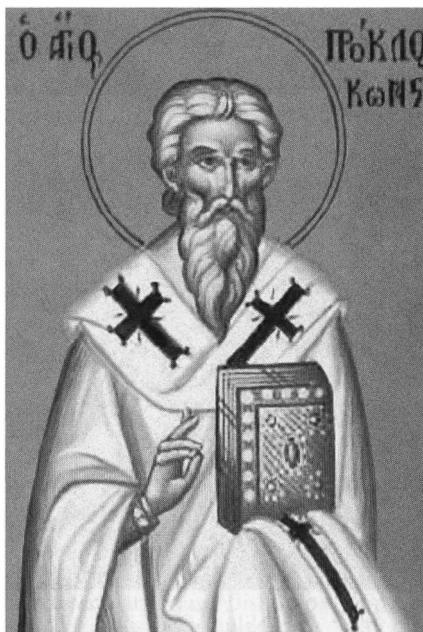
[St. NILUS of Sinai

†ca. 430

Originally from Ancyra in Galatia, he was a disciple of St. John Chrysostom, who instructed him in the study of Holy Scripture and in works of piety. For a time he served as a prefect in Constantinople under Emperor Theodosius I (St. Theodosius the Great). Together with his family, he embraced the monastic life in Egypt: his wife and daughter in a convent in Egypt, and he and his son at Mount Sinai. He wrote



St. Cyril of Alexandria.
*Fresco by Monk Theophanes the Cretan,
Stavronikita Monastery, 1545–1546.*



St. Proclus of
Constantinople.
Contemporary Greek icon.

discourses on the spiritual life (some of which have been included in *The Philokalia*), as well as many letters dealing with theological, apologetic, exegetical, and ascetic themes. As is known from his letters, he vigorously denounced the persecution of St. John Chrysostom both to Emperor Arcadius and to the imperial courtiers. Commemorated November 12.]

St. JOHN CASSIAN, presbyter of Marseilles 360–435

A Westerner, he received a monastic formation in Egypt and Palestine and heard the sermons of St. John Chrysostom in Constantinople. He returned to the West and gave the first systematic presentation of the principles of Eastern monasticism in the West in his *Institutes* and *Conferences*; he also founded monasteries for men and women in Marseilles, and wrote a book *Against Nestorius*. Commemorated February 29.

St. CYRIL of Alexandria

ca. 375–444

Patriarch of Alexandria from 412, he was the leader in the defense of Orthodoxy and the title of “Theotokos” for the Virgin Mary against the Nestorian heresy at the Third Ecumenical Council (431) and in many writings. He also wrote works against the Arians and pagans, many commentaries on Scripture, and sermons and letters. Commemorated January 18 and June 9.

[St. PROCLUS of Constantinople]

†446

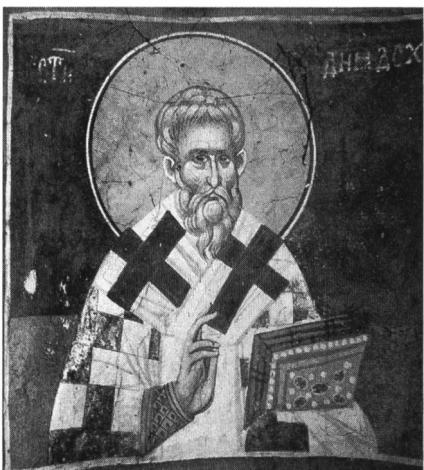
He was a disciple and novice of St. John Chrysostom (see p. 726 above), and was ordained a deacon and priest by him. As Bishop of Cyzicus, he fought against the Nestorian heresy, delivering a sermon in the presence of Nestorius himself (then Archbishop of Constantinople), in which he defended the title of “Theotokos.” This sermon was later made part of the acts of the Third Ecumenical Council (431), at which Nestorius was deposed. In 435 St. Proclus was elected Archbishop of Constantinople; three years later he had the relics of his exiled teacher, St. John Chrysostom, translated back to Constantinople from Comana and interred with great honor in the Church of the Holy Apostles. His extant works include twenty-five sermons and several letters, including a celebrated letter known as the *Tome of Proclus* (436), in which he condemned propositions made by the Nestorians. Commemorated November 20.]

[SOZOMEN (Salminius Hermias Sozomenus)]

ca. 400–ca. 450

He was born in southern Palestine into a Christian family. His grandfather, along with many others in the region, had converted to Christianity after witnessing a miracle performed by St. Hilarion the Great (293–371). St. Hilarion’s disciples became Sozomen’s first teachers, imparting to him a reverence for monasticism as well as a mastery of Greek. As an adult he went to Beirut to study law, and then to Constantinople to work as a lawyer. Beginning around 440, he undertook to write a history of the Church from the Ascension of Christ to his own times, dedicating it to the then-reigning emperor, Theodosius II. This work—of which the chapters covering the years 312 to 425 have

SAINTS AND EARLY CHURCH WRITERS



St. Diadochus of Photiki.
*Fresco from Gracanica Monastery,
Kosovo, Serbia, 1321–1322.*



Sts. Barsanuphius and John.
*Contemporary icon by Nun Katherine,
St. Andrew School of Iconography,
Indianapolis, Indiana.*

survived to the present day—is an important, painstakingly researched source of early Church history.]

Blessed THEODORET of Cyrus

ca. 393–458

Bishop of Cyrus near Antioch, he received his education in Syrian monasteries. Involved in controversy because for a long time he refused to condemn Nestorius (fearing to go to an extreme), he later became a confessor of Orthodoxy against the heresy of Eutyches (Monophysitism)* at the Fourth Ecumenical Council (451). His writings are quite various and include, apart from his polemical works, commentaries on Scripture, the last great refutation of paganism (which reveals his broad knowledge of pagan literature), an *Ecclesiastical History* that continues Eusebius' narrative to 428, a *History of the Lovers of God* (the Lives of thirty Syrian ascetics known to him), and many letters.

* The idea that in Christ there is only one nature.—ED.

[St. DIADOCHUS of Photiki

ca. 400–before 486

As Bishop of Photiki in Epirus (present-day northwestern Greece), he showed himself to be one of the chief opponents of the Monophysite heresy. In his treatise *On Spiritual Knowledge and Discrimination* (included in *The Philokalia*), he countered the false teaching of the Messalian (Euchite) sect that Baptism and the other Mysteries were powerless to drive the devil completely out of the soul. Commemorated March 29.]

[Sts. BARSANUPHIUS the Great and JOHN the Prophet

sixth century

St. Barsanuphius was an Egyptian who as a young man embraced the monastic life in Palestine. After years of coenobitic life, he went to the monastery of Abba Seridus near Gaza, built a cell a short distance away, and lived there in reclusion, seeing no one except St. Seridus. In his weekly visits to St. Barsanuphius, St. Seridus brought him questions from the monastery's monks and from laymen, and wrote down his answers of spiritual direction. After some years Barsanuphius left his cell to his disciple John and settled nearby. St. John conducted the same life of silence as did his elder, and like him was vouchsafed the gifts of clairvoyance and prophecy, so that he was able to communicate with his elder without having to see or write to him. He too would answer questions brought to him by Abba Seridus. A collection of over eight hundred answers from Sts. Barsanuphius and John has come down to us, touching upon topics as various as watchfulness and prayer, social relations, points of Scriptural interpretation, and Church doctrines. Commemorated February 6.]

[St. Abba DOROTHEUS of Gaza

sixth century

Originally from Antioch, he entered the monastery of Abba Seridus near Gaza, and gave himself with full trust to the direction of the holy Elders Barsanuphius and John. (About a hundred of his questions to the Elders, together with their answers to him, are included in the collection mentioned above.) After the deaths of Sts. John the Prophet and Seridus, and St. Barsanuphius' withdrawal into complete seclusion, St. Dorotheus went to found a monastery between Gaza and



St. Abba Dorotheus of Gaza.
*Fresco from the Dousikion Monastery,
Pyla, Trikala, Greece, sixteenth century.*



St. Isaac the Syrian.
*Contemporary icon by Fr. Pachomios,
Mount Athos.*

Maiuma. There he directed his disciples in the spirit he had received from Sts. Barsanuphius and John. His *Spiritual Instructions*, which he bequeathed to his monks, is considered one of the Church's main primers of monastic and spiritual life. Commemorated August 13.]

[OECUMENIUS

late sixth century

He produced the first Greek commentary on the book of the Apocalypse (Revelation). From theological statements in this work, it appears that he embraced a non-Chalcedonian Christology,* not accepting the formulation of the Fourth Ecumenical Council regarding

* Specifically, the Christology of the heretic Severus of Antioch, who, while distancing himself from the expressions of the above-mentioned Eutyches, still held that Christ had only one nature at His Incarnation. See the evaluation of Oecumenius' theology in Eugenia Scarvelis Constantinou, *Andrew of Caesarea and the Apocalypse in the Ancient Church of the East*, part 1, pp. 14–27.—ED.

the two natures of Christ. It was probably due to this, combined with his sometimes fanciful interpretations of the book of the Apocalypse, that his commentary was not accepted by the Orthodox Church.

[ANDREW, Archbishop of Caesarea

late sixth–early seventh century

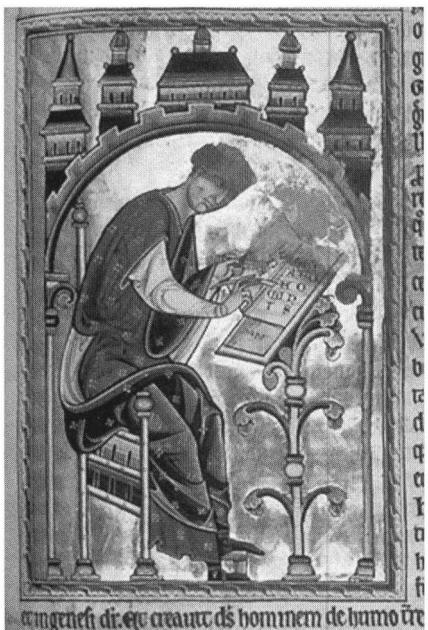
As a hierarch in Cappadocia, Archbishop Andrew was a well-known and respected exegete. At the request of a fellow bishop, he produced the second Greek commentary on the book of the Apocalypse—primarily, it appears, as an Orthodox alternative to Oecumenius' attempt. (He frequently cited Oecumenius' interpretations, usually to refute them, and sometimes to add to them.) This balanced, sober, and doctrinally sound commentary drew frequently on passages by earlier Fathers concerning the book of the Apocalypse. Translated into Georgian, Slavonic, and Latin, it became the standard and authoritative commentary on the Apocalypse for the Eastern Orthodox Church. Of Archbishop Andrew's other works, only a series of answers to exegetical questions, known as the *Therapeutike*, has come down to us.]

[St. ISAAC the Syrian

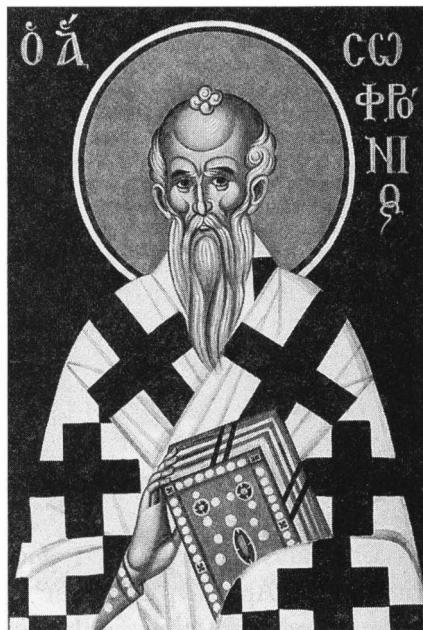
seventh century

Born in Qatar on the western shore of Persian Gulf at the beginning of the seventh century, he was the Bishop of Nineveh (in present-day Iraq) for a short time before retiring into solitude, first in the wilderness of Mount Matout, and later in the monastery of Rabban Shapur. A selection of his *Ascetical Homilies*—translated from Syriac into Greek at the end of the eighth century, into Georgian in the tenth century, and into Slavonic in the fourteenth century—acquired a prominent place in the ascetic literature of the Orthodox Church, being used as a manual of prayer, contemplation, and spiritual warfare by those living in stillness. Commemorated January 28.]*

* St. Isaac is absent from the Greek hagiographical collections but is commemorated in the Slav collections. It is now generally known that he belonged to the Church of the East, which alone was present during the seventh century in the area he inhabited, and which did not recognize the Third and subsequent Ecumenical Councils.—ED.



St. Isidore of Seville writing *The Etymologies*. Illumination from the Aberdeen Bestiary, twelfth century.



St. Sophronius of Jerusalem.
Contemporary fresco from Ormylia
Monastery, Greece.

[St. ISIDORE, Archbishop of Seville

ca. 560–636

Born into a noble family of Cathagenes in Spain, he shared in the work of his older brother, St. Leander, Archbishop of Seville, in converting the Arian Visigoths to the Orthodox Faith. When his brother died, he was consecrated as his successor in Seville, the first see of the Church in Spain. He continued his work among the Visigoths, which eventually met with complete success: Arianism, which had been the original form of Christianity among the Visigoths, was eradicated. Known as a miracle-worker, he was also recognized by his contemporaries as the most learned Western European of his age—an estimation that is shared by scholars even today. His principal work, *The Etymologies*—a voluminous compilation of all the knowledge up to his time—was the primary source of knowledge in the West for many centuries. Commemorated April 4.]

[St. SOPHRONIUS of Jerusalem

ca. 560–638

In his late teens and early twenties he traveled throughout the monastic centers of Asia Minor, Egypt, and Rome with his spiritual father, Monk John Moschus, author of the monastic chronicle *The Spiritual Meadow*. Many years later, as a monk in a monastery near Carthage, he was the spiritual father of St. Maximus the Confessor, inspiring him to defend the Faith against the newly arisen heresy of Monothelitism.* Elected Patriarch of Jerusalem in 634, St. Sophronius actively opposed the new heresy, sending a synodical letter to all the patriarchs on how it conflicts with Orthodox doctrine. This letter has been preserved along with a number of his sermons and poems, as well as his moving *Life of St. Mary of Egypt*, which is read in Orthodox churches every year during Great Lent. Commemorated March 11.]

St. MAXIMUS the Confessor

580–662

Born of a noble family of Constantinople, he was secretary of Emperor Heraclius. Having left the world and become a monk, he engaged in an energetic battle against the heresy of Monothelitism, gaining its condemnation at a council in Rome.** For his confession of Orthodoxy his tongue was cut out and his hand cut off. Commemorated January 21 and August 13. His chief writings are on spiritual life (*Four Hundred Texts on Love* and others); his other works include explanations of the Liturgy and the books of St. Dionysius the Areopagite, and polemical writings against the Monothelites and Monophysites.***

[St. BEDE the Venerable

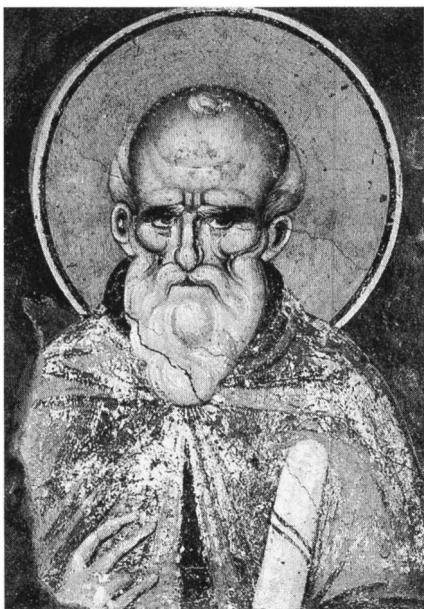
672–735

He was a priest and monk at the Northumbrian monastery of St. Peter at Wearmouth (today part of Sunderland, England), and of its daughter monastery, St. Paul's, in modern Jarrow. His varied works in-

* The idea that in Christ there is only one will.—ED.

** The Lateran Council of 649. In 680, less than two decades after St. Maximus' repose, the Monothelite heresy was condemned at the Sixth Ecumenical Council, held in Constantinople.—ED.

*** A large part of St. Maximus' writings is also devoted to combating and correcting the errors of Origenism.—ED.



St. Maximus the Confessor.
*Fresco from the Church of the Protaton,
 Karyes, Mount Athos, fourteenth century.*



St. Bede the Venerable.
Contemporary icon from Britain.

clude *The Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, *The History of the Abbots of Wearmouth and Jarrow*, *The Life of St. Cuthbert of Lindisfarne*, commentaries on many books of the Old and New Testaments, a Martyrology, homilies, and hymns, as well as treatises on chronology, grammar, music, and natural phenomena. Commemorated May 25.]

St. JOHN DAMASCENE

ca. 675–749

A minister under the caliph in Damascus, he wrote three letters in defense of the holy icons, for which he was slandered before the caliph and his hand was cut off. After his miraculous healing by the Mother of God, he abandoned the world and retired to St. Sabbas' monastery near Jerusalem, where he wrote many books. His most famous work is *On the Orthodox Faith*, which is the best summary of the teachings of the early Church Fathers. He also wrote polemical works against various



St. John Damascene.
Fresco by Monk Theophanes the Cretan,
Stavronikita Monastery, 1545–1546.



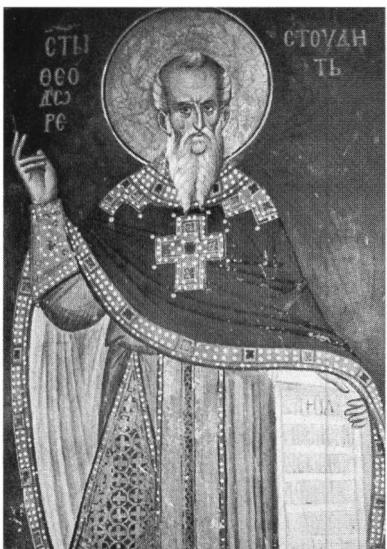
St. Cosmas of Maiuma.
Fresco from the Meteora Monastery of
Varlaam, Greece, sixteenth century.

heresies (most notably the three letters against the Iconoclasts) and sermons on feast days. He is renowned as the writer of many feast-day hymns and canons (including the service of Pascha), and as the compiler of the *Octoechos*, whose verses (especially the dogmatika) are a summing up of Orthodox teaching. Commemorated December 4.

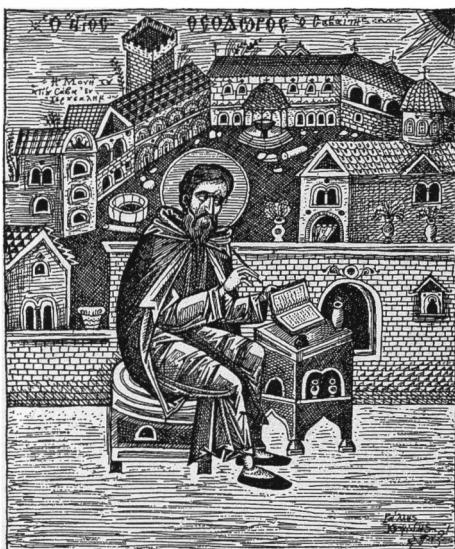
[St. COSMAS of Maiuma

ca. 787

Orphaned at a young age, he was adopted by Sergius, the father of St. John Damascene. Together with St. John he received an excellent education under the tutelage of a learned monk from Sicily (also named Cosmas), and later became a monk of St. Sabbas' monastery. In 743 he was consecrated as Bishop of Maiuma, located on the southern coast of Palestine. He is well-known as a composer of liturgical canons, fourteen of which are sung every year in the Orthodox Church. His most fre-



St. Theodore the Studite.
*Fresco from Decani Monastery,
Kosovo, Serbia, 1338–1347.*



St. Theodore the Great Ascetic.
*Iconographic drawing by
Rallis Kopsidis, 1956.*

quently sung hymn is to the Mother of God: "More honorable than the Cherubim ..." He also wrote commentaries on the poems of St. Gregory the Theologian; his canon for the Nativity of Christ was based on a Nativity sermon of St. Gregory. Commemorated October 12 or 14.]

[St. THEODORE the Studite (the Confessor)

759–826

He was born into an aristocratic family in Constantinople. His uncle St. Plato of Sakkudion (†813)—a confessor of Orthodoxy against the Iconoclasts—inspired his entire family to embrace the monastic life. As abbot of the Studite monastery in Constantinople, St. Theodore shone as a guide of souls and a composer of liturgical hymns, including many hymns of the *Lenten Triodion*. When a new period of Iconoclasm began under Emperor Leo the Armenian, St. Theodore wrote treatises and letters in defense of the icons, for which he was exiled, scourged, and imprisoned. Shortly before his death he dictated his *Testament* for the guidance of the Studite monastery, which was later incorporated

into the Rules of monasteries on Mount Athos and elsewhere. Commemorated November 11.]

[St. THEODORE the Great Ascetic

†ca. 848

A monk of St. Sabbas' monastery, he was elected Bishop of Edessa in Syria.* He was an outstanding preacher, and also a great apologist: his public disputation with those outside the Church led to the conversion of many to the Orthodox Faith. Leading a strict ascetic life, he was granted by God the gift of healing the sick. This, too, resulted in many non-believers embracing the Faith, especially Muslims. Two works attributed to him are included in *The Philokalia*. Commemorated July 19.]

St. PHOTIUS the Great

810–893

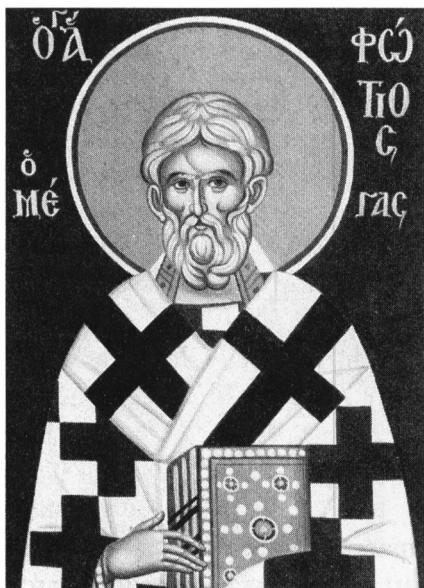
Of noble birth and a relative of martyrs and confessors, he occupied a high place at the Byzantine court when he was elected Patriarch of Constantinople, even though he was still a layman. He suffered much from the political intrigues of the court, but while he was Patriarch he was able to state clearly the Orthodox position against the pretensions to universal rule of the Pope of Rome and against the Western error of the *Filioque*. He also did much for the conversion of the Slavs, sending the mission of Sts. Cyril and Methodius. He wrote on the Procession of the Holy Spirit, against the Paulicians (a new Manichaean sect), dogmatic works, sermons, letters; he made an important collection of the Church's canons, and in his *Library* made an excellent critical compilation of a number of both Christian and pagan works. Commemorated February 6.

[St. SYMEON Metaphrastes

†late tenth century

Born in Constantinople, he was an imperial chancellor (logothete) during the reigns of three emperors. Retiring from the world and becoming a monk, he devoted himself to collecting and editing the Lives

* It has been suggested in recent times that he was actually Bishop of Harran, near the present-day border of Turkey and Syria. See Hieromonk Makarios of Simonos Petra, *The Synaxarion*, vol. 6, p. 196 (2008).—ED.



St. Photius the Great.
*Contemporary fresco from Ormylia
Monastery, Greece.*



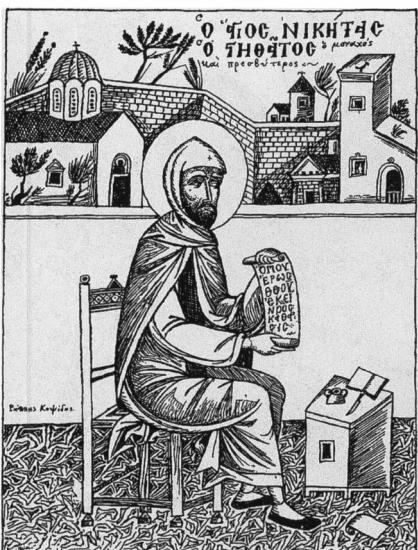
St. Symeon the New Theologian.
*Contemporary fresco from Simonos Petra
Monastery, Mount Athos.*

of the saints: a monumental work that remains the basis of Orthodox *Synaxaria* to this day. The name by which he is known, *Metaphrastes*, means “interpreter” or “translator.” He also adapted and abridged the ascetical treatises of Sts. Basil the Great and Macarius the Great; his version of the latter is included in *The Philokalia*. Commemorated November 9.]

St. SYMEON the New Theologian

949–1022

Raised in the imperial court of Constantinople, he early attended the Studite monastery where, under the direction of Symeon the Devout, he labored in the strictest ascetic life. Elected abbot of the monastery of St. Mamas, he renewed it spiritually with his teachings. He suffered much from monks who did not desire such strict teaching, as well as over the veneration of his own spiritual father after the latter’s death. Commemorated March 12 and October 12. His homilies on



Nicetas Stethatos.
Iconographic drawing by Rallis Kopsidis,
1956.



St. Peter Damascene.
Iconographic drawing by Rallis Kopsidis,
1952.

spiritual life, on the highest as well as a common level, have an honored place in *The Philokalia*, and are so profound that they have earned him the title of "New Theologian."

[NICETAS STETHATOS

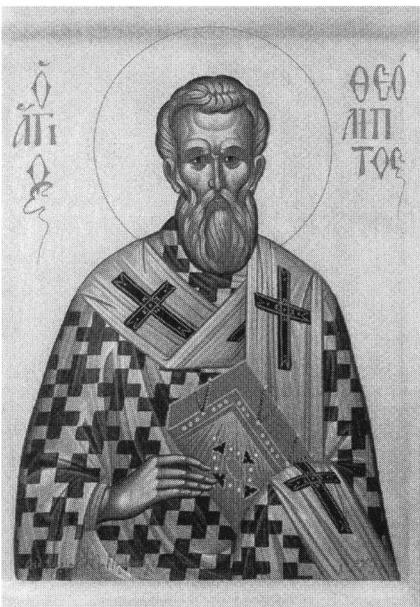
ca. 1000—ca. 1090

A priest-monk of the Studite monastery, he was the disciple and biographer of St. Symeon the New Theologian.* Some years after St. Symeon's repose, as a result of a vision in which the Saint appeared to him, Nicetas prepared an edition of Symeon's works. At the time of the Schism of 1054, Nicetas wrote two books in defense of the Orthodox Church against the Latins. Among his other theological writings are treatises on the soul, spiritual contemplation, the new heaven and new earth, and the angelic and ecclesiastical hierarchies. His three Centu-

* Nicetas' biography of St. Symeon was translated for the first time into English by Fr. Seraphim Rose and included in St. Symeon the New Theologian, *The Sin of Adam and Our Redemption* (republished as FCM).—ED.



Blessed Theophylact of Ohrid.
Printed Slavic icon of the
seventeenth century.



Theoleptus, Metropolitan
of Philadelphia.
Contemporary Greek icon.

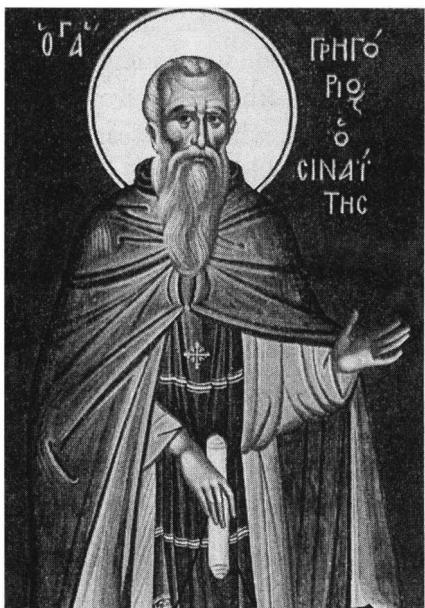
ries of texts on the practice of the virtues, the purification of the *nous*, and the acquisition of higher knowledge are contained in *The Philokalia*.]

[St. PETER DAMASCENE

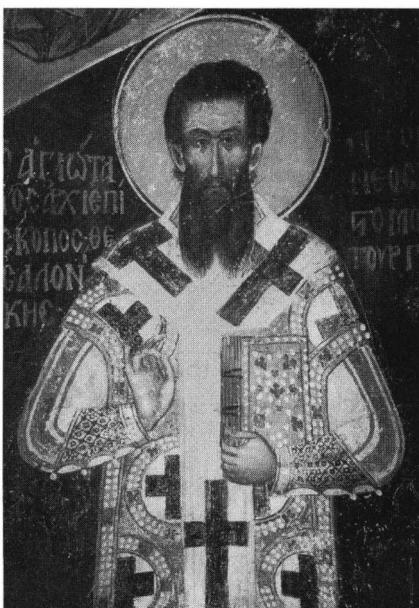
Living in stillness in a small monastic community, he immersed himself in the writings of the Holy Fathers. Out of his study and practical application of these texts, he produced a rich treasury of instructions on prayer, watchfulness, and the cultivation of the virtues. This work was later included in its entirety in *The Philokalia*. Because it cites the teachings of numerous Fathers who came before St. Peter, St. Nicodemus of the Holy Mountain (see below) called it “a concentrated *Philokalia* within the more extended *Philokalia*.” Commemorated February 9.]

eleventh-twelfth century

Saints and Early Church Writers



St. Gregory the Sinaite.
Contemporary fresco from Simonos Petra Monastery, Mount Athos.



St. Gregory Palamas.
Fresco from Vatopaidi Monastery, Mount Athos, 1371.

Blessed THEOPHYLACT of Ohrid and Bulgaria ca. 1050–ca. 1110

A native of Constantinople, he received a good classical education and became Archbishop of Ohrid in Bulgaria when it was still under Byzantine rule. He is mainly known for his commentaries on almost all the books of the New Testament, where he followed closely the commentaries of St. John Chrysostom. He wrote also homilies, letters, and an accusation against the errors of the Latins which, while mild in tone, emphasizes the impossibility of accepting the *Filioque*. [Commemorated December 31.]

[THEOLEPTUS, Metropolitan of Philadelphia ca. 1250–1322]

After his monastic tonsure, he suffered imprisonment because of his outspoken opposition to the union between the Orthodox Church and the Church of Rome which was promulgated at the Council of Ly-

ons (1274). In 1284 he was elevated to the see of Philadelphia, where he served as metropolitan for nearly forty years. He was widely revered as a spiritual father and a teacher of hesychasm (the practice of noetic prayer and inner stillness). St. Gregory Palamas, who in his early years was Metropolitan Theoleptus' disciple, described him as "an authentic theologian and a trustworthy visionary of the truth of God's mysteries" (*In Defense of the Holy Hesychasts* 1.2.12). Some of Theoleptus' spiritual instructions are included in *The Philokalia*. Commemorated June 25.]

[St. GREGORY the Sinaite

ca. 1265–1346

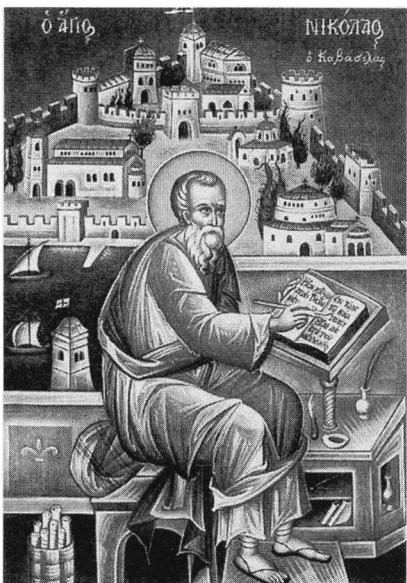
He spent the early years of his monastic life on Cyprus, Mount Sinai, and Crete. Having learned the practice of noetic prayer from the hermit Arsenius, he went to Mount Athos, where many monks flocked to him for instruction in the hesychast way of life. Due to incursions by the Turks, he and his disciples were forced to leave Athos, eventually settling in Paroria, on the frontier between Bulgaria and the Byzantine empire. Through his spiritual friendship with the rulers of Byzantium, Bulgaria, Serbia, and Wallachia, and through his numerous disciples of various nationalities, St. Gregory became the fountainhead of the vast hesychast movement that spread from Byzantium to the Slavic world. Five of his theological and ascetic works are found in *The Philokalia*. Commemorated April 6 and August 8.]

St. GREGORY Palamas

1296–1359

A learned monk of Mount Athos of exalted spiritual life; later he became Archbishop of Thessaloniki. He fought the heresy of the Latinizer Barlaam of Calabria, who rose against the contemplative life of the hesychast monks and taught that the light of Mount Tabor and the grace of God in general is something created. St. Gregory, in his many treatises on this subject, distinguishes between the Essence and the Energies of God, both being equally Uncreated; through the Uncreated Energies man can have true communion with God, which would not be the case if Barlaam's opinions were correct. Commemorated November 14 and on the Second Sunday of Lent—the latter feast a special recognition of his importance in the defense of Orthodoxy.

SAINTS AND EARLY CHURCH WRITERS



St. Nicholas Cabasilas.
*Contemporary fresco from the Monastery
of the Evangelist John the Theologian,
Souroti, Thessaloniki, Greece.*



St. Symeon, Archbishop of
Thessaloniki.
Contemporary Greek icon.

[St. NICHOLAS Cabasilas

ca. 1322–after 1391

He received his spiritual formation from Dorotheus Blates, a close disciple of St. Gregory Palamas and later Metropolitan of Thessaloniki. Educated in Constantinople, he served for a time as imperial counselor. During a council held in Constantinople in 1351, he actively defended the hesychast theology of St. Gregory Palamas against the Saint's opponents. Later he retired from public life and gave himself over to prayer and contemplation. It is not known whether he remained a layman or became a monk, but it is recorded that many important figures in the empire, including the emperor himself, regarded him as their spiritual father. His two major works, *A Commentary on the Divine Liturgy* and *The Life in Christ*, elucidate the theology of the Holy Mysteries of the Church, explaining how they unite man with the God-man Christ. Commemorated June 20.]



St. Nilus of Sora.
*Icon by the A. V. Mel'nikov School of
Iconography, Sergiev Posad, Russia, 2001.*



St. Nilus the Myrrh-gusher.
*Fresco from Vatopaidi Monastery,
Mount Athos.*

[**St. SYMEON, Archbishop of Thessaloniki** †1430

He served as Archbishop of Thessaloniki from 1417 until his repose. During those difficult years, when the city was about to fall under the Turkish yoke, he tirelessly exhorted his flock to remain true to the Orthodox Faith and place all their hope in God. He wrote a discourse on the priesthood, composed many hymns and prayers, and compiled a spiritual commentary on all the rites of the Orthodox Church, which remains to this day as one of the primary sources of information on Byzantine liturgics. Commemorated September 15.]

[**St. NILUS of Sora** 1433–1508

Having begun his monastic life in Russia, he spent several years on Mount Athos in order to learn the hesychast way of life that was still flourishing there. On his return to Russia, he established there the

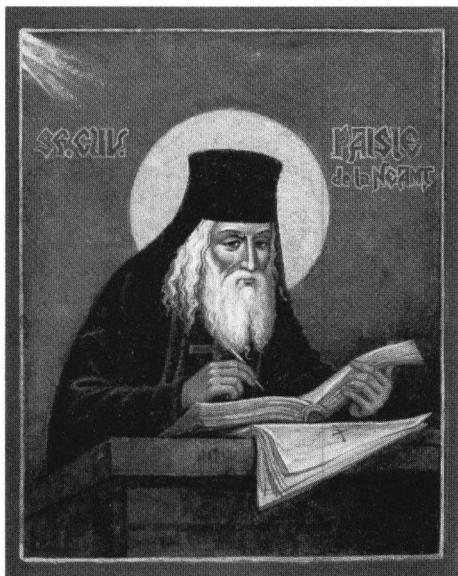
“skete” form of monasticism, which—being the “middle way” between living alone (eremitism) and living in large monasteries (coenobitism)—consists of a small community of monks residing in separate cells and coming together for church services. He composed a Rule of skete life for his monastic brethren, in which he imparted the tradition of the Holy Fathers on inner stillness, the practice of the Jesus Prayer, and the struggle against the passions. He taught that it is better for monasteries to be poor, without many possessions or land holdings, so that the inhabitants will not be distracted from their true calling. Commemorated April 7 and May 7.]

[St. NILUS the Myrrh-gusher of Mount Athos †1651

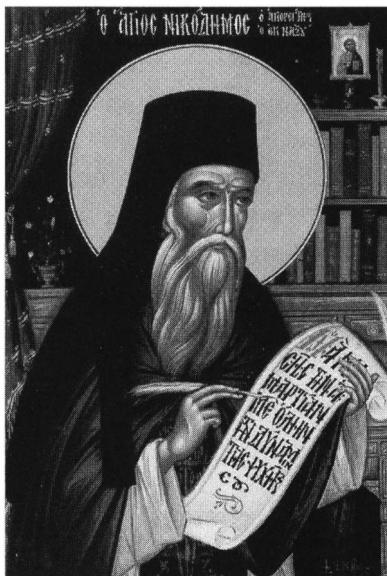
Born in the Peloponnese, he went with his uncle, Hieromonk Macarius, to the Monastery of Malevi, where he became a monk and a priest. Desiring greater solitude, he and his uncle went to live in a cell on Mount Athos. After Fr. Macarius’ repose, St. Nilus found a cave on a sheer cliff overlooking the sea, almost inaccessible to any living thing. There he lived until his repose, unknown to all, with God as the only witness of his spiritual struggles. When he was buried near his cave, a fragrant myrrh flowed from his body so abundantly that it poured into the sea hundreds of feet below, where people came in boats to collect it for its healing properties. Accounts of his posthumous appearances, healings, and teachings have been recorded on Mount Athos. Commemorated May 7 and November 12.]

[St. PAISIUS Velichkovsky 1722–1794

Born in the Ukraine, as a young man he went to the sketes of Wallachia (in present-day Romania) for monastic training. From there he went to Mount Athos, where he sought out the writings of the hesychast Fathers, began to translate them from Greek into Slavonic, and put their teachings into practice. Soon monks—primarily of the Moldavian and Slavonic tongues—came to him seeking to learn the way of the Fathers. He and his disciples later settled in Moldavia (also now part of Romania), where a thousand monks gathered around him. He tirelessly continued to produce translations of hesychast writings, which eventually formed the Slavonic *Philokalia* (*Dobrotolyubije*), pub-



St. Paisius Velichkovsky.
Contemporary Romanian icon.

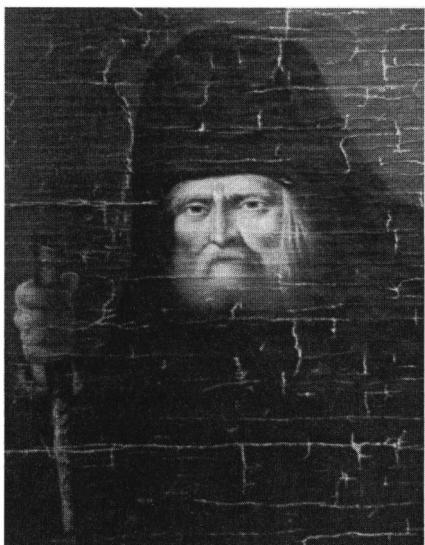


St. Nicodemus of the
Holy Mountain.
Contemporary Greek icon.

lished in Moscow in 1793. These translations, together with his influence through the activity of his disciples, led to a widespread blossoming of sanctity in nineteenth-century Russia. Commemorated November 15.]

St. NICODEMUS of the Holy Mountain 1749–1809

A monk of various sketes of Mount Athos, he was a leader (together with St. Macarius of Corinth in Greece and St. Paisius Velichkovsky for Russia) of the eighteenth-century Orthodox movement of return to the sources of the Church's faith and piety. He combined the strictest ascetic life with an immense labor of writing. His works are all directed to the practical benefit of Orthodox Christians; they include Lives of all the major saints of the Church (*Great Synaxarion*) and of the New Martyrs of Greece, the *Evergetinos* (sayings of the desert fathers), *A Handbook of Spiritual Counsel*, *Unseen Warfare*,



St. Seraphim of Sarov.
Portrait of 1832.



St. Philaret, Metropolitan of Moscow.
Nineteenth-century engraving.

commentaries especially on the Epistles of St. Paul, *The Rudder* (a collection of the Church's canons), and many others.* He was a zealous defender of Orthodox teaching and practice against the innovations of the Latins. Commemorated July 14.

[St. SERAPHIM of Sarov

1754–1833

As a young man he entered Sarov Monastery in Russia, remaining there until his repose. For his humility and great labors of prayer, he was granted visions of Christ, the Mother of God, and the heavenly world, and was vouchsafed the gifts of miracle-working and clairvoyance. Thousands of pilgrims flocked to him to ask his prayers and spiritual counsel. His teachings were written down by his disciples and published after his repose: *Spiritual Instructions to Laymen and Monks* (edited by St. Philaret, Metropolitan of Moscow) and *Conversation of*

* Along with St. Macarius of Corinth, St. Nicodemus was responsible for preparing the Greek *Philokalia* for publication, which took place in 1782.—ED.

SAINTS AND EARLY CHURCH WRITERS

St. Seraphim of Sarov on the Aim of the Christian Life. Commemorated January 2 and July 19.]

[St. PHILARET (Drozdov), Metropolitan of Moscow 1782–1867

An ascetic and miracle-worker, he was at the same time an outstanding orator and a penetrating theological writer, fully in the tradition of the Holy Fathers who preceded him. As leader of the Russian Church, he gave crucial support to the spiritual revival generated by St. Paisius Velichkovsky and his monastic followers. He took part in preparing the publication of the Bible and Patristic writings in modern Russian, and authored over two hundred works of his own—the most influential being his *Longer Catechism of the Orthodox, Catholic, Eastern Church*, which has remained a standard text in Russia and other Orthodox countries since its publication in 1823. Commemorated November 19.]

St. IGNATIUS Brianchaninov, Bishop of the Caucasus 1807–1867

An offspring of the monastic tradition of St. Paisius Velichkovsky, he was a leading apologist in Russia for Orthodox monasticism and Patristic Orthodoxy against the errors of modern secular “enlightenment.” He was an especially keen critic of wrong approaches in spiritual life and exposed the many forms of spiritual deception (*prelest*). His works include *The Arena* (addressed to the monastics of the last times), *On the Prayer of Jesus*, and numerous homilies on aspects of the spiritual life. [Commemorated April 30.]

St. THEOPHAN the Recluse, Bishop of Tambov 1815–1894

After retiring from his bishopric in 1866, he conducted a work of Orthodox enlightenment in Russia similar to that of St. Nicodemus in Greece. He translated into Russian *The Philokalia*, *Unseen Warfare*, and many homilies of St. Symeon the New Theologian; he wrote detailed commentaries on the Epistles of St. Paul, several basic textbooks of spiritual life (*The Path to Salvation*, *The Spiritual Life and How to Be Attuned to It*), and numerous letters on spiritual and moral life. Like St. Ignatius, he was especially concerned to preserve the purity of the Or-

SAINTS AND EARLY CHURCH WRITERS

thodox worldview against modern “enlightenment.” [Commemorated January 10.]

St. JOHN of Kronstadt 1829–1908

A Russian parish priest who was a wonderworker in the spirit of the ancient saints of Orthodoxy, he revealed himself in his diaries and sermons as a defender of Patristic faith and piety against the errors of modern times. His *My Life in Christ* is a treasury of Orthodox attitudes and worldview. Commemorated October 19 and December 20.

St. NECTARIOS, Metropolitan of Pentapolis and Wonderworker of Aegina 1846–1920

Pious and humble from his childhood, he was ordained bishop in the Church of Alexandria, only to suffer deposition due to the envy of his colleagues. The last thirty years of his life he spent as director of a seminary school and then as builder and spiritual father of a convent in Aegina. His numerous miracles after his death have revealed him as a wonderworker of our times. Always intent on the Orthodox enlightenment of himself and others, he wrote numerous works on aspects of Orthodox faith and piety, including a thorough refutation of the errors of Roman Catholicism; his aim was always to strengthen Christians in the simplicity, love, and self-sacrifice of genuine Orthodoxy. Commemorated November 9.

[Brief descriptions of other saints and elders of modern times are provided in appendix 2 above.]



Detail of an icon of the Resurrection of Christ (the harrowing of hell),
showing Adam being delivered from hell by Christ.
Fresco from the Chora Church of the Holy Savior,
Constantinople, 1315–1321.

NOTES

In notes for parts of the present book taken from Fr. Seraphim's writings or lectures, bracketed portions have been added by the editor. These bracketed portions provide information about alternate editions and translations of cited works, most of them published after Fr. Seraphim's repose.

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17. Letter of Fr. Seraphim Rose to Alexey Young, April 5/18, 1973.
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26. Letter of Fr. Seraphim Rose to Alexey Young, July 4/17, 1973.
27. Letter of Fr. Seraphim Rose to Alexey Young, February 25/March 10, 1974.
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2. St. Basil the Great, *Hexaemeron* 9.1, FC 46, pp. 135–36.
 3. St. John Damascene, *On the Orthodox Faith* 1.2, FC 37, p. 167.
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 6. St. Isaac the Syrian, *Ascetical Homilies* 19, *Tvorenija*, p. 85 [trans. Holy Transfiguration Monastery, *Homily* 29, p. 143] [*Homily* 74 in the printed Greek text edited by Nikephoros Theotokis (1770)].

Afterword: FR. SERAPHIM'S LAST TALK ON CREATION AND EVOLUTION

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3. Ibid. 1.5, SC 122.212 (FCM, p. 103). (This passage in SC 122 is missing in the PPS 14 translation.)
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6. St. Gregory of Nyssa, *On the Making of Man* 30.34, NPNF 2 5, p. 427.
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10. St. Irenaeus of Lyons, *Demonstration of the Apostolic Preaching* 15, PPS 17, p. 49.
11. St. Athanasius the Great, *On the Incarnation of the Word* 3, SC 199.272–74, NPNF 2 4, pp. 37–38*.
12. Canon 109 of the “African Code,” in *The Seven Ecumenical Councils*, NPNF 2 14, p. 496. In *The Rudder* (Pedalion) of St. Nicodemus of the Holy Mountain, this Canon is listed as Canon 120 of the Council of Carthage.
13. St. Gregory the Theologian, *Oration 38: On the Theophany, or the Nativity of the Savior* 12, SC 358.130, NPNF 2 7, p. 348*.
14. St. Maximus the Confessor, *Ambigua* 45, PG 91.1353B.
15. St. Gregory the Sinaite, *On Commandments and Doctrines* 8, *Philokalia* (Greek) 4, p. 32, *Philokalia* 4, p. 213; see also 46, 81, *Philokalia* 4, pp. 221, 227.
16. St. John Chrysostom, *Homilies on Genesis* 15.4, 16.1, 17.1, 17.7, FC 74, pp. 202–3, 207, 222, 238 (15.14, 16.2, 17.1, 17.30); St. Maximus the Confessor, *Ambigua* 45, PG 91.1353B.
17. St. Irenaeus of Lyons, *Demonstration of the Apostolic Preaching* 13, PPS 17, p. 48; St. Ephraim, *Commentary on Genesis* 2.12.1, FC 91, p. 105; St. Gregory the Sinaite, *On Commandments and Doctrines* 9, *Philokalia* 4, p. 213.
18. St. Athanasius the Great, *Commen-*

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20. St. John Chrysostom, *On the Statues* 11.3, PG 49.122, NPNF 1 9, p. 414*. See Panayiotis Nellas, *Deification in Christ*, p. 74.
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27. St. John Chrysostom, *On Virginity* 14.3, 5, trans. Sally Rieger Shore, p. 21.
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37. St. Gregory Palamas, *Topics of Natural and Theological Science* 16, *Philokalia* 4, p. 353.
38. St. Nicodemus of the Holy Mountain, *Symvouleftikon encheiridion peri fylakis ton pente aisthiseon* (A Handbook of spiritual counsel on the guarding of the five senses), pp. 156–57, trans. Peter A. Chambers, p. 150*.
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117. Idem, “A Deer Lost in Paradise,” in *Man and the God-man*, p. 112.
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The Prophet Moses.
Contemporary icon from Greece.

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