

Origen, origins, and allegory

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Origen has recently been cited by several proponents of theistic evolution in defence of their position. The claim is that Origen's allegorical hermeneutic lends authenticity to a belief in deep time and evolution, and that figurative readings of Scripture have been dominant throughout Christian history. This paper responds to these claims, while also noting some difficulty with Origen's orthodoxy. The first response is in relation to hermeneutics, showing that the strong dichotomy between literal and spiritual exegeses is false. All early theologians, including Origen, read Scripture historically and spiritually, even if Origen read the six-day creation account allegorically. The second response is in relation to Origen's writing regarding Adam and the Fall, and the third, in relation to the age of the earth. It becomes clear that Origen believed in a real Adam, created physically in the recent past, who was the progenitor of all humanity. Origen also spoke against the Epicurean beliefs of Celsus, beliefs now inherent in Darwinian evolution, and so his teaching cannot be properly used to support theistic evolution.

Leading theistic evolutionists, such as Denis Alexander, Karl Giberson, and Francis Collins,¹ (figure 1) have recently emphasized allegorical readings of the Genesis creation account in support of their position, and so dismiss literal or historical readings as not strongly held in early Christianity. Towards this end the Alexandrian approach to biblical hermeneutics is referenced, especially with the writing of Origen (figure 2). The thinking of these early Christians is broad-brushed to give the impression that their work provides an interpretative framework that supports Darwin's theory of evolution. Denis Alexander, for instance, urges his readers to follow Origen, suggesting that:

"In 248 Origen wrote that Genesis references to Adam are 'not so much of one particular individual as of the whole human race'. Figurative understandings of the Genesis text have been part of mainstream theology ever since."²

And in his book *Creation or Evolution, Do we have to choose?* he criticizes those who read Genesis literally, citing Origen's apparent derogatory comments in *De Principiis* towards those who might be so silly as to think of God as a gardener planting trees in Eden.³ He then makes similar comments to those above, claiming that

"Figurative and theological understandings of Genesis 1 were the dominant approach to the text amongst both Jewish and Christian commentators until at least into the fourteenth century It is not until the twentieth century, with the rise of modernist interpretations of the text ... that one finds the trend to interpret the passage as if it were written in the language of modern science."⁴

Karl Giberson and Francis Collins also present a partial view of early Christian theologians that does not reflect their thinking authentically. They suggest that many of the

"Early Christian thinkers ... were capable of discerning that the Genesis creation stories were not trying to teach about the literal history of the world. The works of many of the first Christian theologians and philosophers actually reveal an interpretation of Genesis surprisingly compatible with both the great age of the earth and Darwin's theory of evolution. ... Origen opposed the idea that the creation story should be interpreted as a literal and historical account of how God created the world."⁵

In response, it is necessary for Christians to recognize that Origen's approach to biblical hermeneutics is more qualified and complex than these statements suggest, although it is relevant to acknowledge some difficulty with Origen. He lived in a time of controversy, and later received posthumous condemnation, especially at the Second Council of Constantinople, wherein some of his alleged teachings were declared anathemas, for instance his apparent belief in the pre-existence of souls, and the belief that the sun, moon, and planets might possess souls. As a result of criticism, Origen has not received a declaration of sainthood from either Eastern or Western churches. Subsequently, a good part of his writing has been neglected and is no longer extant, and that which remains, particularly *De Principiis*, has been edited by friends and foes alike. Rufinus's Latin translation was edited as an arguably justifiable attempt to return it to its original, although it also seems to have been an attempt to render Origen's writing more palatable to Roman ears.⁶ Jerome also produced an edited Latin text, but, regrettably, this editing somewhat obscures knowledge of Origen's thinking. The complete Greek text of *De Principiis* has been lost; however, significant and relevant sections, for instance Book III and IV:i–iii do remain in the original language.⁷

As an example of the impact of editing, Crouzel suggests that Origen's apparent view of reincarnation and the

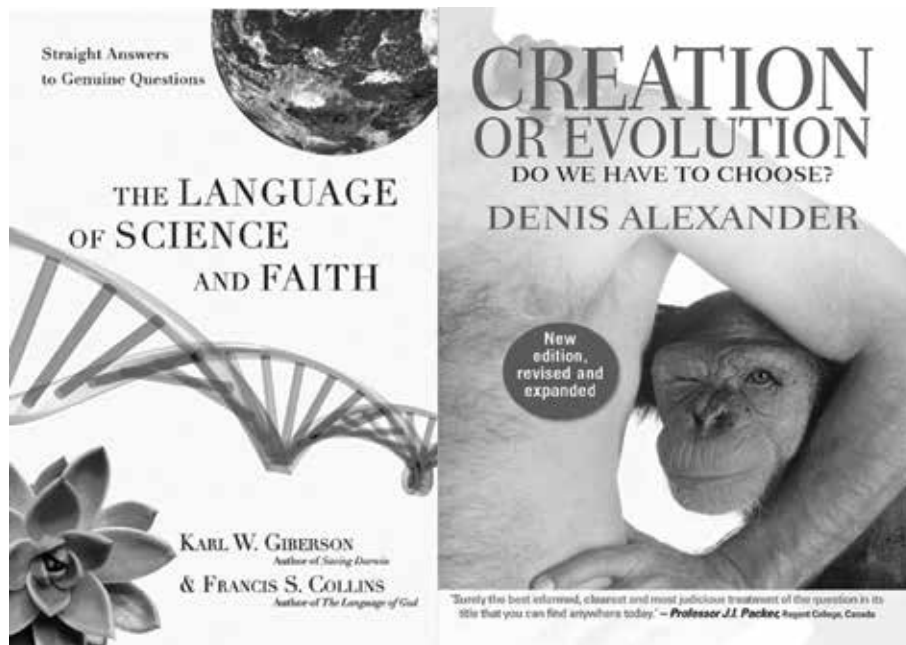


Figure 1. Giberson and Collins, *The Language of Science and Faith* (left), and Alexander, *Creation or Evolution: Do we have to choose?* (right).

pre-existence of the soul is reliant upon Jerome's Latin quotes of the *De Principiis*, but it is noteworthy that Origen wrote differently in the Greek in other passages; therefore Cruzel thinks Jerome's translation may be unreliable.⁸ Origen at times seems to suggest that Jesus and the Holy Spirit were somewhat less in status than the Father, a criticism levelled by Epiphanius in his *Ancoratus*.⁹ This leads to the claim that he was non-Trinitarian, although it may be noted that he lived at a time when the doctrine of the Trinity was not fully developed. He is however perhaps not the most appropriate role model for evangelical Christians to follow and neither is he considered the best representative of early Christian hermeneutics in Reformed thinking. However, some of the criticism ranged against him may not do justice to his original intent.

Origen, the son of a Christian martyr, became a pupil of Clement and followed his mentor in becoming head of the Catechetical School in Alexandria. The Hellenized Jewish scholar Philo was an influence upon both in their reading of Genesis.¹⁰ Origen had also previously attended lectures of the Platonist philosopher Ammonius Saccas, who was the teacher of Plotinus, a major influence in the development of Neo-Platonism.¹¹ This influence seems to have led to some of his heterodox teachings. Based upon the Platonic division of the human person into body, soul, and spirit, Origen's three levels of biblical interpretation were divided into the literal sense, the moral sense, and the allegorical sense.¹² The influence of Plato led him to emphasize symbolism and allegory with less motivation to defend Scripture in its historical sense. Origen

was apparently concerned that it ought to be read in a way that would gain respect from pagan philosophers, again perhaps revealing an unhealthy Platonic influence upon his thinking. The need for a literal defence of the Old Testament against Greek skeptics was evidently not central to his teaching, this because Scripture could be read allegorically if necessary.¹³ Although some of Origen's theology was rejected by the church, later theologians such as Pseudo-Dionysius, extended the influence of Neo-Platonism into the Medieval period with Christian mystics withdrawing from the world to seek spiritual fulfilment.¹⁴ Such an environment was not conducive to the development of science.

But even so, from available evidence his writing does not support the assertions of theistic evolutionists. As will be shown here, the evidence shows that Origen only read some elements of the Genesis creation narrative allegorically. He held other parts as history, for instance when placing Adam in chronological context, and he rejected the deep time of pagan cosmology. The following discussion will respond to three assertions relating to Origen's thinking and writing: firstly, relating to Origen's approach to biblical hermeneutics in regard to historical and allegorical readings; secondly, relating to his approach to the personhood of Adam and the Fall; and lastly, relating to his understanding of the age of the earth. Origen's influence upon Christian theology through later centuries will be held over for a separate discussion. But his response to the Epicurean Celsus suggests he should not be used to justify acceptance of Darwinian evolution, which was itself developed out of an Epicurean view of the world.

Origen: figurative or historical reading of Scripture?

There is firstly the suggestion, from Origen's writing, that figurative approaches to the Genesis text were the predominant understanding in the minds of many early theologians. The further inference being that literal or historical readings of Genesis were not strongly held, nor considered important. Alexander comments, following initial reference to Origen, that 'Figurative understandings of the Genesis text have been part of mainstream theology ever since.'¹⁵ However, this statement relies upon a false

dichotomy and is therefore misleading. Most of the early theologians read the text for its spiritual meaning, if that is what Alexander means by figurative, even as most early theologians read it literally and historically as well. Hauser and Watson point out that

“... the dichotomy of spiritual and literal does not accurately describe the interpretation seen at work in the commentaries and homilies from these schools [Alexandria and Antioch]. Both schools understood that the literal wording of the text of the Bible points to a deeper meaning.”¹⁶

Over the past half-century there has been a change in understanding of the theological differences between the centres of learning at Antioch and Alexandria, as Young and Fairbairn note.¹⁷ The prevailing view had been that the school of Antioch majored on literal readings, while Alexandria had emphasized the allegorical,¹⁸ but this is now seen as unsustainable. It is recognized that there was diversity within each centre of learning, and that both read the text literally as well as symbolically.

It is true that Origen did not hold some aspects of the creation account as historical, for instance reading the six days allegorically with creation occurring in an instant.¹⁹ He suggested further that “the Word of God has arranged for certain stumbling-blocks ... and hindrances and impossibilities to be inserted in the midst of the law and the history”²⁰ He struggled with some miracles in both the Old and New Testaments, perhaps unduly influenced by the naturalism of Greek philosophy. An example he gives in *De Principiis*, is where he considered there to be no material sense to the six jars of water that Jesus turned into wine at the wedding of Cana.²¹ These scriptural statements he believed were divinely ordained in order to cause the reader to stop and think more deeply about the meaning. And yet Origen was careful not to dismiss the whole history of Scripture. Although he struggled to accept that the first few days of creation could be illuminated “without the sun and moon and stars” or that there was a literal tree of life in the garden of Eden,²² he responded to those who would say he was rejecting all the history of the Old Testament:

“But someone may suppose that the former statement refers to all scriptures, and may suspect

us of saying that because some of the history did not happen, therefore none of it happened ... we must assert, therefore, that in regard to some things we are clearly aware that the historical fact is true [περί τινων τὸ τῆς ιστορίας εἶναι ἀληθές].”²³

There are in fact occasions when Origen reads Scripture more literally than the theologians of Antioch. Eustathius, an early fourth century Bishop of Antioch, thought Origen was too literal in his interpretation of the account of Saul’s dialogue with the deceased Samuel (via the enchantment of the witch of Endor). Eustathius preferred to read the account as a demonic deception, and not the literal ghost of Samuel.²⁴ Crouzel also observes that on occasions Origen defended the literal text of Genesis against pagan skeptics in a manner that would not be acceptable to many modern, even conservative, theologians. Concerning a defence of the scale of Noah’s Ark, he observes that “Origen in fact believed in the historicity of the Bible much more than the most traditionalist of our exegetes do today”.²⁵

There were a number of differences between Origen and the fourth-century Antiochene theologians, but it was not related to a literal versus figurative dichotomy. Both schools read the text historically and symbolically. This can be seen for instance in Diodore’s writing; he was one of the main theologians of the second period of the school of Antioch, and critic of Origen. While reading the text of Scripture literally, he also emphasized the spiritual, or anagogical reading that could be attained through contemplation:

“... we shall treat of it historically [κατὰ τὴν ιστορίαν] and literally [κατὰ τὴν λέξιν] and not stand in the way of a spiritual [κατὰ τὴν ἀναγωγήν]²⁶ and more elevated insight [θεωρία].”²⁷

Added to this, within the Antiochene school there was a desire to read the text for its practical moral message. That is not to say that there weren’t several differences between the two centres of learning, as some divergence of opinion is evident. The early Alexandrian theologians, including Origen, favoured Greek-influenced allegory versus a more Hebraic approach to spiritual insight by those at Antioch; they favoured philosophy and abstract contemplation versus the rhetorical preaching and the moral exegesis of the Antiochenes; and there were



Figure 2. Imaginative portrayal of Origen by André Thévet in “Les Vrais Portraits Et Vies Des Hommes Illustres”

theological differences in understanding the Incarnation of Jesus prior to the resolution of the Council of Chalcedon. Antioch tended to emphasize the human nature of Christ as being distinct from the divine logos, while Alexandria focused on the divine nature of Jesus.¹⁷ Fairbairn suggests that such theological differences directed their exegesis, and not the other way around as is often considered.¹⁷

Diodore's justification for objecting to Origen's allegorical approach was perhaps also based upon the belief that allegory was too strongly influenced by Greek philosophy and pagan beliefs, for instance through the writing of Plato, and the Hellenized Jewish scholar Philo. Greek mythology was usually read allegorically without any foundation in reality. The Antiochene theologians on the other hand wanted to hold to what they believed was a more authentic Hebraic approach to biblical interpretation, which was grounded in real history, as Fuller, for instance, observes.¹⁸

However, the problem for Diodore in rejecting allegory was that Paul used the word *allēgoroumena* (ἀλληγορούμενα) in Galatians 4:24 to describe the relationship between Sarah and Hagar as symbolic of the difference between the heavenly and earthly Jerusalem. This forced him to argue that Paul was really engaged in spiritual contemplation, and not allegory, because his examples (Sarah and Hagar) were real people engaged in a real struggle, and this implied some spiritual significance for understanding the relationship between the Messianic community and apostate Israel. There is a sense though that Diodore's student Chrysostom (figure 3) softened the objection to allegory. Chrysostom wrote as follows in *Homily on Psalms 9:7*:

“But if you feel it necessary to give in addition some kind of figurative interpretation [ἀναγωγή] we have no objection. For it is possible to interpret some passages theoretically [θεωρησαι]. Others in contrast are to be understood solely according to a strict literal interpretation, for example, ‘In the beginning, God made heaven and earth.’ (Gen. 1:1). Others again in a sense different from the actual words, for example, ‘Spend your time with the hart you love, with the filly that has won your favour... (Prov. 5:17–19). ... In other passages ... it is necessary to accept both the sense of the words as they stand and the meaning that plainly arises from them as in ... ‘Just as Moses lifted up the Serpent’ (Jn. 3:14). Here we must

believe the actual fact ... and ... the sense ... signified by the fact, namely a type of Christ.”²⁸

By the early fifth century there was little difference between both centres. Cyril of Alexandria read the whole of Scripture literally as a book written by one author, but linked by a typology that was centred around Christ and salvation history. In this way he avoided the excesses of allegory and read spiritual significance from the historical text, although at times he seems to have bridged between both Antioch and Alexandria in a rather eclectic manner.²⁹ Neither did he think Christians should be ashamed of the simplicity of their faith in light of the sophistry of Greek philosophy.³⁰ In the early fifth century there was a move towards reconciliation between the two sides, primarily in understanding the divine and human natures of Christ through the doctrine of *hypostatic union*, and towards this end the *Formula of Reunion* was finally agreed at the Council of Chalcedon AD 451.³¹ There is also a sense that just as Christ's divine and human nature were held to be in union, so too literal and figurative readings of Scripture were held together.



Figure 3. John Chrysostom of Antioch. This is an early Byzantine mosaic, located in the Cathedral of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople (Istanbul)

Origen's view of Adam and the Fall

Another pressing question that arises concerns whether Adam and Eve were real people in Origen's thinking, or figurative of humanity as a whole, as Alexander, for instance, claims. He writes that Origen thought that Adam was "not so much of one particular individual as of the whole human race". And yet this view is not supported by leading theologians.³² This is the passage of Origen that Alexander alludes to:

"... so also the story of Adam and his sin will be interpreted philosophically by those who know that Adam means anthropos (man) in the Greek language, and that in what appears to be concerned with Adam Moses is speaking of the nature of man. For, as the Bible says, 'in Adam all die', and they were condemned in 'the likeness of Adam's transgression'. Here the divine Word says this not so much about an individual as of the whole race. Moreover, in the sequence of sayings which seem to refer to one individual, the curse is shared by all men. There is also no woman to whom the curses pronounced against Eve do not apply."³³

Origen was, in this passage, expounding part of his view of the Fall, and the curse upon mankind, while the allusion of Alexander is that this passage offers theological support to the belief that Adam and Eve were the chosen representative couple called from among a wider human community; the Neolithic farmers called to bear the divine image as *Homo Divinus*.³⁴ However, this doesn't accurately reflect Origen's position, nor the context of the passage, which is concerned with the impact of Adam's sin upon all mankind. Origen was on occasions concerned with genealogy, speaking of Adam and Eve as the real parents of all humanity, but when deriving theological significance, he wrote figuratively with Adam representative of humanity as a whole.³⁵

Unfortunately, this does introduce ambiguity and confusion into the minds of readers, with some of Origen's early opponents (such as Theodore of Mopsuestia) thinking that he denied the historical Adam.³⁶ And yet within Origen's wider hermeneutic the literal reading of Genesis was not dismissed, and in effect could be read figuratively whether historical or not. In a passage comparing Adam with Christ, and the church with physical Israel, Origen writes that "Isaac descended from Abraham, while all go back to Adam ..." and that "Adam is the father of all men [ὡς ὁ Ἀδὰμ πατήρ ἐστὶ πάντων τῶν ἀνθρώπων]."³⁷

Similar comments are expressed in his *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, where Origen more clearly elucidates on the genealogical link between Adam and all humanity, so that the posterity of death passed from Adam to all men. He illustrates his argument by appealing to the account of Levi being in the loins of Abraham when he paid tithes to

Melchizedek (Hebrews 7: 9–10) to show that all were in the loins of Adam when he sinned:

"... how much more were all men, those who are born and have been born in this world, in Adam's loins when he was still in Paradise. And all men who were with him, or rather in him, were expelled from Paradise when he was himself driven from there; and through him the death which had come to him from the transgression consequently passed through to them as well."³⁸

Origen's writing seems to go further in the Preface to *De Principiis* by asserting that belief in Adam, in the plain sense, is part of the necessary doctrines of the faith; doctrines given by apostolic authority (at least according to Rufinas' Latin translation) and passed on through the church in unbroken succession:

"The kind of doctrines which are believed in plain terms through the apostolic teaching are the following: First, that God is one, who created and set in order all things, and who, when nothing existed, caused the universe to be. He is God from the first creation and foundation of the world, the God of all righteous men, of Adam, Abel, Seth ..."³⁹

These statements suggest that not only did Origen hold to a literal Adam as the father of all human beings, but also that these were considered to be necessary doctrines for biblical interpreters, given authoritatively through apostolic succession. Although these statements may be coloured by Rufinas' Latin translation, it is notable that modern proponents of theistic evolution do not seem to follow apostolic authority with regard to the creation account.

And yet Origen struggled to accept literally the idea that God formed man with his hands, or that he breathed life into his face, or that Eve was formed from Adam's rib.⁴⁰ The problem for Origen is that it anthropomorphizes God's activity and he prefers to allegorize these divine works. But he also recognized that these were actual people interacting with God. How a spiritual being interacts with physical flesh in this way is of course a profound mystery for all Christians, but it is central to the belief of the faith, for instance in holding to the doctrine of the Resurrection.

There is also an apparent modification of Origen's belief relating to the physical Fall following his resettlement from Alexandria to Caesarea, at which point he is faced with the question of infant baptism, and relatedly, the possible need for remission of sins for infants. Although Origen did not seem to believe that humanity acquired Adam's guilt, in later writing he spoke of a *macula* or *sordes peccati*: that is, a stain of sin in each person passed on through an impure blood-line to all as a result of Adam's Fall. The justification for this was Job 14:4–5, and Psalm 51:5 ("Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me").⁴¹

His wider view of Adam's creation and fallen nature is somewhat obscure, and mainly passed on through somewhat fragmentary, or secondary evidence. Some commentators suggest that he taught a two-stage Fall with Adam and Eve created as spiritual beings prior to their physical formation: the first Fall from Heaven when they moved away from God, the second Fall earthly, apparently expounding upon Adam's prior creation in the timeless mind of God. However, other commentators suggest that Origen was merely describing the same event in different ways, and that this view arises through poor translation.⁴² This ambiguity can be seen with the account of Adam and Eve's provision of animal skins for clothing by God; some commentators have ascribed to Origen the view that the leather clothing should be read as figurative of human flesh following a spiritual Fall. Although Origen does offer this allegory as one possible meaning, he doesn't find it wholly convincing and in *Contra Celsum* suggests the meaning is "secret and mysterious", and "superior" to Plato's belief regarding "the descent of the soul which loses its wings".⁴³

As with Philo, in his *Homilies on Genesis* he may have considered the creation (ποίησις, poiesis) of Adam in the image of God as incorporeal, existing purely in the mind of God, with the formation (πλάσις, plasis, Latin plasmatus) of man occurring physically, perhaps instantaneously, on the sixth day from the clay (terrae limo).⁴⁴ Philo also believed that Adam was originally conceived in the mind of God, in his image without a body, then formed in an instant with the whole of creation in the recent past. The Fall was a result of ungodly pleasures, that led to physical death.⁴⁵ Origen's *Homilies on Genesis* seem to follow quite closely the interpretation of Philo.⁴⁶ But whatever we may think of the beliefs of Origen, they are markedly different from the beliefs of those who seek to use him to support acceptance of theistic evolution.

Origen's view of the age of the earth

As noted above, Giberson and Collins comment that many of the early theologians, especially Origen, provided an interpretation of Genesis that is compatible with "the great age of the earth and Darwin's theory of evolution".⁴⁷ And yet when one looks at Origen's actual comments, for instance in *Contra Celsum*, a different account emerges. He specifically rejected the deep time of Greek authors, and the Epicurean ideas expounded by Celsus, and the theogonies of Hesiod and others. Origen defended Jews and Christians against the charge that they were simple-minded and ignorant because they did not accept the priority of the Greek writers. He defended the writing of Moses as being superior in age and authority. The Greek writers' failure to recognize the priority of the authorship of the Mosaic account therefore renders

their argument invalid, and instead Origen thought that one may hold the scriptural account of creation with integrity. He rejected as absurd the possibility of a power of generation that emanates from Greek idols and writes:

"After this, secretly wishing to attack the Mosaic cosmogony that the world is not yet ten thousand years old [ἐμφαίνοντα μηδέπω μυρίων ἐτῶν ἀριθμὸν ἔχειν τὸν κόσμον], but is much less than this, Celsus agrees with those who say the world is uncreated, although he hides his real intention."⁴⁸

"After this Celsus quotes from literature outside the divine Scriptures [θείου λόγου ἱστορίας], the stories about *the men who claimed antiquity, such as the Athenians, Egyptians, Arcadians, and Phrygians...* . . . It was not, therefore, the Jews who *composed a most improbable and crude* [ἀπιθανώτατα καὶ ἀμουσότατα] *story* about the man born of earth, but the men who according to Celsus were *inspired, Hesiod and his thousands of others*, who had never learnt or heard of the far older and more sacred traditions to be found in Palestine . . ."⁴⁹

Origen pointedly noted that Plato was right to expel the cosmogonies of Homer and Hesiod from his "State" because it would corrupt the youth, and that the Epicurean Celsus was being mendacious. These statements reflect those of earlier Christian authors, for instance those of Theophilus of Antioch in his *Apologia to Autolycus*, written in the second century, which also strongly defended the Christian faith against the pagans. Although Theophilus was less enthusiastic towards Plato, this suggests that there was a common view among the early Christians to reject the twin beliefs of deep time and generating evolutionary powers.

"And from the foundation of the world the whole time is thus traced [Ἀπὸ δὲ καταβολῆς κόσμου ὁ πᾶς χρόνος κεφαλαιωδῶς οὕτω κατάγεται]. . . . All the years from the creation of the world amount to a total of 5698 [εχλήη] years, and the odd months and days."⁵⁰

"For if even a chronological error has been committed by us, of, e.g., 50 or 100, or even 200 years, yet not of thousands and tens of thousands [μυριάδες, ἢ χιλιάδες ἐτῶν], as Plato and Apollonius and other mendacious authors have hitherto written [καὶ οἱ λοιποὶ, ψευδῶς ἀναγράψαντες]."⁵¹

And similar sentiments are later expressed in Augustine's *City of God*. He writes:

"Such men are also misled by certain wholly untruthful writings which purport to contain the history of many thousands of years of time. For we compute from the sacred writings that six thousand years have not passed since the creation of man."⁵²

Not only did these early Christians reject the deep time of the Greek writers, they also specifically excluded the evolutionary ideas of Epicurus and Hesiod that were based

upon some esoteric power of generation at work in nature. One may wonder whether if Origen were alive today he would see the inherent Epicurean ideas present in Darwin's theory of evolution.⁵³

Summary

There is insufficient space here to properly consider how theologians read Scripture through the Medieval Period, except to note that Alexander is partially correct to say that there was a focus upon figurative or spiritual readings of Scripture. Although Cyril of Alexandria had tried to reign in unbounded allegory, with influence from Neo-Platonism excessive spiritual contemplation was later encouraged by Pseudo-Dionysius and others, but was most unhelpful for the development of science. With so many monastic lives dedicated to pure spiritual contemplation there was less concern to study creation for the sake of improving the material world. In this light, science as we know it could not get going, as Torrance and Harrison for instance have noted.^{13,54}

The claim that Origen's approach to hermeneutics provides room for belief in deep time and evolution within Christian theological discourse obscures the thrust of his teaching. The strong dichotomy between the Antiochene school, that focused upon literal readings, and the Alexandrian centre that emphasized the spiritual, has been shown to be false. All early theologians read Scripture both symbolically and historically, although it is probably true that Origen followed Philo in holding that the creation occurred at once in the recent past, and that the six-day account was meant to be read allegorically. This belief was also held by Clement and Augustine.

The evidence further shows that Origen held Adam and Eve to be directly and recently created, and the protoplasts of all subsequent human beings. Although on occasions he referred to Adam as figurative of humanity as a whole, when speaking chronologically he accepted that there was a genealogical link from Adam to all. Origen's beliefs about the Fall are somewhat difficult to glean, possibly coloured by errors in translation, but he seems to have believed that there was a stain of sin passing from Adam to all, even though not suggesting that humanity shares Adam's guilt.

There is also clearly a commitment, especially in his writing *Contra Celsum*, that creation occurred not even ten thousand years ago. Those who wrote otherwise did so because of a reliance upon pagan sources which he thought erroneous or mendacious. Origen held in high esteem the writing of Moses and asserted that it was superior in accuracy and antiquity to that of the pagan authors such as Hesiod and Epicurus. This raises difficulties for those who seek to use his writings to justify belief in Darwinian evolution especially when we can see the influence of these pagan authors in Darwin's own writing.

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- Origen, DP, IV.II.9; in: Butterworth, ref. 3, p. 285. This comes from extant Greek sections, and is therefore unaffected by Rufinus's edited translation: ὀκνομήσῃ τινα οἰοῖναι 'σκάνδαλα' καὶ 'προσκομίματα' καὶ 'ἄδύνατα' διὰ μέσου ἐγκαταταχθῆναι τῷ νόμῳ καὶ τῇ ἱστορίᾳ ὁ τοῦ θεοῦ λόγος. Greek text is from: Origenes vier Bücher von den Prinzipien; in: Görgemanns, H. and Karpp, H. (Eds.), *Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft*, Darmstadt, Germany, pp. 462–560, pp. 668–764, 1976.
- Origen, DP, IV, II.5; in: Butterworth, ref. 3, pp. 277–278 (from extant Greek sources), referencing John 2:1–11.
- Origen, DP, IV.III.1; in: Butterworth, ref. 3, p. 289, (from extant Greek sources).
- Origen, DP, IV.III.4; in: Butterworth, ref. 3, p. 294, (from extant Greek sources).
- Young, F.M., The rhetorical schools and their influence on patristic exegesis; in: Williams, R. (Ed.), *The Making of Orthodoxy Essays in Honour of Henry Chadwick*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp. 194–195, 1989. Young is citing Eustathius's work, *On the Witch of Endor and Against Origen*, which may be found in PG 18, pp. 613–673.
- Crouzel, H., *Origen*, Worrall A.S. (trans.), T&T Clark, Edinburgh, p. 63, 1989.
- Anagoge—the word implies climbing up from the literal to the spiritual hidden meaning, generally using typology.
- Diodore of Tarsus, Hill, R.C. (trans.), *Commentary on Psalms 1–51*, Society of Biblical Literature, Atlanta, GA, XXV, pp. 4–5, 2005.

28. Hill, R.C. (Ed.), *St John Chrysostom: Commentary on the Psalms*, vol. 1, Holy Cross Orthodox Press, Brookline, MA, 2007.
29. Keating, D.A., *The appropriation of divine life in Cyril of Alexandria*, Oxford University Press, New York, p. 5, 2004; in: Artemi, E., *Cyril Of Alexandria speaks for God in his interpretation of the Holy Bible, Acta Theologica* 34(1): 1–16, 2014.
30. Cyril of Alexandria, “The Spirit does not reveal the truth to those who spend too much effort preparing for battle and who exult in tangled and deceptive arguments rather than rejoice in the truth. This is because the Spirit does not ‘enter a deceitful soul’ nor does he otherwise allow his precious pearls to be rolled under the feet of swine. Instead, he would rather spend his time with simple minds because they move without guile and avoid superfluous sophistry.” (Ad Johannes I PG 73, 9AB; in: Artemi, ref. 29.)
31. Russell, N., The church in the commentaries of St Cyril of Alexandria, *International J. for the Study of the Christian Church* 7(2):72–73, 2007; O’Keefe, J.J., Christianizing Malachi: fifth-century insights from Cyril of Alexandria, *Vigiliae Christianae*, 50.2, p. 137, 1996; and, Kelly, J.N.D., Patristic literature, The post-Nicene period, *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, April 2017.
32. See, for instance, Bammel, C.P., Adam in Origen; in: Williams, R. (Ed.), *The Making of Orthodoxy: Essays in Honour of Henry Chadwick*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp. 62–93, 2002.
33. Origen, *Contra Celsum*, 4.40; in: Chadwick, H. (trans.), Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, p. 216, 1965.
34. Alexander, *Creation or Evolution*, ref. 1, pp. 246–253.
35. Bouteneff, ref. 6, pp. 89–120.
36. Greer, R.A. (trans.), *Theodore of Mopsuestia: The Commentaries on the Minor Epistles of Paul*, Society of Biblical Literature, Atlanta, GA, pp. 112–115, 2010. Greer uses Swete, B. (Ed.), *Theodori episcopi Mopsuesteni; in: epistolae b. Pauli commentarii*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1880–1882. “There are people who ... fabricate from themselves certain foolish fictions [fabulas uero quasdam ineptas ex se confingere] and give their folly the name of allegory. [They] invert the meaning of everything since they wish the whole narrative of divine scripture [diuina scriptura historiam] to differ in no way from dreams of the night. For they say that not even Adam actually existed as Adam, since it strikes them they should interpret scripture as much as possible ‘spiritually’—they want their folly to be called spiritual interpretation.”
37. Origen, *De Principiis*, IV.III.7; in: Butterworth, ref. 3, p. 299 (from extant Greek sources).
38. Origen, *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans: Books 1–5*, Scheck, T.P. (trans.), The Catholic University of America Press, Washington D.C., book 5, chap. 1, pp. 12–14, 309–311, 2001 (from Rufinus’s Latin translation from the Greek).
39. Origen, *De Principiis*, book I, preface 3–4, in Butterworth, ref. 3, pp. 1–7.
40. Origen, *Contra Celsum*, 4., pp. 37–38; in: Chadwick, ref. 33, p. 213.
41. Tennant, F.R., *The Sources of the Doctrine of the Fall and Original Sin*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp. 304–305, 1903. See also Laporte, J., Models from Philo in Origen’s teaching on original sin, *Laval théologique et philosophique* 442:191–203, 1988.
42. See, for instance, Bouteneff, *Beginnings*, ref. 6, p. 108, and Crouzel, H., *Origène et la Philosophie*, Paris, pp. 195–215, 1962. Courzel argued that attributable quotes in *De Principiis*, via Jerome’s Latin translation, were unsubstantiated.
43. “And the statement that the man who was cast out of the garden with the woman was clothed with ‘coats of skins’, which God made for those who had sinned on account of the transgression of mankind, has a certain and mysterious meaning, superior to the Platonic doctrine of the descent of the soul which loses its wings and is carried hither ‘until it finds some firm resting-place’.” *Contra Celsum*, 4.40; in: Chadwick, ref. 33, p. 216. This is discussed in Chadwick’s footnotes from Origen (*Sel. in Gen* 42 (MG 12.101 A-B); Lommatzsch, vol. 8, p. 58).
44. Origen, *Homilies on Genesis and Exodus*, 1.13, Heine (trans.), Catholic University of America Press, Washington D.C., 2002; and Philo, *On the Creation*, pp. 69–76; see Bouteneff, ref. 6, p. 109.
45. Philo, *On the Creation*, ref. 44, pp. 69–76, 154–160.
46. Mook, J., The Church Fathers on Genesis, the Flood, and the age of the earth; in: Mortenson, T. and Ury, T.H. (Eds.), *Coming to Grips with Genesis*, Master Books, Green Forest, AR, pp. 23–52, 2008. Forster, R. and Marston, P., *Reason, Science and Faith*, Monarch, East Sussex, p. 203, 1999. “[Origen, Homily 1] repeats Philo’s point, and might ‘hint’ at a simultaneous creation view.” Laporte, J., Models from Philo in Origen’s teaching on Original Sin, *Laval théologique et philosophique* 442:191–203, 1988. Origen also interpreted symbolically Adam formed as male and female as the division of the soul (female) and spirit (male), with the feminine soul the one more susceptible to the temptation of forbidden pleasure. The “... demons also, ... both feed on and promote our evil deeds.” From this he infers the serpent of Genesis as symbolic of the devil and his cohorts, while also alluding to soulish forbidden pleasures present in mankind. Origen, *Homily on Genesis and Exodus*, ref. 44, 1.15–17.
47. Giberson and Collins, ref. 1.
48. Origen, *Contra Celsum*, 1.19; in: Chadwick, ref. 33, p. 20. Greek source: Migne, J.P. (Ed.), *Patrologiae cursus completus*, vol. 11, *Origen, Contra Celsum*, Harvard University Library, 1857.
49. Origen, *Contra Celsum*, 4.36; in: Chadwick, ref. 33, pp. 211–212. Greek source: Migne, 1857.
50. Theophilus, *Apology to Autolytus*, Book III XXVIII; in: Schaff, P. (Ed.), *Ante-Nicene Fathers (ANF)*, vol. 2., T&T Clark, Edinburgh, pp. 120, 1885; ccel.org. Greek source: Migne, J.P., *Patrologiae cursus completus*, vol. 6, *Ad Autolytum*, Lib. III, 28, Harvard University Library, p. 1165, 1857.
51. Theophilus, *Apology to Autolytus*, Book III, XXIX, ANF02, pp. 120–121, ref. 50, ccel.org.
52. Augustine, *The City of God*; in: Dyson, R.W. (Ed. & trans.), *City of God, Against the Pagans*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, p. 512, 1998. Book XII, 11: “Of the falseness of the history which ascribes many thousands of years to times gone by” [*Fallunt eos etiam quaedam mendacissimae litterae, quas perhibent in historia temporum multa annorum milia continere, cum ex Litteris sacris ab institutione hominis nondum completa annorum sex milia computemus*]. Latin from Aurelii Augustini, S.; in: Monteverde, F. (Ed.), *De Civitate Dei Contra Paganos Libri XXII*, Opera Omnia, Latin edn., Nuova Biblioteca Agostiniana, Rome.
53. Charles Darwin was influenced by David Hume and his grandfather Erasmus Darwin. Erasmus, in *Zoonomia*, praised Hume’s affinity for the works of Epicurus and Hesiod in *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*. This work of Hume implied that there were esoteric powers of generation at work in nature. Hume, D., *Dialogues concerning natural religion*; in: Kemp Smith, N. (Ed.), *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, 2nd edn, Indianapolis, IN, Bobbs-Merrill Educational Publishing, 1947; and Darwin, E., *Zoonomia; Or The Laws of Organic Life*, vol. 1, 2nd American edn, from 3rd London edn, corrected by the author, Thomas and Andrews, New York, pp. 400–401, 1803.
54. Torrance, T.F., *Belief in Science and in Christian Belief*, The Handsel Press, Edinburgh, pp. 1–17, 1980.

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