

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



Evolution and God's Special Creation



Seminar flow

Activity	Time
Introduction to Seminar 2	1.30-1.35 (5 mins)
Lecture (Part 1): Islamic Narratives on Creation	1.35-2.35 (60 mins)
Group Activity	2.35-2.45 (10 mins)
Lecture (Part 2): The Science of Evolution	2.45-3.15 (30 mins)
Asr & Coffee Break	3.15-3.40pm (25 mins)
Lecture (Part 2): Continue	3.40-4.00 (20 mins)
Lecture (Part 3): What Can we Accept?	4.00-4.20 (20 mins)
Q&A	4.20-4.40 (20 mins)



Instructors



Dr. Omar Qureshi



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Overview

- Seminar Learning Outcomes (CLOs)
- Three sections:
 - Section 1 – Islamic Narratives on Creation
 - Section 2 – The Science of Evolution
 - Section 3 – What Can We Accept?
- Conclusion



Seminar Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

SLO 1	Describe and explain the scientific account of Neo-Darwinian evolution	Section 1
SLO 2	Describe and explain the theological account of non-humans and humans	Section 2
SLO 3	Describe, categorise, and evaluate various Muslim responses to Neo-Darwinian evolution	Section 3
SLO 4	Distinguish and evaluate the various kinds of conflicts (potential, apparent, and actual) between Islam and evolution	



SECTION 1

Islamic Narratives on Creation



How old is the cosmos?

إِنَّ رَبَّكُمُ اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ فِي سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ ثُمَّ اسْتَوَىٰ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ يُغْشِي اللَّيْلَ النَّهَارَ يَطْلُبُهُ حَثِيثًا وَالشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ
وَالنُّجُومَ مُسَخَّرَاتٍ بِأَمْرِهِ ۗ أَلَا لَهُ الْخَلْقُ وَالْأَمْرُ تَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ ٥٤

Verily your Lord is Allah, who created the heavens and the earth in six days and then established Himself above the Throne. He covers the night with the day, [another night] chasing it rapidly; and [He created] the sun, the moon, and the stars, subjected by His command. Unquestionably, His is the creation and the command; blessed is Allāh, Lord of the worlds. [7:54]

What does six days mean in this verse?



How old is the cosmos?

What does six days mean in this verse?

Day (*al-yawm*) in Arabic means from **dawn to dusk**.

Thus, days in this verse means what immediately comes to one's mind: Saturday, Sunday, Monday...

Day in the Qur'an, at times, refers to 1,000 years "a single day in your Lord's sight is as a **thousand years** in yours" [22:47] and "the angels and the supreme Angelic Spirit ascend to Him in a single day that would take **fifty thousand** human years to traverse" [70:4]

Day in Arabic also means time periods (*al-awqāt*). Six days in the verse refers to six days **six periods of time**.
[al-Bayḍāwī]



Islamic Narratives on Creation

Theology of humans

1. Insān, Bashar, Banū ādam
2. Doctrines Regarding **Humans**
3. Doctrines Regarding **Adam**
4. Creation of non-humans?
5. Doctrine Regarding **Hawwā'**.



Insān, Bashar, Banū ādam

1. ***Insān*** and ***bashar*** both refer to mankind and apply equally to male and female.
 - a) ***Insān*** refers to our rational soul operating through its cognitive and active powers.
2. ***Bashar*** refers to man considered in his bodily aspect.
 - a) His biological nature, physical life, shape, and construction.
 - b) Lexically, the term *bashar* signifies the surface of the skin upon which hair grow.
 - c) In his biological nature as *bashar*, man is different in kind from animals.



Insān, Bashar, Banū ādam

3. **Banu ādam** refers to:

- a) *Mankind* that includes Adam, Hawwā', and all male and female progeny. This meaning is synonymous with the word *al-nāss*.
- b) The progeny of Adam and Hawwā'. This usage includes all of mankind except Adam and Hawwā'.
- c) The male progeny of Adam. This is the literal usage of the term.

4. Muslim scholars define a human being as a rational animal (*al-ḥayawān al-nāṭiq*):

- *al-ḥayawān* – living being
- *al-nāṭiq* – speaking
- Thus, a human is a living being that *speaks*.



The Creation of Humans in the Qur'an

Who began the origin of Man from moist clay (<i>tīn</i>) [32:7]	الَّذِي أَحْسَنَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقَهُ مَبْدَأَ خَلْقِ الْإِنْسَنِ مِنْ طِينٍ ٧
They themselves were created from clinging clay [37:11]	فَأَسْتَفْتِهِمْ أَهُمْ أَشَدُّ خَلْقًا أَمْ مَنِ خَلَقْنَا إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاهُمْ مِنْ طِينٍ لَّازِبٍ ١١
Truly We created Man of a finished blank of hardened clay made of black mud or decayed mud [15:26]	وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ صَلْصَلٍ مِّنْ حَمَإٍ مَّسْنُونٍ ٢٦
He created mankind from a tinkling hard blank of clay like baked pottery, and jinnkind He created from a pure flickering flame of fire [55:14 – 15]	خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ صَلْصَلٍ كَالْفَخَّارِ ١٤ وَخَلَقَ الْجَانَّ مِنْ مَّارِجٍ مِّن نَّارٍ ١٥



Who is the father of mankind?

***Prophet Adam (Allah grant him peace)
is the father of all humankind***

“Then people will come to Adam and say, “You are the ***father of mankind*** (*abū al- bashar*), Allah created you with His own two hands and breathed into you of His spirit...” (Sahih Muslim)



Who is the first human being?

Prophet Adam is the first human being.

﴿إِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَأِكَةِ إِنِّي خَلَقْتُ بَشَرًا مِّنْ طِينٍ ۖ ٧١ فَإِذَا سَوَّيْتُهُ ۖ وَنَفَخْتُ فِيهِ مِن رُّوحِي فَقَعُوا لَهُ ۖ سَاجِدِينَ ۗ ٧٢ فَسَجَدَ الْمَلَأِكَةُ كُلُّهُمْ أَجْمَعُونَ ۗ ٧٣ إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ اسْتَكْبَرَ وَكَانَ مِنَ الْكَافِرِينَ ۗ ٧٤ قَالَ يَا بَلِيسُ مَا مَنَعَكَ أَنْ تَسْجُدَ لِمَا خَلَقْتُ بِإِيْدِي ۖ اسْتَكْبَرْتَ أَمْ كُنْتَ مِنَ الْعَالِينَ ۗ ٧٥ قَالَ أَنَا خَيْرٌ مِّنْهُ خَلَقْتَنِي مِن نَّارٍ وَخَلَقْتَهُ ۖ مِن طِينٍ ۗ ٧٦﴾



Who is the first human being?

﴿إِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلٰٓئِكَةِ اِنِّیْ خَلُقُ بَشَرًا مِّنْ طِیْنٍ ۙ ۷۱ فَاِذَا سَوَّیْتُهُ ۙ وَنَفَخْتُ فِیْهِ مِنْ رُّوْحِیْ فَقَعُوْا لَهٗ ۙ سٰجِدِیْنَ ۙ ۷۲ فَسَجَدَ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةُ كُلُّهُمْ اٰجْمَعُوْنَ ۙ ۷۳ اِلَّا اِبْلِیْسَ اُتٰكِبَرَ وَاَنَّ مِنَ الْكٰفِرِیْنَ ۙ ۷۴ قَالَ یٰۤاِبْلِیْسُ مَا مَنَعَكَ اَنْ تَسْجُدَ لِمَا خَلَقْتُ بِیَدَیْیْ اُتٰكِبَرْتَ اَمْ كُنْتَ مِنَ الْعٰلِیْنَ ۙ ۷۵ قَالَ اَنَا خَيْرٌ مِّنْهُ خَلَقْتَنِیْ مِنْ نَّارٍ وَخَلَقْتَهُ ۙ مِنْ طِیْنٍ ۙ ۷۶﴾

And [mention] when your Lord said to the angels, 'Truly, I will create a man (*bashar*) from clay. So when I have completed him, and breathed into him of My spirit, then fall down prostrate to him.' And the angels prostrated, one and all. Save for Satan, who was too proud to, and disbelieved. He said to him, 'O Satan, what prevented you from prostrating to what I have created with My two hands? Are you arrogant, or too exalted?' He said, 'I am better than he; You created me from fire and created him from clay'" (38:71-76).



Who is the first human being?

﴿إِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلٰٓئِكَةِ اِنِّیْ **خَلَقْتُ** بَشَرًا مِّنْ طِیْنٍ ۙ ۷۱ فَاِذَا سَوَّیْتُهُ ۙ وَنَفَخْتُ فِیْهِ مِنْ رُّوْحِیْ فَقَعُوْا لَهٗ ۙ سٰجِدِیْنَ ۙ ۷۲ فَسَجَدَ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةُ كُلُّهُمْ اٰجْمَعُوْنَ ۙ ۷۳ اِلَّاۤ اِبْلِیْسَ اُسْتَكْبَرَ وَكَانَ مِنَ الْكٰفِرِیْنَ ۙ ۷۴ قَالَ یٰۤاِبْلِیْسُ مَا مَنَعَكَ اَنْ تَسْجُدَ لِمَا خَلَقْتُ بِیَدَیْیْ اُسْتَكْبَرْتَ اَمْ كُنْتَ مِنَ الْعٰلِیْنَ ۙ ۷۵ قَالَ اَنَا خَيْرٌ مِّنْهُ خَلَقْتَنِیْ مِنْ نَّارٍ وَخَلَقْتَهُ ۙ مِنْ طِیْنٍ ۙ ۷۶﴾

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Doctrines Regarding Ḥawwā'

Then Iblīs was exiled from the Garden when he was cursed, and Adam was put to dwell in the Garden. He went around alone with no wife in whom he could find repose. Then he fell asleep and work up to find a woman sitting beside his head whom God had created from his rib.

So he asked her: 'Who are you?' And she said: 'A woman.' He said: 'Why are you created?' She said: 'So that you could find repose in me.' Then the angels ask him, to see how much he knew: "What is her name, Adam?" He said: Ḥawwā' They said: 'Why is she called Ḥawwā'?' He said: 'Because she was created from something living (*ḥaiy*).'

Then God said to him: 'Adam, dwell you and your wife, in the Garden, and eat thereof whatever you desire.'

(Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī)



What is man's place in the cosmos?

وَلَقَدْ كَرَّمْنَا بَنِي آدَمَ وَحَمَلْنَاهُمْ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ وَرَزَقْنَاهُمْ مِّنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَفَضَّلْنَاهُمْ عَلَى كَثِيرٍ مِّمَّنْ خَلَقْنَا تَفْضِيلًا

Indeed, We have dignified/honored the children of Adam, carried them on land and sea, granted them good and lawful provisions, and favored them far above many of Our creatures.
[17:70]

Humans are the most superior and honorable of all creation.



Were there living being before the creation of humans?

وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَأِكَةِ إِنِّي جَاعِلٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً قَالُوا أَتَجْعَلُ فِيهَا مَن يُفْسِدُ فِيهَا وَيَسْفِكُ الدِّمَاءَ وَنَحْنُ نُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِكَ وَنُقَدِّسُ لَكَ
قَالَ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ٣٠

Will you place thereon one who will work corruption there
and shed blood? [2:30]



Were there living being before the creation of humans?

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Will you place thereon one who will work corruption there
and shed blood? [2:30]

How did they know?



Were there living being before the creation of humans?

Will you place thereon one who will work corruption there and shed blood?

How did they know?

Opinion 1

God informed the angels that among the children of Adam are those who will work corruption and shed blood.

Opinion 2

There were previous inhabitants on the Earth, namely jinn-kind who worked corruption and shed blood. The angels were assuming humankind will be like jinn-kind.



Did humans evolve from prior living beings? Did the human form evolve?

الَّذِي خَلَقَكَ فَسَوَّكَ فَعَدَلَكَ ۝٧

Who created you, then formed you perfect, then balanced you even out. [82:7]

لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ فِي أَحْسَنِ تَقْوِيمٍ ۝٤

Verily We have created man in fairest symmetry
[95:4]



Did humans evolve from prior living beings? Did the human form evolve?

Humans are created from the outset in the complete physical form and fairest symmetrical form (aḥsan al-taqwīm).

Humans did *not* evolve, over the course of time, from another species. Humans are a living being distinct in essence, not in terms of degree, from other living beings.

﴿الَّذِي خَلَقَكَ فَسَوَّنَكَ فَعَدَلَكَ ۖ﴾

Who created you, **then formed you perfect**, then balanced you even out. [82:7]

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Verily We have created man **in the fairest symmetry** [95:4]



**Does man belong to the
anthropological classification of
Homo?**

***Man does not belong to the anthropological
classification of Homo***



As Muslims, what do we believe to be true regarding humans?

Doctrinal Position
1. Humans are the most superior and honourable of all creation.
2. The human species is created from dust (<i>turāb</i>) and proliferated from the first human Adam (PBUH).
3. Prophet Adam (PBUH) is the father of all humankind
4. Prophet Adam (PBUH) was created by Allah in paradise not on earth.
5. There were other living beings before humans were created.
6. Humans are created from the outset in the complete physical form and fairest symmetrical form (<i>aḥsan al-taqwīm</i>). Humans did not evolve, over the course of time, from another species. Humans are a living being distinct in essence, not in terms of degree, from other living beings.
7. Man does not belong to the anthropological classification of Homo



SECTION 2

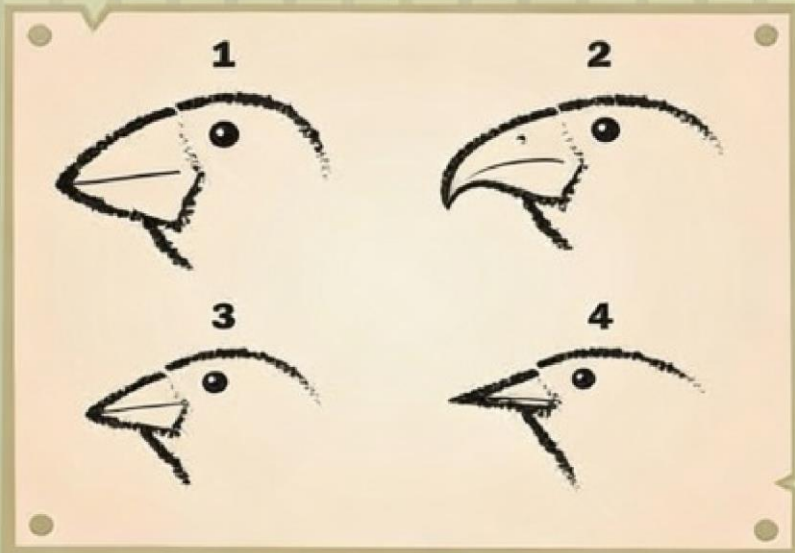
The Science of Evolution



What is Evolution?

- Evolution has three key principles:
 1. Deep time
 2. Common ancestry
 3. Mechanisms





What is Evolution?

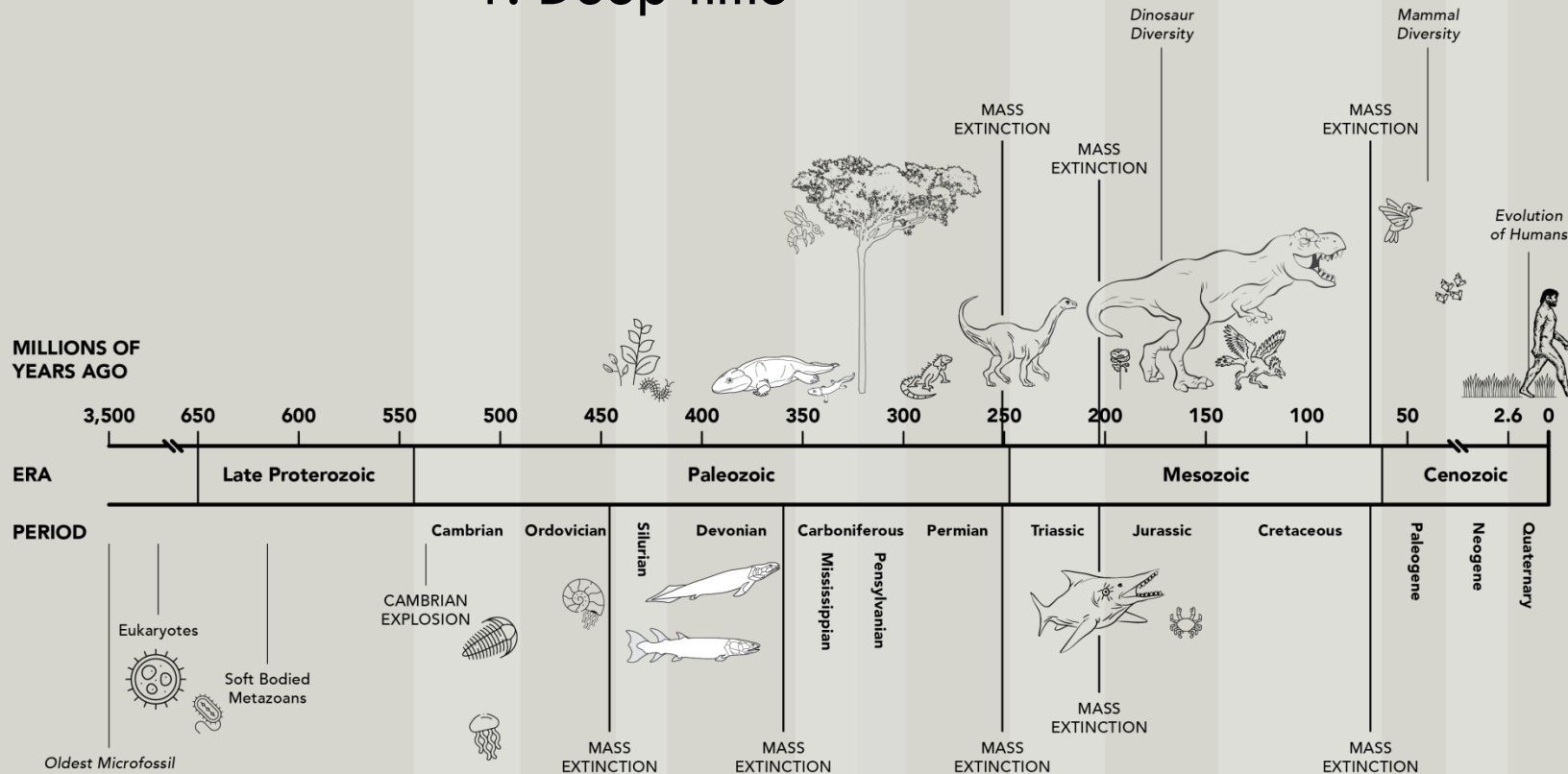
- Evolution has three key principles:
 1. **Deep time**
 2. Common ancestry
 3. Mechanisms



Key Principles of Evolution: Deep Time

Life Above Water

1. Deep time



Water-based Life



Key Principles of Evolution: Deep Time

- Evolution has three key principles:
 1. **Deep time – the earth is really old (4.6 billion years)**
 2. Common ancestry
 3. Mechanisms



What is Evolution?

- Is this *qaṭ'ī* or *ẓannī*?
 - Measurements are based on:
 1. Rock samples
 2. Isotope measurements
 - 1% error range

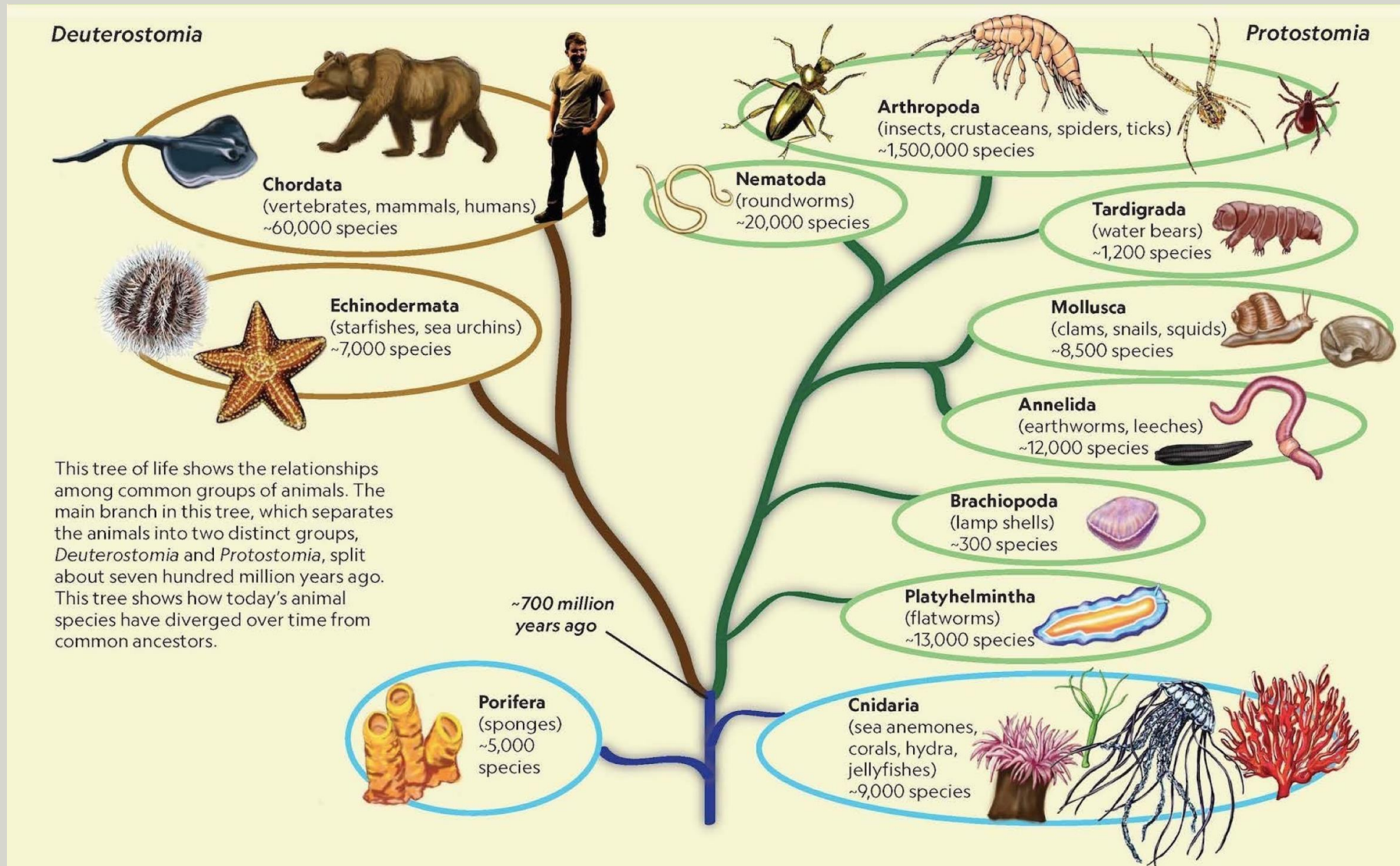


Key Principles of Evolution: Common Ancestry

- Evolution has three key principles:
 1. Deep time – the earth is really old (4.6 billion years)
 - 2. Common ancestry**
 3. Mechanisms



2. Common ancestry

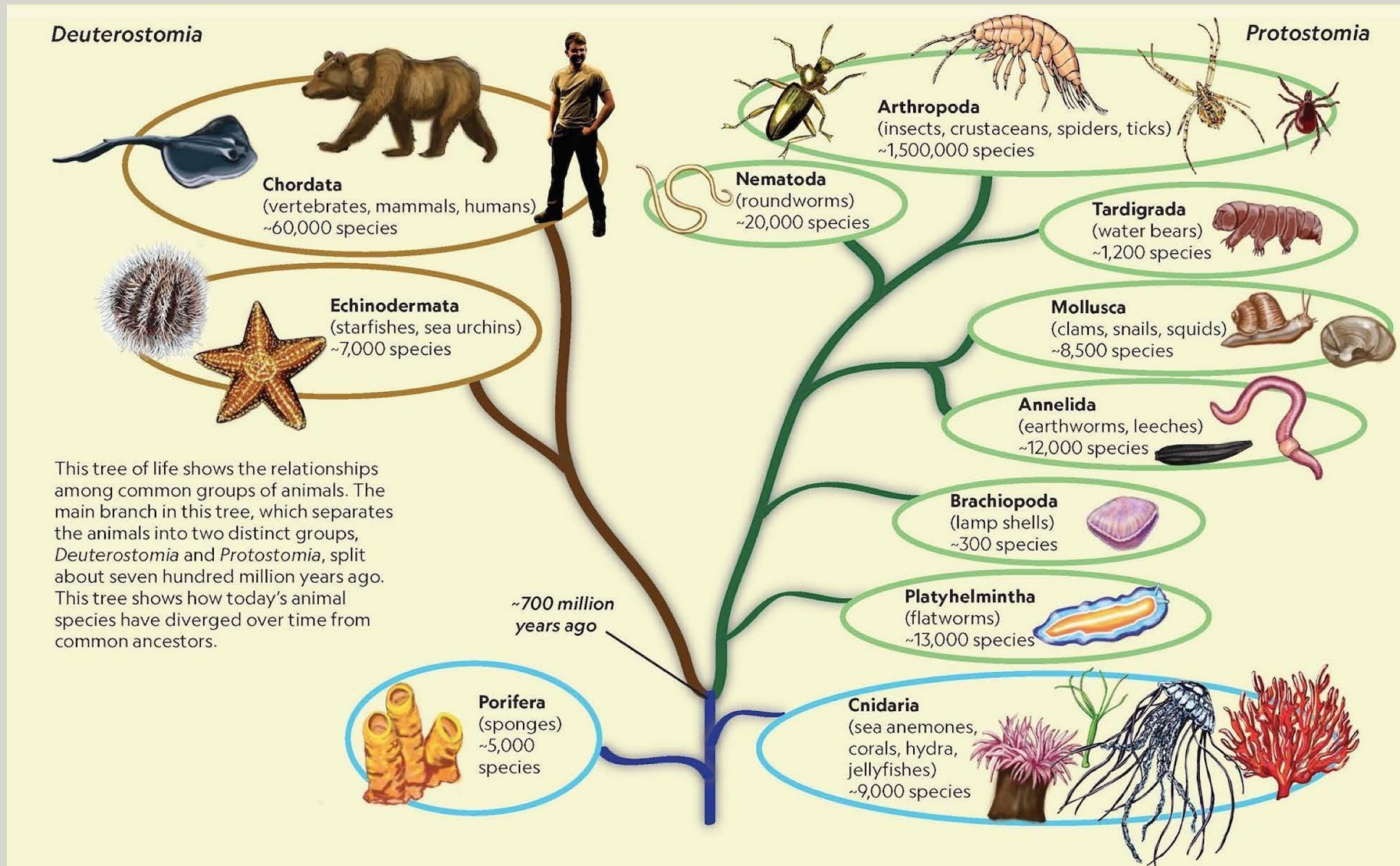


2. Common ancestry

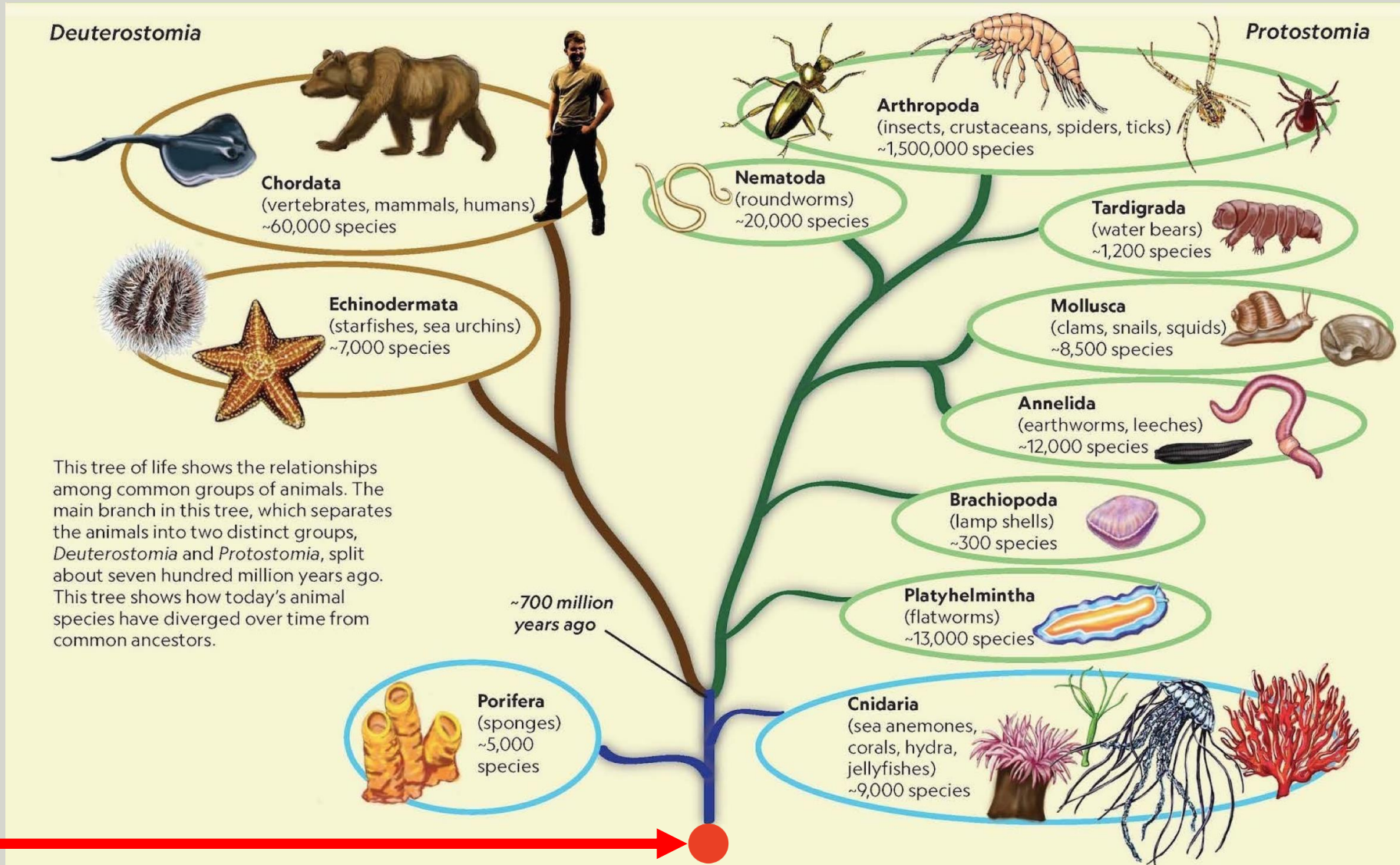
- An important distinction between:
 - Origins of **life** – **abiogenesis**
 - Origins of **species** – **evolution**



2. Common ancestry



2. Common ancestry



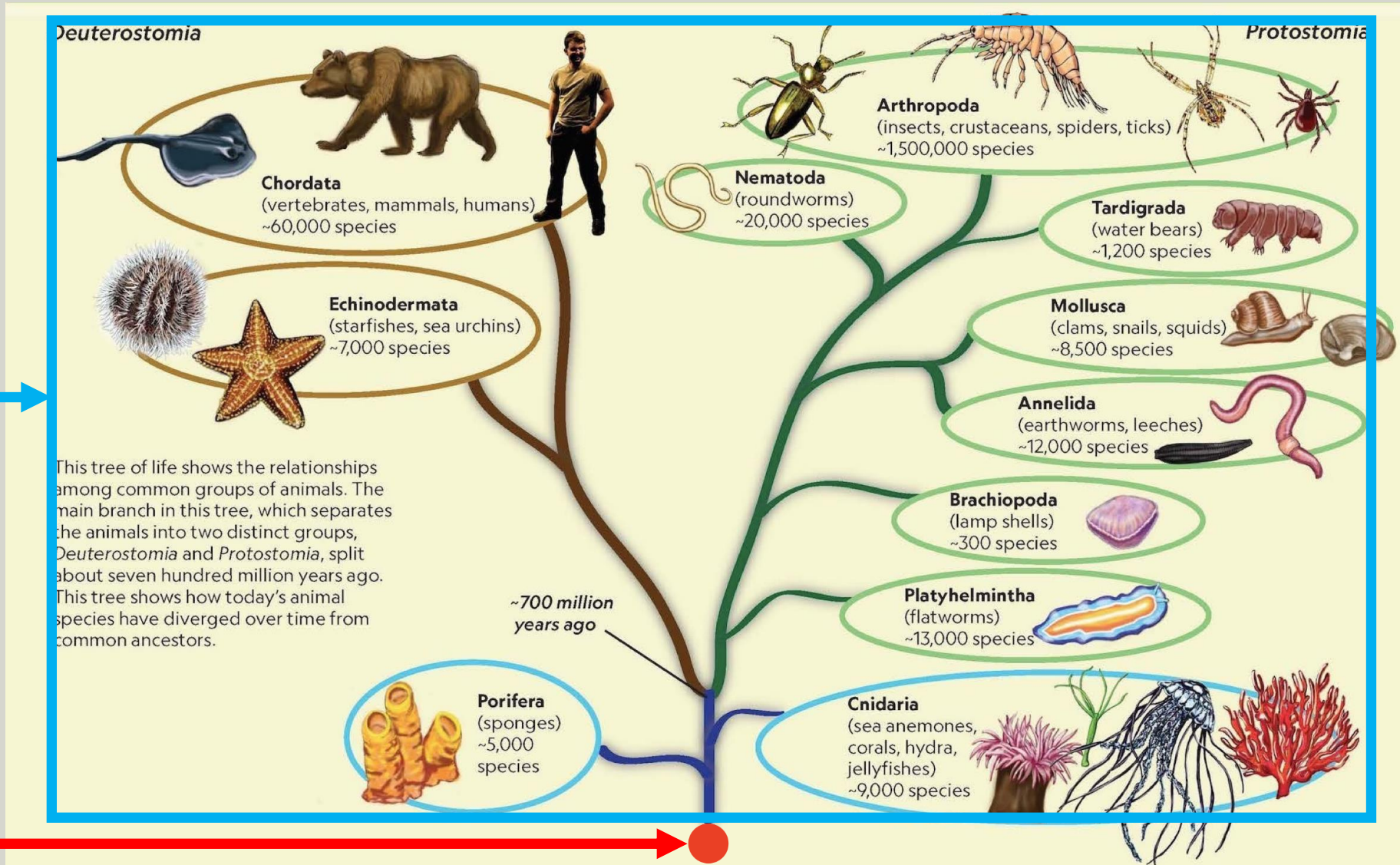
Origins of
life



2. Common ancestry

Origins of
species

Origins of
life



What is Evolution?

- Is this *qaṭ'ī* or *ẓannī*?
 - Till now, there is no adequate explanation of the *origins of life (abiogenesis)*
 - Evolutionary biologists have:
 1. Methodological disagreements about trees
 2. Questioned whether there is a single or multiple trees
 3. Revised placements of species in light of new knowledge

Doolittle, W. Ford and Eric Baptiste. 2007. **Pattern Pluralism and the Tree of Life hypothesis**. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America* 104(7): pp. 2043-2049.



Key Principles of Evolution: Common Ancestry

- Evolution has three key principles:
 1. Deep time – the earth is really old (4.6 billion years)
 2. **Common ancestry – all biological life is interconnected through a long, historical lineage like a family tree**
 3. Mechanisms



Key Principles of Evolution: Mechanisms

- Evolution has three key principles:
 1. Deep time – the earth is really old (4.6 billion years)
 2. Common ancestry – all biological life is interconnected through a long, historical lineage like a family tree
 3. **Mechanisms**

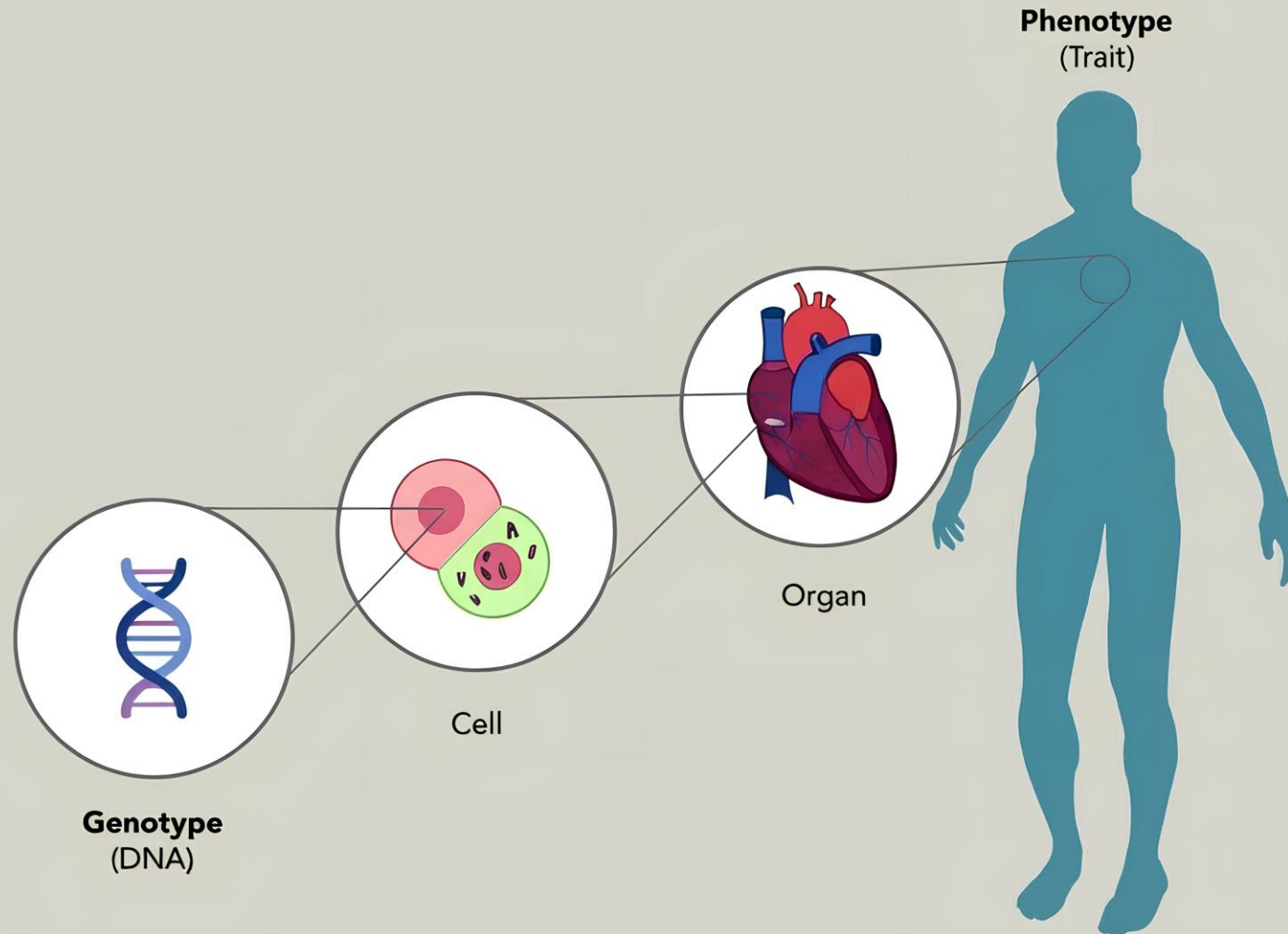


3. Mechanism

- Two key mechanisms:
 - a. Random mutations
 - b. Natural selection



a. Random mutations



b. Natural selection



What is Neo-Darwinism?

- Evolution has three key principles:
 1. Deep time – the earth is really old (4.6 billion years)
 2. Common ancestry – all biological life is interconnected through a long, historical lineage like a family tree
 3. Mechanisms:
 - a. Random mutations
 - b. Natural selection
- Collectively known as Neo-Darwinism



Evidence for the Theory of Evolution

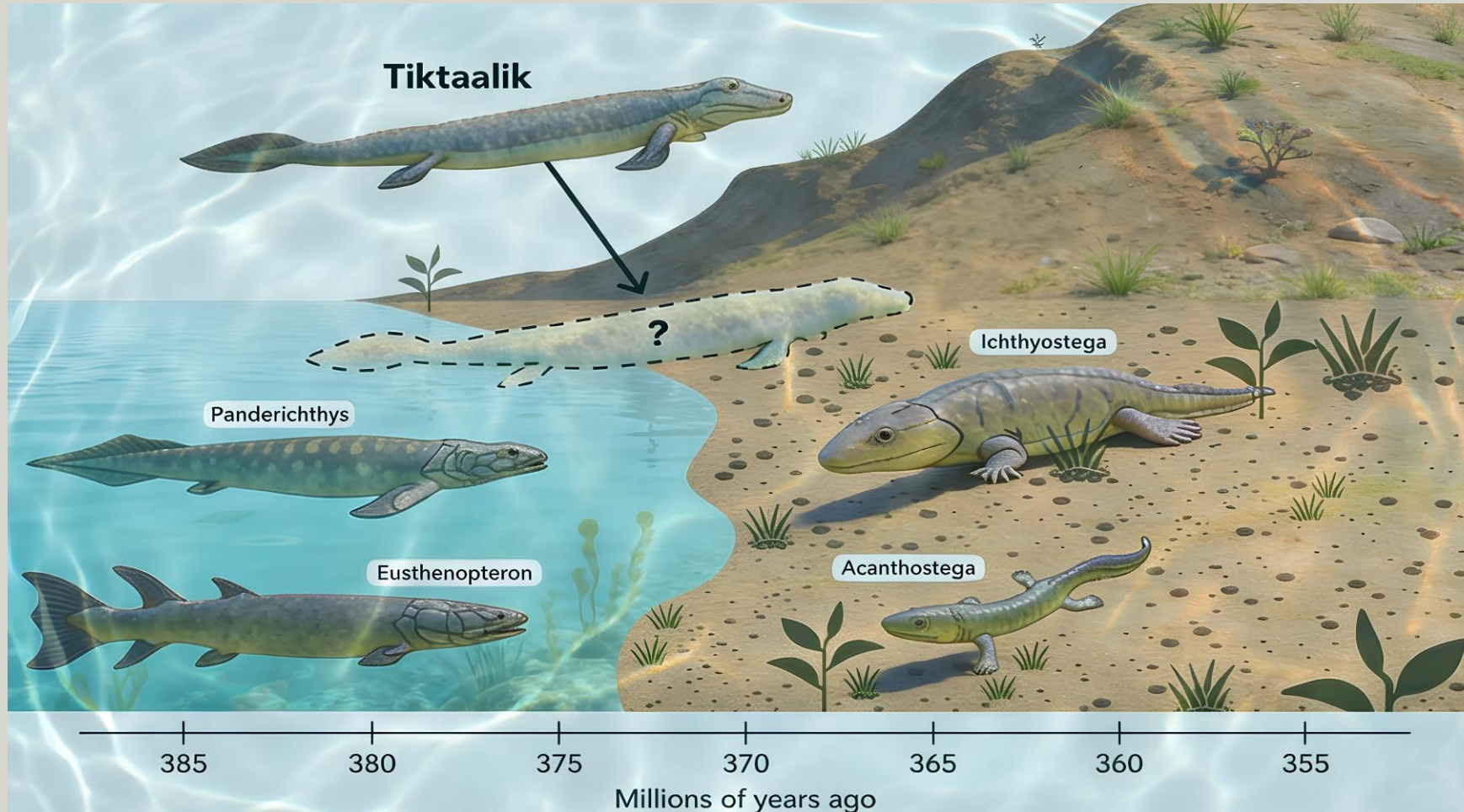
- There are many
- Some of the main ones include:
 1. Fossil record
 2. Homology
 3. Genetics



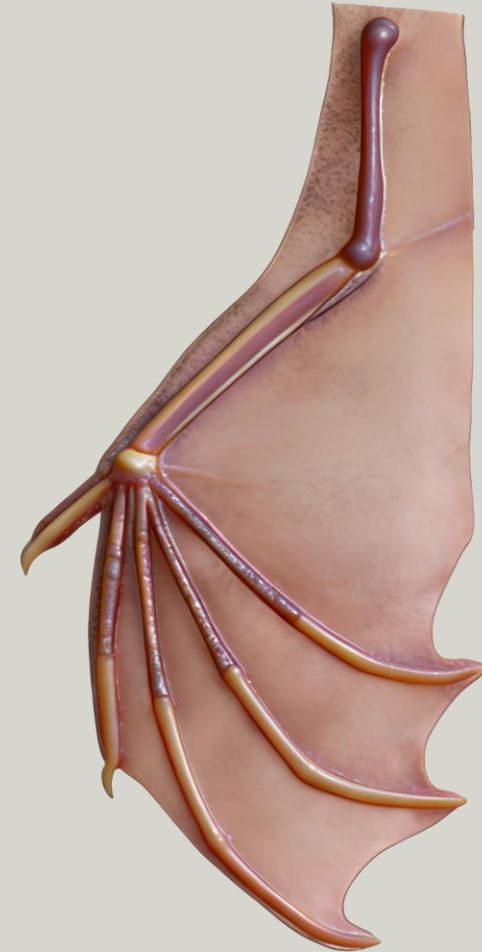
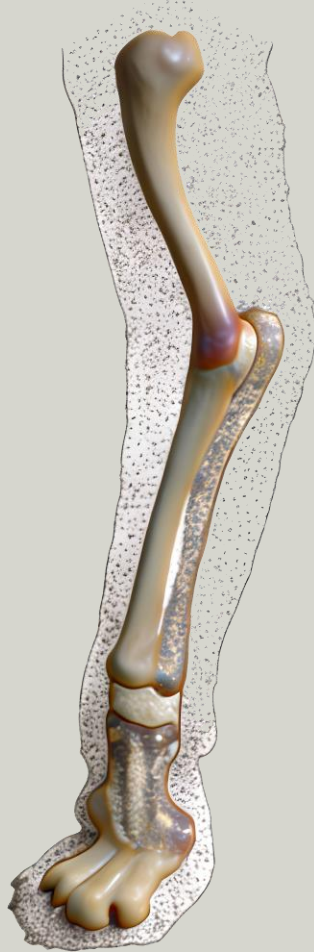
1. Fossil Records



1. Fossil Records



2. Homology



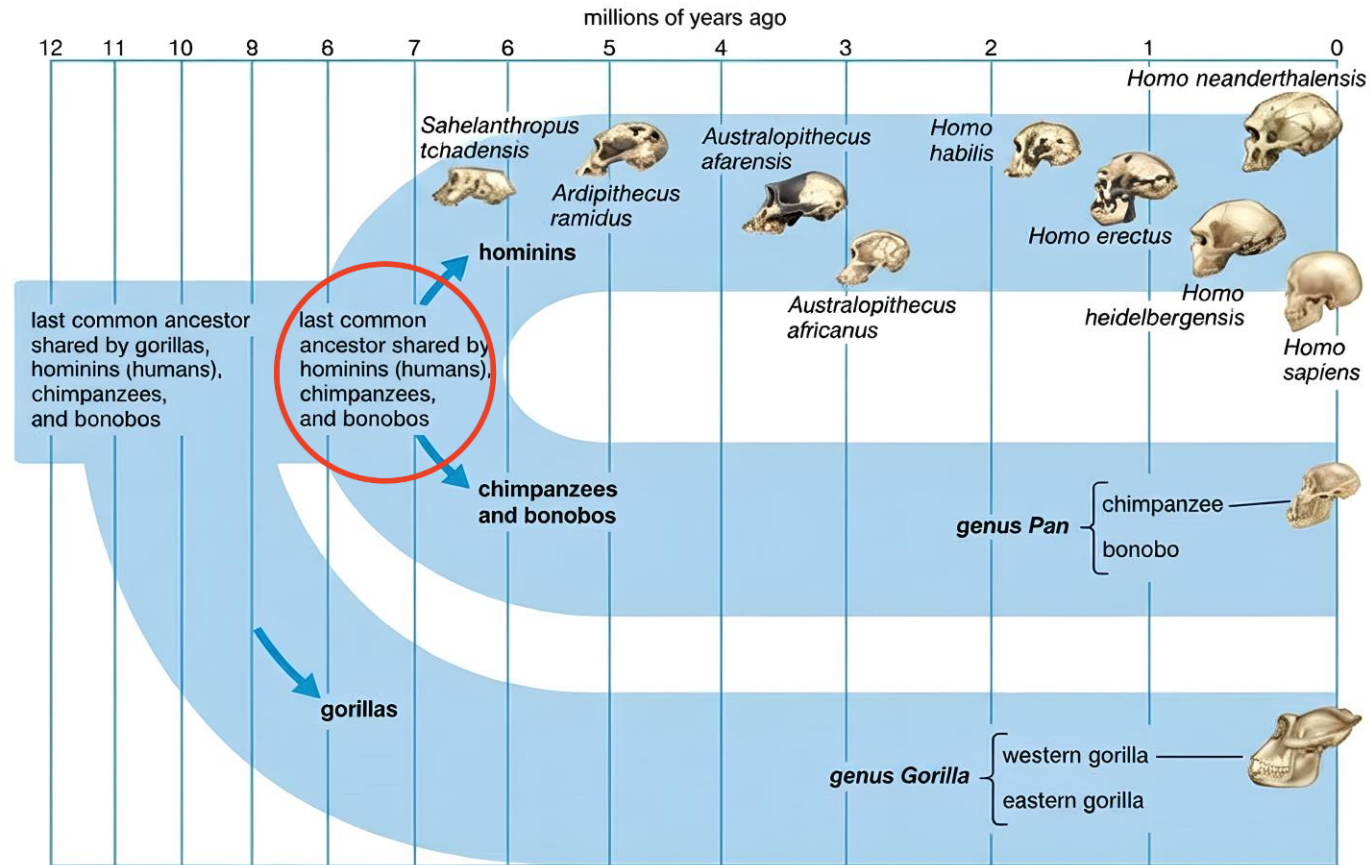
2. Homology



2. Homology



3. Genetics



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3. Genetics

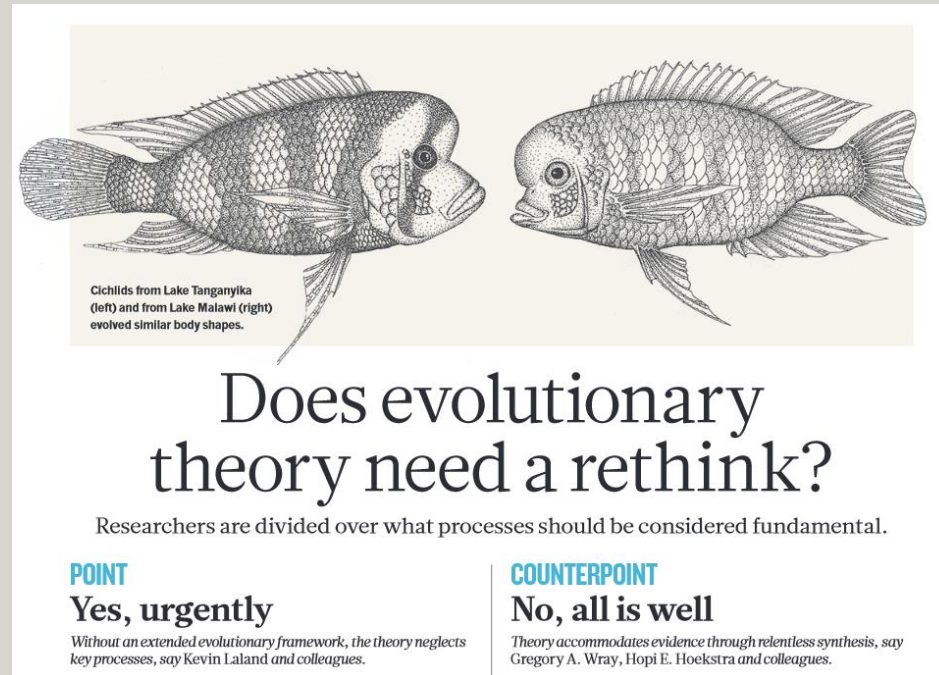
**Watch Video:
DNA Evidence That Humans & Chimps Share A Common Ancestor:
Endogenous Retroviruses**

Stated Clearly
<https://youtu.be/oXfDF5Ew3Gc?si=UIQnMvdcyxa5vsLh>



What is Evolution?

- Is *Neo-Darwinism qatı'or zanni?*



Does evolutionary theory need a rethink?

<https://www.nature.com/articles/514161a>



Questions to Think About

- Can/should we accept or reject:
 - Deep time?
 - Common ancestry?
 - Mechanisms:
 - Random mutations?
 - Natural selection?



CONCLUSION

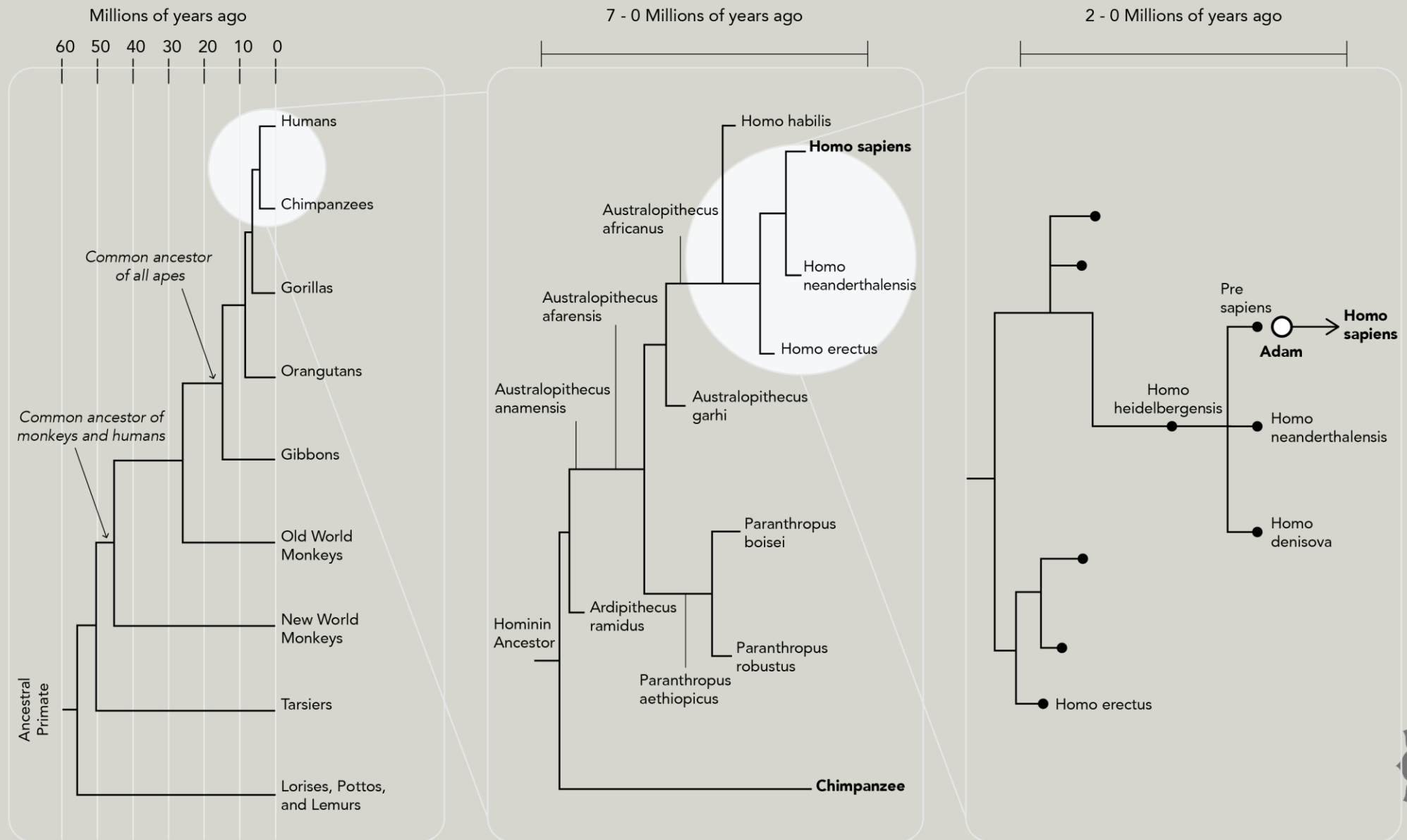


SECTION 3

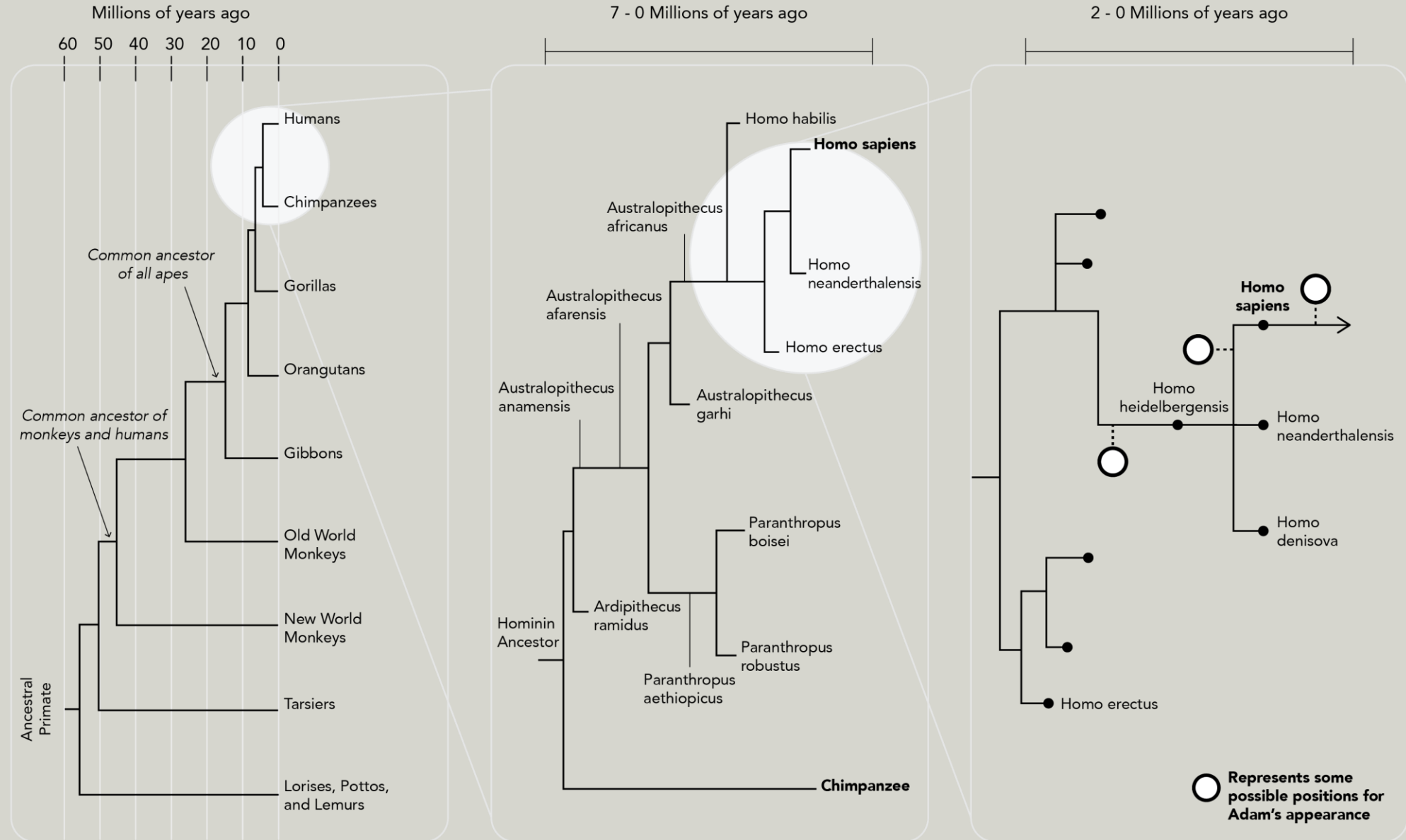
What Can We Accept?



Human Exceptionalism



Adamic Exceptionalism



SLO 1	Describe and explain the scientific account of Neo-Darwinian evolution	Section 1
SLO 2	Describe and explain the theological account of non-humans and humans	Section 2
SLO 3	Describe, categorise, and evaluate various Muslim responses to Neo-Darwinian evolution	Section 3
SLO 4	Distinguish and evaluate the various kinds of conflicts (potential, apparent, and actual) between Islam and evolution	



What Can We Accept?

Where do the principles of evolution intersect with theology?



Let us look at the principles of evolution considering what Muslims believe to be true.

Is the proposition 'the earth might be 4.6 billion years old' in conflict with what specific doctrines of the Qur'an or Sunnah?

It is not in conflict.

Is the proposition 'all biological life, including the human being, is interconnected through a long, historical lineage like a family tree' in conflict with what specific doctrines of the Qur'an or Sunnah?

It is in conflict.

Is the proposition 'human beings, chimpanzees, and monkeys all have a common ancestor from which they evolved' in conflict with what specific doctrines of the Qur'an or Sunnah?

It is in conflict.



***And Allah, the Exalted,
knows best!***

