



Logos et scientia

Center for the Study of the Relationship between Science and Religion

Faculty of Philosophy and Religious Studies of the University of Zagreb

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Conference of the Center for the Study of the Relationship between Science and Religion

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Religion and Society

The Relationship between Science and Religion

Science and Society

EXPLORING RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

INVITED ▪ LECTURE

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Re-examining the Compatibility of Evolution and Design Arguments

Could evolution and biological design arguments be compatible after all? It has often been argued that there is a conflict between evolution and seeing any divine purpose in the biological world. Darwin himself struggled with the issue, saying that sometimes the intuition of design 'comes over me with overwhelming force' but at other times 'it seems to go away.' In modern debates, many defenders of design arguments have opted to argue against evolution. Instead, this lecture develops a philosophical *evolutionary design argument*, updating the ideas of 19th-century biologist Asa Gray based on current science and philosophy. This challenges the dichotomy of evolution and design as opposing explanations, thereby undermining both Intelligent Design arguments (insofar as they require gaps in evolutionary processes) and atheistic philosophical interpretations of evolutions, which assert that evolution is purposeless and unguided. The lecture also considers and responds to four objections to evolutionary design arguments, including (1) the logical compatibility of evolution and design, (2) the principle of simplicity, (3) the role of chance in evolution, and (4) potential unfalsifiability. Evolutionary design arguments provide an interesting case study of the relationship between theistic and scientific explanations.