

Against Evolution Part I A Theory Not Worthy of Catholic Credulity

How the Bankrupt Theory of Evolution Has Overthrown the Genesis Account of the Fall with the Help of its Catholic Enablers

by Christopher Ferrara

God Separating the Lands and the Waters by Raphael

When we descend to details, we can prove that no one species has changed...

-Charles Darwin, 1863

Through use and abuse of hidden postulates, of bold, often ill-founded extrapolations, a pseudo-science has been created. It is taking root in the very heart of biology and is leading astray many biochemists and biologists...

-Pierre-Paul Grassé (Evolutionary Zoologist, 1973)

Introduction

As the atheist ideologue Richard Dawkins famously observed in his oxymoronically entitled *The Blind Watchmaker*, “Darwin made it possible to be an intellectually fulfilled atheist.”²² Darwinian and neo-Darwinian evolution provide the atheist with a substitute for God, concealing the insuperable problem noted by Hume (as quoted by Dawkins): “I have no explanation for complex biological design. All I know

is that God isn’t a good explanation, so we must wait and hope that somebody comes up with a better one (emphasis mine).”²³

Charles Darwin (1809-1882) was a scientific mediocrity who knew almost nothing of the emerging science of genetics being developed by the Augustinian friar, Gregor Mendel (1822-1884). For Darwin, cells were blobs of protoplasm easily altered by environmental conditions. Genetics would expose the naiveté of his primitive hypothesis, leading to the more sophisticated but equally unbelievable neo-Darwinian “synthesis.” Given the theory’s provenance in the intellectual crudities of nineteenth-century skepticism and materialism, one would think that Catholics would view it with the incredulity it deserves, holding it to the rigorous standards

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of proof that are supposed to apply to the sciences.

With the rise of Modernism in the Church, however, came the rise of evolutionary thinking in theology, led by Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, neo-Modernism’s preeminent

evolutionary mountebank (implicated in the Piltdown Man hoax) whose writings were twice condemned by the Holy Office. Only weeks before the commencement of the Second Vatican Council, the Holy Office under John XXIII issued this *monitum* concerning Teilhard's writings:

... it is sufficiently clear that the above-mentioned works abound in such ambiguities and indeed even serious errors, as to offend Catholic doctrine.

For this reason, the most eminent and most revered Fathers of the Holy Office exhort all Ordinaries as well as the superiors of Religious institutes, rectors of seminaries, and presidents of universities, effectively to protect the minds, particularly of the youth, against the dangers presented by the works of Fr. Teilhard de Chardin and of his followers.⁴

It is the burden of this series to show that, despite all protestations of orthodoxy, the attempted reconciliation of the Faith with the putative “discoveries” of evolutionists has inevitably eroded confidence in the *de fide* teaching on Creation, the basic elements of historical truth indispensable to the integrity of the Genesis account, and thus the foundation of the dogma of Original Sin.

As we shall see here, the constituency in the Church that can fairly be called neo-Catholic (a form of “conservative” Catholicism with liberal features akin to political neo-conservatism) has joined the neo-Modernists in pronouncing the death of the traditional account of the Fall. Bereft of the guidance of the Magisterium for an alternative account, they devise their own versions of how, in a world in which men evolved from ape-like ancestors, Original Sin could have been transmitted to the entire human race by one man, and how all humanity could have descended from two first parents.

Unproven, untestable, unrepeatable, unverifiable and therefore unscientific, yet uncontainable in its pretensions, neo-Darwinism is another Trojan Horse in the City of God. But our neo-Catholic brethren, always eager to disparage “Catholic fundamentalism,” have not hesitated to open the horse's belly and invite what is inside to wreak havoc in the Church. They aid and abet the conquering march of a pseudoscience with no claim

on reason because it is contrary to reason—indeed laughable in many of its preposterous contentions. It is long past time for Catholics to unite in opposing a materialist superstition masquerading as an empirical science.

The Evolutionary Superstition

The essence of the textbook theory of evolution is that the infinite variety of life is the result of fortuitous and unguided incremental changes in matter over vast amounts of time, beginning with lifeless molecules. The proposed mechanism for the evolutionary progress of molecules to men is itself constantly evolving to avoid falsification.

The innumerable transitional forms preceding emerging new species that Darwin expected the fossil record to show were never forthcoming, even though evolution by small mutations conserved by natural selection would logically produce vastly more transitional than terminal forms.

Quite to the contrary, the “Cambrian explosion,” in which the basic body plans of the animal phyla appear abruptly in the fossil record without prior incipient stages, confounds evolutionists to this day, despite their flimsy attempts to explain away this massive embarrassment for their beloved theory.

Pierre-Paul Grassé, the eminent French evolutionary zoologist and one time President of the French Academy of Sciences, admitted in 1977 that:

The lack of concrete evidence relative to the ‘heyday’ of evolution [the Cambrian explosion] seriously impairs any transformist theory... *a shadow is cast over the genesis [!] of the fundamental structural plans and we are unable to eliminate it...* The lack of direct evidence leads to the formulation of *pure conjectures* as to the genesis of the phyla; we do not even have a basis to determine the extent to which these opinions are correct.⁵

Concerning the Cambrian explosion, the Chinese paleontologist Jun-Yuan Chen, an expert in the Cambrian shale at Chengjiang, China, remarked: “In China we can criticize Darwin, but not the government; in America, you can criticize the government, but not Darwin.”⁶ The same is true within the post-conciliar Church: all are free to engage in “higher criticism” of Sacred Scripture



Evolution is not a scientific theory, even though it has arrogated to itself the dignity of a testable empirical proposition. A theory that can never be falsified because it simply concocts a new hypothesis to save itself is not science but superstition.

with voluptuous abandon, but thunderous mockery and objurgation greet those few hardy souls who dare to utter a peep against Sacred Evolution.

Yet as neo-Catholics kowtow to neo-Darwinism’s “synthetic model” of “natural selection” conserving a gradual accumulation of random genetic changes, that model is under increasing pressure from revisionists *within* the evolution establishment who know a loser when they see one. As early as 1980 the late Stephen Jay Gould of Harvard, then the world’s most renowned evolutionist, reluctantly conceded that it would seem that model “as a general proposition, is effectively dead, despite its persistence as textbook orthodoxy.”⁷⁷ It was Gould who posed an obvious question “fundamentalists” critics of evolution have been asking for decades: “Of what possible use are the imperfect incipient stages of useful structures? What good is half a jaw or half a wing?”⁷⁸ And it was he who famously admitted what was always evident: “the fossil record contains precious little in the way of intermediate forms; transitions between major groups are *characteristically abrupt*.”

In an attempt to keep Darwinism alive, neo-Darwinians have grafted various *ad hoc* hypotheses onto Darwin’s creaky old theory, including “genetic drift,” Gould-Eldredge’s “punctuated equilibrium” (abrupt mutational leaps, conveniently bypassing fossilized intermediates), genetic recombination, Gould-Lewontin’s “spandrels” hypothesis, and so forth. The basic idea, however, remains absurd: where once there was no life, blind natural processes have produced a world filled with millions of living species of staggering complexity even at their most elemental level.

Evolution’s credibility problem begins at the very beginning of evolutionary time: protein synthesis is impossible without the chromosomal DNA “code,” but DNA depends on proteins for execution of its instructions. Quite simply, “the code cannot be translated other than by the products of translation”⁷⁹—a classic chicken-and-egg dilemma. Worse, in a cell the DNA code imparts information to RNA for the assembly of proteins by a process called

transcription. But how did DNA “evolve” this function without RNA already being present to serve as the transcript, and how did single-stranded RNA interface with its double-stranded DNA complement, which had to uncoil itself for this purpose, especially in view of RNA’s unstable, mutation-prone nature? Then there is the question how the DNA code, written in what Gould called “machine language,” was compiled in the first place.¹⁰

In *The Origins of Life: A New View* (p. 294), evolutionary revisionist Stuart Kaufman states the obvious about this fundamental biogenetic system: “Its emergence seems to require its prior existence.” Undaunted by the obvious—as evolutionists always are—Kaufman proposes a “new view” of the “self-organization” of polymeric molecules even more implausible than the previous “new views.”¹¹ In evolution theory what Kaufman calls an “elegant body of ideas” keeps the show going, even if observation or experiment cannot confirm them.

And what of the building block of animal life, the eukaryotic cell? Evolutionists have no credible explanation for how mindless processes could produce a biological world-within-a-world consisting of an outer membrane, cytoplasm, organelles, an intricate folded reticulum and a nucleus, surrounded by its own double-layered lipid membrane with pores for the passage of selected molecules and ions, packed with chromosomal DNA that imparts genetic instructions to RNA for protein assembly by ribosomes, which

execute the RNA instructions and then protect the manufactured protein products with tiny vesicles transported to the Golgi apparatus for final processing. Mitochondria, organelles of incredible complexity with their own DNA (yet also needing nuclear DNA to function), power cellular activity governed by complex and co-dependent chemical reactions. Destroy or damage any of these interdependent components and a cell ceases to function properly or dies. This is not even to discuss the impossibly intricate process of cell division by meiosis (for sexual reproduction) and mitosis (for building up and repairing tissues) or the mind-boggling ability of cells to differentiate into specialized



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functions based on their locations in an organism.

As to the origin of the first cell, evolutionists—utterly stumped—offer feeble, indemonstrable, and fantastical speculations, including magical self-assembly of cells atop crystals, the seeding of the planet with biological material delivered from outer space by comets or meteoroids, and even (as Francis Crick of DNA fame argued) by alien spacecraft that brought organisms to our planet.¹² Yet, confronted with their inability to explain the emergence of even one functioning cell without a guided process—indeed even *with* a guided process under controlled laboratory conditions—evolutionists confidently assure us that they have explained a world filled with organisms composed of billions and *trillions* of cells interacting precisely as required for life. And in response to every objection evolutionists provide the same non-reply: that we cannot explain exactly *how* evolution happened does not mean it did not happen, for evolution is a fact and someday we will discover the evolutionary explanation. Meanwhile, “elegant ideas” fill massive gaps that would result in the abandonment of any other scientific theory.

But evolution is not a scientific theory, even though it has arrogated to itself the dignity of a testable empirical proposition. A theory that can never be falsified because it simply concocts a new hypothesis to save itself is not science but superstition. The biochemist and Nobel laureate Ernst Chain, an Orthodox Jew, was thus openly contemptuous of Darwinian evolution: “I would rather believe in fairies than in such wild speculation.” His son Benjamin related that “There is no doubt that he did not like the theory of evolution by natural selection—and he disliked theories in general, and more especially when they assumed the form of dogma. *He also felt that evolution was not really a part of science*, since it was, for the most part, not amenable to experimentation...”¹³

Splitting the Difference with the Zeitgeist

Would that our neo-Catholic friends exhibited such healthy skepticism about evolution’s scientific pretensions. Instead, confronted with the nonsensical claim that non-life gave rise to a world filled with living creatures through the blind operation of natural processes—the “Blind Watchmaker” of Dawkins’s manifesto—the neo-Catholic obligingly posits “theistic evolution,” by which God intervened at each stage to bring the “gradual development” of life to the next level.

But if evolution would be impossible without such hidden divine interventions, why not simply accept what the fossil record shows and Genesis recounts: immediate divine creation of living things according to kind? The dictates of reason hardly compel us to do otherwise. On the contrary, the fossil evidence speaks *against* evolution, as Gould implicitly conceded. No one has better expressed the folly of “theistic evolution” than the great Wolfgang Smith, an accomplished scientist and philosopher who graduated from Cornell at the age of 18 with majors in mathematics, physics, and philosophy and earned a Ph.D. in mathematics at Columbia. Smith observes that “theistic evolution” dis-serves the Church by:

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bringing God into the picture precisely as a kind of *deus ex machina* commissioned to make Darwinian evolution work. *Instead of letting the Darwinist hypothesis fail on scientific grounds, it seeks to bolster that now faltering theory by the ad hoc postulate of divine intervention, for which, to put it mildly, there is not a shred of theological rationale. In a word: theistic evolutionism compounds bad science with spurious theology...* Is it not the height of folly, on the part of Christian apologists, to bolster the atheistic and now discredited hypothesis through the no less gratuitous postulate that God steps in to consummate the anti-God scenario? One is hard pressed to name a doctrine as flagrantly inane!¹⁴

Yet, having posited a multiplication of miracles to make evolution plausible, neo-Catholic evolutionists mock fellow Catholics for “fundamentalism” in rejecting “evolutionary science”—having just rejected it themselves by positing divine intervention! Here, as in so many other ways, the neo-Catholic attempts to appear reasonable by splitting the difference with the Zeitgeist. He has been cowed by a pseudoscience that employs certain scientific techniques, to be sure, but only to serve an absolutely non-negotiable *a priori* conclusion: there is no Creator. The ideological blinders must never come off. As Francis Crick, co-discoverer of the structure of DNA, put it: “Biologists *must constantly keep in mind* that what they see was *not designed*, but rather evolved.”¹⁵ In other words: don’t believe your lying eyes. And this, they tell us, is science.

Revelation, the Fathers, and the Magisterium on the Origin of Species

According to what theologians call “the analogy of faith,”

Scripture cannot contradict itself if read as an integral whole, with obvious metaphorical expressions being distinguished from literal facts. The literal truth of the Genesis account involves the direct creation of corporeal creatures by God according to kind, culminating in the creation of Adam and Eve. Scripture and its traditional interpretation by the Magisterium determine the meaning of the account, *not* secular science—especially not a pseudoscience infested by atheist demagogues promoting the New Atheism.

This does not mean a blind fideism that would deny the true data of reason. The Church has nothing to fear from authentic scientific discoveries because the Faith and *right* reason are never in conflict. The theory of evolution, however, is readily shown to be contrary to reason as well as the physical evidence. Thus its patently nonsensical claims hardly compel modification of the traditional Catholic view of the Genesis account in light of Scripture and Sacred Tradition:

We firmly believe and confess *without reservation* that there is only one true God... *the creator of all things, visible and invisible, spiritual and corporeal*, who by his almighty power from the beginning of time made at once (*simul*) out of nothing (*ex nihilo*), both orders of creatures, *the spiritual and the corporeal*, that is, the angelic and the earthly, and then the human creature, who, as it were, shares in both orders, being composed of spirit and body.¹⁶

Thus declared the Fourth Lateran Council (1213-1215) in a way that pertains to the infallible Magisterium. The creation of *all things* by God *ex nihilo*—out of nothing—is a dogma of the Faith, even if there is room for interpretation as to how many of the basic kinds of corporeal creatures God created while allowing variation or adaptation within kinds to provide the full diversity of life: “And God created... *every* living and moving creature... *according to its kind* (Gen. 1:21).”

The Catholic dogma of creation *ex nihilo* cannot be reduced to an empty formula by supposing that God created only certain primordial conditions from which “every

living and moving creature” arose through some natural process of evolution without further acts of divine creation. There is not a trace in the Genesis account or anywhere else in Holy Scripture, nor in the Church Fathers, of this sort of macro-evolutionary “transformism”—i.e., one species giving rise to another gradually over eons, or the “molecules to man” hypothesis. As for the creation of man, “[t]here is no place in Holy Scripture that would indicate or allude to the fact that man is of animal origin.” All scriptural references “point towards God immediately molding man from clay.”¹⁷ If God had “created” by means of evolution, it is inconceivable that neither Holy Scripture nor the Patristic teaching on its interpretation would fail to make the least mention of it. Why would God conceal this alleged historical and scientific reality from every one of the inspired authors, who could certainly have presented it in popular language?

Nor can Saint Augustine be enlisted as a proto-evolutionist, as certain Catholic evolutionists would have it according to a superficial and abusive interpretation of his notion of “rational seeds” (*rationes seminales*). Augustine saw these rational seeds as merely the causal principles by which the original kinds continued to exist, move, and generate offspring according to kind, as subsistent beings, following their creation. He held, as

did the other Fathers, that God created all the kinds at once (*simul*)—just as Lateran IV would affirm dogmatically nine centuries later:

Perhaps we ought not to think of these creatures at *the moment they were produced* as subject to the processes of nature which we now observe in them, but rather as under the wonderful and unutterable power of the Wisdom of God, which *reaches from end to end mightily and governs all graciously*. For this power of Divine Wisdom does not reach by stages or arrive by steps. It was just as easy, then, for God to create everything as it is for Wisdom to exercise this mighty power.

For through Wisdom all things were made, and the motion we now see in creatures, measured by the lapse of time, as each one fulfills its proper function, comes to



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creatures from those *causal reasons implanted in them*, which God scattered as seeds at the moment of creation when He spoke and they were made, He commanded and they were created.

Creation, therefore, did not take place slowly in order that a slow development might be implanted in those things that are slow by nature; nor were the ages established at plodding pace at which they now pass. Time brings about the development of these creatures according to the laws of their numbers, but there was no passage of time when they received these laws at creation.¹⁸

Augustine, in fact, maintained that Creation occurred in an instant and that the six-day demarcation in the Genesis account is merely an aid provided by the inspired author to facilitate an understanding of how “God created all things together,” including the six days themselves.¹⁹ Moreover, Augustine, along with the other Fathers, would have regarded as rank heresy the claim that man is descended from beasts. He affirmed without question that man was “formed from the slime, and while he slept a woman had been made for him from his side...”²⁰

Here it must be noted that the Magisterium does not strictly impose a belief in “literal six-day creation” or a particular age of the Earth, but rather permits the opinion that the word “day” [*yôm*] in the Genesis account could represent “a certain space of time” (*temporis spatio*).²¹ Further, creation “at once” (*simul*) does not specify how long “a space of time” was involved in Creation. To say, for example, that “all the products were manufactured at once” is not to say that they were all manufactured instantaneously or in any particular span of time. On the other hand, this limited interpretational latitude provides no foundation for the claim that molecules evolved into men over billions of years.

By the late nineteenth century Darwinism was on its conquering march in society, and by the turn of the twentieth century it had wormed its way into Modernist theology. The Magisterium responded vigorously to the threat with a series of decisions by the Pontifical Biblical Commission, then an arm of the papal Magisterium to which, Pope Saint Pius X insisted, “all are bound in conscience to submit...”²² In 1907, following decisions

of the Commission defending aspects of the inspired and historical character of the Scriptural narrative then under attack by Modernist exegetes, the Holy Office under Pius X issued the landmark decree *Lamentabili*, enumerating and condemning the errors of Modernism, including the following *condemned* proposition: “Scientific progress demands that the concepts of Christian doctrine concerning God, *creation*, revelation, the Person of the Incarnate Word, and Redemption be reformed.”²³

Then, in 1909, the Commission issued a decision answering NO to this question: “Is it possible... to call in question the *literal and historical meaning* [of the Genesis account] where there is question of *facts* narrated in these same chapters which pertain to the *foundations of the Christian religion...*” Among these *facts*, said the Commission, are “the special creation of man; the formation of the first woman *from* the first man.”²⁴

I quite agree with Father Michael Chaberek, O.P., whose recently published definitive study of the history of the Church’s approach to evolutionism concludes: “The principle of historical and literal exegesis, applied to the origin of species and mankind, has caused *insurmountable obstacles for the theistic theory of evolution*, which turned out to contradict the natural sense of the words of Holy Scripture. One may therefore say that the decrees [of the Pontifical Biblical Commission] from the years 1905-1909, and especially the last one (on the historical character of Genesis 1-3), have ruled out biological macroevolution...”²⁵

Concerning the creation of Eve *ex Adamo*, which strictly precludes her prior evolution from “hominids,” as Father Brian Harrison has shown,²⁶ this is an infallible teaching of the universal ordinary Magisterium—a doctrine the Church has always held. Thus Pope Leo XIII in his encyclical on marriage, *Arcanum* (1880), declared as follows regarding “*the never-interrupted doctrine of the Church*” on the origin of marriage:

We record what is to all known, *and cannot be doubted by any*, that God, on the sixth day of creation, having made man from the slime of the earth, and having breathed into his face the breath of life, gave him a companion, *whom He miraculously took from the side of Adam* when he was locked in sleep. God thus, in His most far-reaching

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foresight, decreed that this husband and wife should be the natural beginning of the human race, from whom it might be propagated and preserved by an unfailing fruitfulness throughout all futurity of time [my emphasis].

With good reason, then, did Saint Pius X identify the special creation of Adam and the creation of Eve from Adam as *facts* at the foundations of the Faith. For one thing, to deny these facts leads naturally to polygenism, the claim that the human race is descended from a group of first humans who evolved from “hominids”

(aka “hominins”). Polygenism cannot be reconciled with Genesis unless Genesis is reduced to a fable—a matter the next article in this series will consider at length in light of the teaching of Pius XII in *Humani generis*.

Neo-Modernism, explains the late Father John A. Hardon, S.J., in his monumental *Modern Catholic Dictionary*, “attempts to reconcile modern science and philosophy at

the expense of the integrity of the Catholic faith. It has its roots in the Modernism condemned by Pope St. Pius X.”²⁷

As this series will demonstrate, neo-Catholic evolutionists substantially agree with neo-Modernists in arguing for a revision of the Church’s teaching on creation to accommodate evolution, ridiculing any opposition to the attempt as “fundamentalism.” They flagrantly abuse the limited freedom of opinion Pius XII allowed in this area. ✘

Next Issue: Part II: The Neo-Catholic Planet of the Apes



The Expulsion of Adam and Eve from Paradise by Benjamin West

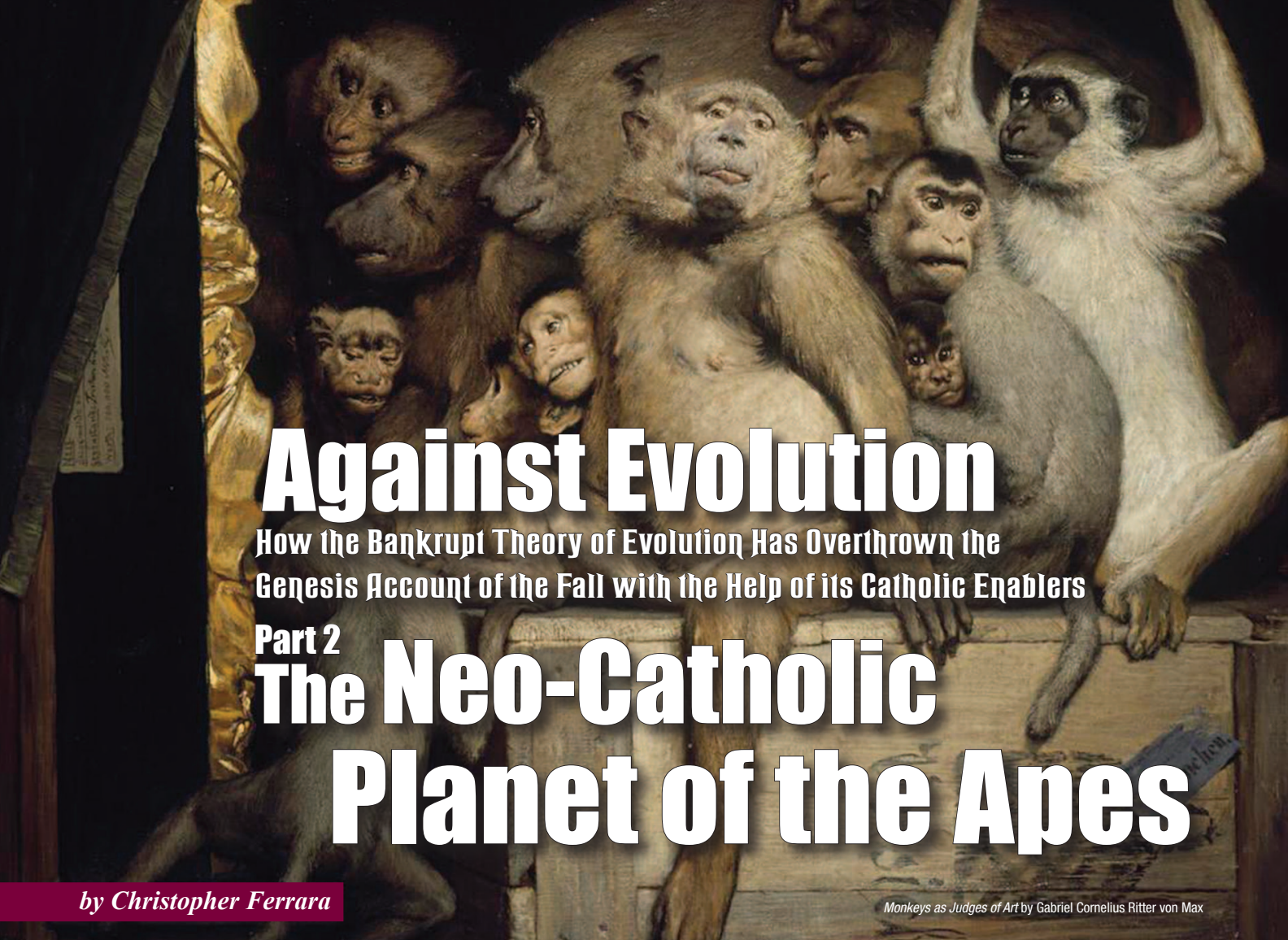
The creation of Eve ex Adamo, which strictly precludes her prior evolution from “hominids,” ... is an infallible teaching of the universal ordinary Magisterium—a doctrine the Church has always held.



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Notes

1. This series is adapted from an essay that first appeared in *The Remnant* in May 2015.
2. Dawkins, *The Blind Watchmaker* (1996), p. 10.
3. Ibid.
4. “Warning Concerning the Writings of Teilhard de Chardin,” Sacred Congregation of the Holy Office, June 30, 1962.
5. Grassé, *Evolution of Living Organisms*, pp. 17, 31. Emphasis mine, here and throughout, unless otherwise indicated.
6. See, http://www.evolutionnews.org/2014/04/in_china_we_can084451.html
7. Gould, “Is a new and general theory of evolution emerging?” *Paleobiology*, 6[1], 1980, p. 20.
8. Gould, “The Return of the Hopeful Monsters”; accessed @ www.darwiniana.t.ripod.com/gould_n_86_6_22-30.html.
9. In Stephen J. Meyer, *Signature in the Cell*, p. 134.
10. Ibid., p. 121.
11. Cf. Stephen C. Meyer, *Darwin’s Doubt*, pp. 293-300.
12. Crick’s “scientific” paper making precisely this argument, published in 1972, is available @ <http://profiles.nlm.nih.gov/ps/access/SCBCCP.pdf>.
13. Clark, *The Life of Ernst Chain*, Kindle ed., 2775, 2788-2790.
14. Wolfgang Smith, *Theistic Evolution: the Teilhardian Heresy*, p. 5.
15. Meyer, *Signature in the Cell*, p. 20.
16. Denzinger (DZ), 43rd ed., § 800.
17. Michael Chaberek, O.P., *Catholicism and Evolution* (Kettering, OH: Angelico Press, 2015), p. 156 & n. 14.
18. Augustine, *The Literal Meaning of Genesis*, Vol. 1, Bk. 4, Ch. 33 (New York: Paulist, Press, 1982), pp. 141-142. Paragraph breaks added.
19. Ibid., p. 142.
20. Ibid., Bk. 6, Ch. 2, p. 178.
21. Cf. DZ § 3519.
22. *Praestantia Scripturae Sacrae* (1907) @ w2.vatican.va: “we declare and expressly decree that all are bound in conscience to submit to the decisions of the Pontifical Biblical Commission, either those until now promulgated, or those to be promulgated in the future, in the same manner as to decrees of the Sacred Congregations regarding doctrine approved by the Pontiffs” (*dichiariamo ed espressamente decretiamo che tutti sono tenuti in coscienza a sottomettersi alle decisioni del Pontificio Consiglio Biblico, sia a quelle finora già emanate, sia a quelle che saranno emanate nel futuro allo stesso modo che ai decreti delle sacre Congregazioni riguardanti la dottrina approvati dal Pontefice*).
23. DZ § 3464.
24. DZ § 3514.
25. Chaberek, op. cit., p. 157.
26. Harrison, “Did the Human Body Evolve Naturally,” *Living Tradition*, Jan.-Mar. 1998, No. 73-74; accessed @ <http://www.rforum.org/lv/l73.html>.
27. Hardin, *Modern Catholic Dictionary* online @ <http://www.therealpresence.org/dictionary/adict.htm>



Against Evolution

How the Bankrupt Theory of Evolution Has Overthrown the Genesis Account of the Fall with the Help of its Catholic Enablers

Part 2

The Neo-Catholic Planet of the Apes

by Christopher Ferrara

Monkeys as Judges of Art by Gabriel Cornelius Ritter von Max

In the first part of this essay (*The Latin Mass*, Fall 2015) I provided a sketch of some of the fatal flaws in the neo-Darwinian theory of evolution, which preclude Catholic credulity respecting its fantastic claims. I noted that

Pierre-Paul Grassé—himself an evolutionist in search of a credible mechanism for the theory—called neo-Darwinism “a pseudo-science” that “is taking root in the very heart of biology and is leading astray many biochemists and biologists...”¹

Precisely because the theory of evolution is a pseudo-science, any attempt to conform the Genesis account to its contentions is fraught with peril for the Faith. For if one adapts the Church’s traditional understanding of the truths of revelation to the errors of a pseudoscience, the result can only be errors respecting the truths of revelation.

Thus, as we saw in Part I, in order to guard the sources of revelation against the evolutionary speculations which were threatening to run rampant in the Church, Pius XII, in his

landmark encyclical *Humani generis*, while allowing some limited freedom of discussion of the theory among qualified experts, required that the arguments against evolution also be presented and forbade the treatment of the theory

as if it were an established fact. He further positively forbade *even mere discussion* of polygenism—the “conjectural opinion” that man descended, not from two first parents, but from a certain number of early humans:

When, however, there is question of another conjectural opinion, namely polygenism, *the children of the Church by no means enjoy such liberty. For the faithful cannot embrace that opinion* which maintains that either after Adam there existed on this earth true men who did not take their origin through natural genera-

tion from him as from the first parent of all, or that Adam represents a certain number of first parents.²

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The Neo-Catholic Embrace of Polygenism

Neo-Modernism, explains the late Father John A. Hardon,

S.J., in his monumental *Modern Catholic Dictionary*, “attempts to reconcile modern science and philosophy at the expense of the integrity of the Catholic faith. It has its roots in the Modernism condemned by Pope St. Pius X.”³ In this part of the essay I will show that neo-Catholic evolutionists follow neo-Modernists in wantonly transgressing the limited freedom of discussion permitted by *Humani generis*, arguing for a revision of the Church’s teaching on creation to accommodate evolution and ridiculing any opposition to the attempt as “fundamentalism.” By the time they are done with their absurd speculations, the traditional Genesis account of the special creation of Adam and the creation of Eve from Adam as our sole first parents (cf. Part I) lies in ruins, and with it the historical factual foundation of the dogma of Original Sin.

Let us examine a case study of this baneful development, which is only one aspect of the resurgent Modernism of which Monsignor Pozzo spoke in his very important address on the “para-conciliar ideology”⁴ in the post-conciliar Church: an article by Mark Shea entitled “Does Evolutionary Science Disprove the Faith?”⁵

First of all, casting aside Pius XII’s strict prohibition against spreading the error of polygenism, Shea declares there is “increasingly strong evidence for polygenism” and that “[s]cience seems to have disproven the notion that humanity comes from a single solitary pair of humans made literally from a gob of clay and a rib...” He asserts that Pius XII “left room for the possibility of polygenism”—the very opinion the Pope insisted Catholics “cannot embrace.” In typical neo-Modernist/neo-Catholic fashion, Shea mocks opposition to polygenism as “fundamentalism,” assuring his followers that “I don’t think Catholic theology is in mortal danger—or indeed any danger—from the sciences, including the now very strong evidence for polygenism...”

What strong evidence? Shea does not explain, but the “evidence” involves manifestly dubious “computer simulation studies” of speculative gene “coalescence models” whose output is no better than the evolutionary presumptions

behind the input. For example, there is the presumption that man and modern chimps are descended from a common ancestor—the very matter to be proved!—so that human population size at the presumed man-chimp genetic divergence from the presumed common ancestor can be “modeled” on a phylogenetic tree diagram based on an analysis of existing human and chimp gene sequences. As for the speculative modeling itself, evolutionary geneticists assume

a constant rate of mutations over time with no historical events favoring more rapid selection for or against particular traits—even though their own theory posits such events!—and a constant population size over the eons without immigration or emigration.⁶ As the saying goes, a scientist sees what he finds, whereas an evolutionist finds what he sees. “Evolutionary science” indulges elaborately in the fallacy of affirming the consequent, which amounts to historical speculation about what happened in the past based on what is simply presumed to be true in the present: that all living creatures, including man, are the products of evolutionary descent from a common ancestor, which would ultimately have to be a single living cell.

Doctrinaire atheist evolutionists like Jerry Coyne of the University of Chicago cite these methodologically faulty studies, hedged with phrases like “best estimate” and “pretty good estimate,”⁷ in declaring triumphantly that “scientific evidence... absolutely rebuts the Adam and Eve story”⁸ because there is supposedly too much diversity in the human genome to have originated with one set of parents. The smallest possible past population “bottleneck” for human descent to the present world population, they assert, is no fewer than around 10,000 humans, according to their “pretty good estimate.”

Wowed by this “evidence,” which he clearly hasn’t bothered to examine,

Shea simply assumes the argument for polygenism has been clinched and that there must have been at least 10,000 first humans. Curiously enough, the same neo-Catholics who posit a multiplication of miracles to make evolution possible cannot conceive of a miracle that would have allowed Adam and Eve to transmit sufficient genetic



Curiously enough, the same neo-Catholics who posit a multiplication of miracles to make evolution possible cannot conceive of a miracle that would have allowed Adam and Eve to transmit sufficient genetic potential to the human race.

potential to the human race. No, says Shea, there must have been numerous first humans because “science” has disproved the descent of the entire human race from only two first humans: Adam and Eve.

But Pius XII—along with the whole of Tradition—would disagree. As Pius declared in *Humani generis*: “Now it is in no way apparent how such an opinion [polygenism] can be reconciled with that which the sources of revealed truth and the documents of the Teaching Authority of the Church propose with regard to original sin, which proceeds from a sin actually committed by an individual Adam and which, through generation, is passed on to all and is in everyone as his own.”

Shea, however, is pleased to inform his followers of another triumph over Catholic fundamentalism: “Polygenism is, to be sure, the death of simplistic fundamentalist and *sola scriptura* approaches to human origins, but that’s about it.” He never considers the impossibility of *plausibly* reconciling the fall of one man, Adam, with the existence of other men who did not fall. Rather, he quotes a fellow neo-Catholic blogger, one Michael Flynn—appropriately enough a science fiction writer—for his “noodling of the problem.” Flynn objects to the claim by the aforesaid Jerry Coyne that “polygenism spells doom for... the doctrine of the Fall.” Indeed, that is precisely why Pius XII forbade the opinion! Not at all, says Flynn in reply:

Dr. Coyne’s primary error seems to be a quantifier shift. He and his [evolutionary] fundamentalist bedfellows appear to hold that the statement:

A: “There is one man from whom all humans are descended” is equivalent to the statement:

B: “All humans are descended from [only] one man.”

But this logical fallacy hinges on an equivocation of “one,” failing to distinguish “one [out of many]” from “[only] one.” Traditional doctrine requires only A, not B:

That all humans share a common ancestor, not that they have no other ancestors.⁹

So, the neo-Catholic creation narrative presents many first men, among which Adam was merely the patrilineal forbear of present-day men, all the others having conveniently died without leaving lines of descent.



Cro-Magnon Artists Painting in Font-de-Gaume by Charles Knight

So, the neo-Catholic creation narrative presents many first men, among which Adam was merely the patrilineal forbear of present-day men, all the others having conveniently died without leaving lines of descent.

But the Bible contains no account of these lost tribes of Adam’s fellow men—an astonishing omission by the inspired writer of Genesis (Moses, by the way, as “chief and inspired author”).¹⁰ Yet evolution requires polygenism, so the neo-Catholic Genesis account brings in a group of first humans to avoid a supposed falsification of the Bible by “science.” Those are pretty high stakes to wager on a pseudoscience, which, as even Grassé warned, “is leading astray many biochemists and biologists...” Let us see how it is leading many Catholics astray.

Soulless Men?

For starters, if there were numerous first humans not guilty of Original Sin, why would God have allowed them to die out, and why is there no mention of them in Genesis? Furthermore, Pius XII reprobated the opinion that “after Adam there existed on this earth true men who did not take their origin through natural generation from him as from the first parent of all...” Yet polygenism requires the existence of men after Adam who were not Adam’s descendants.

Here is the neo-Catholic answer to this conundrum: aside from Adam, these first men were not *true* men, but rather humanoids. In a bizarre reading of Genesis 6, Flynn offers this invention: “Genesis tells us that the children of Adam and Eve found mates among the children of men, which would indicate that there were a number of *others* [sic] *creatures out there* with whom they could mate.” Other creatures? So, as Shea-Flynn would have it, the alleged minimum requirement of at least 10,000 first “humans” is satisfied by having Adam and Eve’s children engage in essentially bestial sexual relations with an original population of subhumans who, being without spiritual and rational souls, lacked reason, free

will, or the capacity for speech.¹¹

In order to shoehorn his baseless speculation into the Genesis account, Flynn indulges in the kind of verse-twisting one would expect from a Mormon or Jehovah's Witness. Genesis 6 actually refers to the "daughters of men," not the "children of men." As Genesis recounts: "the sons of God seeing the daughters of men, that they were fair, took to themselves wives all of which they chose (Gen. 6:2)." The "sons of God" were the virtuous descendants of Seth and Enos, whereas the phrase "daughters of men" does not imply that there were also "daughters" born of non-humans, which is absurd, but rather refers to women in the line of descent from the reprobate Cain who, as Father Haydock explains, "by their carnal affections lay groveling on the earth..." The bad outcomes of the noble bloodline ("the sons of God"—i.e., godly husbands) marrying into the ignoble bloodline (the "daughters of men"—i.e., ungodly wives) merely on the basis of physical attraction "ought to be a warning to Christians to be very circumspect in their marriages; and not to suffer themselves to be determined in choice by their carnal passion, to the prejudice of virtue or religion."¹²

The neo-Catholic exegesis of Genesis that Flynn advances would require that evolution gave rise to human bodies without the spiritual, rational, and immortal soul that is the form of the body, as Saint Thomas teaches.¹³ These would be lower animals biologically capable of interbreeding with true humans, but possessed of non-spiritual souls lacking the intellectual principle. This literally monstrous proposal "would stand in conflict with the perfection of the first creation, as both [body and soul] are part of human nature."¹⁴ Saint Thomas, of course, rejects the idea: "But it is inconsistent with the perfection of the production of things, that God should have made either the body without the soul, or the soul without the body, since each is a part of human nature. *This is especially unfitting as regards the body, for the body depends on the soul, not the soul on the body.*"¹⁵

Then there is the problem that the emergence of man in this evolutionary manner would require the imperfection all creatures and environments for many millions of years *before* the Fall: the struggle for survival, natural disasters, mass extinctions, genetic mutations, disease and death in all creatures, including evolving man, would have been omnipresent. In short, a world of pain, rather than the Paradise of God's original and perfect Creation. On this basis alone, the entire Genesis account would be reduced to a fairy tale.

And let it not be thought that Flynn's fantasy is peculiar to him. It is the standard neo-Catholic gimmick for "reconciling" polygenism with the dogma of Original Sin. I have encountered the same totally extra-Biblical nonsense many times in private debates on this subject. The lay proponents of this fantasy evidently think Pius XII and his theological consultants were not clever enough to dream it up when the Pope declared that it is "*in no way apparent*" how polygenism can be reconciled with "the sources of revealed truth and the documents of the Teaching Authority of the Church..."

Adam the Ape-Man

According to Flynn, moreover, in physical appearance Adam himself was little more than a clever brute, the evolution of man not yet having reached the stage of modern *Homo sapiens*. He even provides a helpful illustration of Adam relaxing with his subhuman companions after a grueling day of hunting and gathering:

Flynn imagines his Evolutionary Adam, having achieved rationality, "sitting around the campfire after an exciting hunt" with ape-like humanoids, who looked like him but lacked reason. Evolutionary Adam, "remembering the bison they had chased and the moment of truth... suddenly utters the hunting cry that signifies 'bison here!'" That Evolutionary Adam can assign names to things means he "has become sapient and has invented grammar." Thereafter, poor Evolutionary Adam "goes through life as lonely as a man who can speak when no one else can listen."

That the inspired author of Genesis makes no mention of this neo-Catholic Planet of the Apes fantasy does not deter Shea-Flynn in the least, nor does the warning of Pius XII that even among the experts who have a *limited* freedom to discuss evolution there must be "*the greatest moderation and caution...*"

As we can see, the immediate creation of a fully human Adam, body and soul, is expunged from Neo-Catholic Genesis. Also expunged is the traditional Catholic teaching that Adam was the prefiguration of Christ, a man of perfect spiritual and physical integrity and happiness, without sin, gifted with bodily immortality, incapable of suffering, possessed of infused knowledge, free from all concupiscence, who enjoyed the most intimate relationship with God while possessing the fruits of Paradise together with Eve, who had all the same attributes of original human perfection. According to the Neo-Catholic Genesis, God created a stressed-out meat-eater who had to survive by slaughtering bison with his

The immediate creation of a fully human Adam, body and soul, is expunged from Neo-Catholic Genesis. Also expunged is the traditional Catholic teaching that Adam was the prefiguration of Christ, a man of perfect spiritual and physical integrity and happiness, without sin

brutish companions while suffering from a lack of rational companionship. And this was Adam's life *before* the neo-Catholic remake of the Fall!

As for Adam's loss of bodily immortality and integrity (no defects or maladies), Flynn, with Shea's evident approval, explicitly denies the dogma of the *donum immortalitatis*. According to Flynn, death came into the world after sin only in the sense that "Adam" became *aware* he would die, unlike animals, which have no death-awareness: "All of a sudden, he knew he had disobeyed the voice in his head... he knew that someday he would die. So death came into the world — *not as fact*, but as truth. Animals die in fact, but they do not know that they will... (my emphasis)."

The infallible Magisterium begs to differ: "If any one does not confess that the first man, Adam, *when he had transgressed the commandment of God in Paradise* immediately lost the holiness and justice wherein he had been constituted; and that he incurred... the wrath and indignation of God, *and consequently death*... and that *the entire Adam... was changed, in body and soul, for the worse*; let him be anathema."¹⁶

If Shea-Flynn's neo-Catholic exegesis were correct, there would have been no penalty in the flesh on account of Original Sin and the infallible Tridentine anathema would be in error. Contrary to Trent and all of Tradition, *the human condition would have improved after the Fall* due to evolutionary and civilizational progress, there never having been any original Paradise or bodily immortality.

Flynn continues with the standard evolution-driven, neo-Catholic rewrite of the Genesis account:

Since evolution requires that Adam had a father, Flynn simply gives him one: "Now obviously, if all men are descended from Adam, then all men are descended from Adam's father, *ne c'est pas?*..." That Genesis makes no mention of Adam's father is no reason to doubt that he had one. Evolution says that he must have. End of discussion! Naturally, God had to conceal the truth about Adam's subhuman father when He inspired Moses to write Genesis, because evolution is much too complex to explain in simple language for simple people. Unless Flynn is doing the explaining.

Moreover, because "[e]volution proceeds through reproductive isolation," says Flynn, it may be that Adam found other rational men and that "those he found like him started calling themselves 'the Enlightened' or 'the Brights' or even just 'the Sapients'" and for this reason they were driven from the community of the original 10,000 humanoids in a neo-Catholic version of the expulsion from a Paradise that wasn't Paradise. But if these other "Sapients" did not commit the Original Sin, how did Adam transmit its effects to the *whole* human race? Simple! All the other "Sapients" died out, leaving no lines of descent or trace in the Bible.

Why didn't Pope Pius XII think of this? Perhaps it was because, in defense of the integrity of the Genesis account, he condemned the view that "*after Adam there existed on this earth true men who did not take their origin through natural generation from him as from the first parent of all...*"



If we are to accommodate Genesis to Darwin and his progeny, then Evolutionary Eve can hardly be essential to the Fall of Man, and certainly cannot be viewed as anything like a prefiguration of Mary, the New Eve, whose Immaculate Conception and cooperation in the Redemption redeems Eve's epochal fall from her own originally immaculate and immortal state.

What About Eve?

And what about Eve? On the neo-Catholic account, Eve is reduced to dispensable backstory: "For that matter, what Eve was up to doesn't matter much, either!" Flynn assures us. Thanks to Darwin, we now know that Eve could not possibly have been created from Adam, contrary to what Saint Pius X, every Pope before him, the Church Fathers, and other fundamentalists believed before "evolutionary science" dispelled that pious superstition, which Pope Francis seems to find hilarious.¹⁷

From which it follows that Evolutionary Eve, having descended like Adam from "hominids," did not have any of the attributes of physical or mental perfection that Church Fathers, Doctors, Popes, and other such fundamentalists once believed she shared with Adam. So, Flynn the science fiction writer provides the required Evolutionary Eve: "Then one day [Adam] meets a woman-with-words. Perhaps *a woman from another band or tribe* who has *coincidentally received the same mutation*, or perhaps someone who has simply cottoned on to what he has been doing... Here at last is someone he can talk to. (Perhaps he regrets this later, when she will not shut up. But that is a tale for another time.)"

That’s about it for Evolutionary Eve: Enter stage right. Provide comic relief. Exit stage left. If we are to accommodate Genesis to Darwin and his progeny, then the participation of Evolutionary Eve can hardly be essential to the Fall. Nor can she be viewed as anything like a prefiguration of Mary, the New Eve, whose Immaculate Conception and cooperation in the Redemption redeems Eve’s epochal fall from her own originally immaculate and immortal state. That’s just something fundamentalist Church Fathers, Doctors, and Popes thought was important before “science” corrected the Church’s superstitions about human origins.

Genesis Reduced to a Creation Myth

Besides the special creation of Adam and the creation of Eve from Adam, Saint Pius X’s Biblical Commission enumerated these additional *facts* in the Genesis account, “pertaining to the foundations of the Christian religion”:

“the original happiness of the *first parents* in a state of justice, integrity, and *immortality*”

“the command given by God to man to prove his obedience”

“the transgression of the divine command *at the instigation of the devil under the form of a serpent*”

“the fall of *the first parents* from a primitive state of innocence.”¹⁸

The neo-Catholic exegete will of course scoff at Saint Pius X’s defense of the historical reality of this fable. But if there was no serpent then how did the devil tempt Eve? With whom did she have the fateful conversation that led her to transgress the divine command? Was she talking to herself? And in the absence of the serpent what becomes of the prophecy of the Blessed Virgin’s final triumph in Chapter 3 of Genesis, which all of Tradition recognizes as the Protoevangelium (“first Gospel”) with its announcement of the future Redeemer? To recall the passage: “And the Lord God said to the serpent. . . I will put enmities between thee and the woman, and thy seed and her seed: she shall crush thy head, and thou shalt lie in wait for her heel.” The neo-Catholic answer to these questions is simple: it never happened. As for Saint Pius X’s quaint opinion to the contrary, well, that was

the fundamentalist past and this is the evolutionary now.

But the damage does not end there. For the sake of evolution, Shea-Flynn present the cutting edge of neo-Catholic novelty. Racing ahead of even postconciliar neo-Modernist trends, they toss overboard even the new Catechism’s rather stripped-down account of the Fall. Shea notes only one ambiguous passage while failing to mention any of the following:

Revelation makes known to us the state of original holiness and justice of man and woman before sin: from their friendship with God flowed the happiness of *their existence in paradise*.

Revelation gives us the certainty of faith that the whole of human history is marked by the original fault freely committed by *our first parents*.

In the neo-Catholic view, we need not believe any of the historical particulars mentioned in the new Catechism, including Cain’s murder of Abel, because that would require us to believe that there really was an originally sinless and perfect Eve who really lived with Adam in a place that really was a Paradise, that both Adam and Eve really did disobey a specific divine command, causing them to lose not only original holiness but also bodily immortality.

Scripture portrays the tragic consequences of this *first disobedience*. *Adam and Eve* immediately lose the grace of original holiness. *They* become afraid of the God of whom they have conceived a distorted image. . .

The harmony in which *they* had found themselves, thanks to original justice, is now destroyed: the control of the soul’s spiritual faculties over the body is shattered; *the union of man and woman* becomes subject to tensions, their relations henceforth marked by lust and domination.

Harmony with creation is broken: visible creation has become alien and hostile to man. Because of man, *creation is now subject “to its bondage to decay.” . . . Death makes its entrance into human history.*

After that first sin, the world is virtually inundated by sin. *There is Cain’s murder of his brother Abel* and the universal corruption which follows in the wake of sin. . . .¹⁹

In the neo-Catholic view, we need not believe any of the historical particulars mentioned in the new Catechism, including Cain’s murder of Abel, because that would require us to believe that there really was an originally sinless and perfect Eve who really lived with Adam in a place that really was a Paradise, that *both* Adam and Eve really did disobey a specific

divine command, causing them to lose not only original holiness but also bodily immortality, and that Eve really did give birth to Cain, who really did murder Abel, so that the Genesis account really would involve true history. That would be fundamentalism, preventing the necessary revision of the Genesis account to reflect the “discoveries” of “evolutionary science.”

As for Christ being the new Adam and Mary the new Eve, here too Shea-Flynn are at the cutting edge of novelty, dispensing with even the new Catechism’s reference to the Protoevangelium: “The Christian tradition sees in this passage an announcement of the ‘New Adam’ who, because he ‘became obedient unto death, even death on a cross,’ makes amends superabundantly for the disobedience of Adam. Furthermore many Fathers and Doctors of the Church have seen the woman announced in the Protoevangelium as Mary, the mother of Christ, the ‘new Eve.’ . . .”²⁰

Inevitably, Flynn, following the neo-Catholic evolutionary line, arrives at a dismissal of the *entire* Genesis account of human origins and the Fall as “the usual poetic trope or artistic image of one man and one woman alone in a Garden in Eden. . . .” In classic neo-Catholic style Shea-Flynn ignore all of Tradition as defended by the teaching of the Pontifical Biblical Commission of Saint Pius X. Instead of being fundamentalists about the literal meaning of Genesis, like all those pre-Darwinian Fathers, Doctors, and Popes, Shea-Flynn would have us read Scripture the neo-Catholic way, conjuring up evolution-friendly versions of the Fall. We need only maintain that, somewhere along the line, some fellow somewhere, who happens to be our common ancestor, sinned

in some manner. We can even call him Adam if we like.

We have arrived at the point where neo-Catholic “exegesis” has stripped the Genesis account of every single historical fact, leaving us with no revelation of how and

We have arrived at the point where neo-Catholic “exegesis” has stripped the Genesis account of every single historical fact, leaving us with no revelation of how and why our first parents fell from grace, in what condition of perfection they were made, or even who they were.

why our first parents fell from grace, in what condition of perfection they were made, or even who they were. That is exactly what Flynn maintains, falsely asserting that the Tridentine anathemas regarding Original Sin “do not require belief in a factual Genesis myth beyond the simple existence of a common ancestor.” And Shea applauds “the brilliance of Michael Flynn.”

In the final part of this series, I will survey the theological wreckage produced by this (or any other) attempt to reconcile the revealed truths of the Genesis account with the neo-Darwinian account of the supposed evolution of man from lower life forms and the disastrous implications for the dogma of Original Sin, the foundation stone of the entire edifice of Catholic theology. ☒



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Notes

- Grassé, *Evolution of Living Organisms*, p. 6.
- Humanae generis*, n. 37.
- Hardon, *Modern Catholic Dictionary* online @ <http://www.therealpresence.org/dictionary/adict.htm>.
- “Msgr Pozzo on Aspects of the Ecclesiology of Vatican II,” July 2, 2010 @ rorate-caeli.blogspot.com.
- September 14, 2011 @ <http://www.ncregister.com/>.
- Cf. Ann Gauger, Douglas Axe, Casey Luskin, *Science and Human Origins* (Discovery Institute Press, 2012), Ch. 5, “The Science of Adam and Eve,” pp. 105-121.
- Jerry Coyne, “How big was the human population bottleneck? Another staple of theology refuted” @ whyevolutionistrue.wordpress.com.
- Ibid.*
- Michael Flynn, “Adam and Eve and Ted and Alice,” September 1, 2011 @ tofspot.blogspot.com.
- Cf. Decisions of Pontifical Biblical Commission at Denzinger, 43rd Edition, § 3395. (The Commission was an arm of the papal Magisterium of Saint Pius X).
- To avoid some of the decidedly unpleasant consequences of this notion, evolutionary exegetes of Genesis imagine that these beasts, even in the absence of rational souls, might have had enough of the appearance of language and reason (articulate grunts approximating speech, a range of dog-like emotional responses, etc.) so that the mating of true men with them might not seem quite so repellent. Such wild flights of fancy need not detain us.
- Douay Rheims Bible, Haydock Commentary, Genesis 6, Ver. 2.
- Cf. *Summa Theologiae*, I, Q. 76, Art. 1.
- Michael Chaberek, O.P., *Catholicism and Evolution*, 325.
- Summa Theologiae*, I, Q. 91, Art. 4, Reply to Objection 3.
- Council of Trent, Fifth Session, Decree Concerning Original Sin, n. 1.
- “Pope Francis jokes ‘woman was from a rib as he avoids vow to reform church,’” June 29, 2014 @ theguardian.com (“Francis replied: ‘The fact is that woman was taken from a rib.’ Giansoldati wrote that he then laughed ‘heartily’ before saying: ‘I’m joking. That was a joke.’”)
- DZ 3514.
- CCC §§ 384, 390, 399-401.
- CCC § 411.



Against Evolution

How the Bankrupt Theory of Evolution Has Overthrown the Genesis Account of the Fall with the Help of its Catholic Enablers

Part 3 Surveying the Wreckage

by Christopher Ferrara

Adam and Eve Expelled from Paradise from Eglise Saint-Aignan de Chartres in Chartres

In the first part of this essay (*The Latin Mass*, Fall 2015) I provided a sketch of some of the fatal flaws in the neo-Darwinian theory of evolution, which preclude Catholic credulity respecting its fantastic claims. I noted that Paul-Pierre Grassé—himself an evolutionist in search of a credible mechanism for the theory—called neo-Darwinism “a pseudo-science” that “is taking root in the very heart of biology and is leading astray many biochemists and biologists...”

In Part II (*The Latin Mass*, Christmas 2015), I discussed the insuperable problems encountered by “theistic evolutionists” in their attempt to bend the Genesis account to the pseudo-scientific narrative of the descent of all living things from a single primordial cell (whose emergence the narrative cannot credibly explain), man’s descent from lower life forms, and thus a world filled with disease, death, predation, and natural disasters—all occurring eons before the fall of Adam and Eve in Paradise. I examined as a typical neo-Catholic evolutionary

“exegesis” of the Genesis account the speculations of one Michael Flynn, a science fiction writer, as promoted enthusiastically by Mark Shea of the neo-Catholic blogosphere. We saw how, by the time he was done conforming Genesis to the theory of evolution, Flynn had dispensed with any required “belief in a factual *Genesis myth* beyond the simple existence of a common ancestor.”

In this short concluding Part III, I will survey the resulting wreckage of the Genesis account, thus confirming the doctrinal impossibility of any plausible evolutionary reading of Creation, above all the creation of Adam, and of Eve from Adam, which (as Pius X insisted) are facts at the very foundation of our religion.

The creation of Adam, and of Eve from Adam, which (as Pius X insisted) are facts at the very foundation of our religion.

An Inventory of Destruction

Let us now assess, point by point, the destruction of the Genesis account resulting from the neo-Catholic attempt to conform it to the demands of the pseudo-science of the neo-Darwinian narrative:

- Adam had a quasi-human father and quasi-human ancestors, some or all of whom died before Adam sinned, so that death would have entered human history before Original Sin.
- Eve was not created from Adam but rather evolved from hominids as he did.
- Neither Adam nor Eve possessed the gifts of bodily immortality or freedom from bodily infirmity, so neither they nor humanity lost those gifts on account of Original Sin.
- Adam did not fall on account of the temptation to which Eve had first succumbed in the Garden of Eden, which is only a myth or trope, but rather sinned in some other way never revealed.
- Adam and Eve were not expelled from Paradise together, with Eve to bear children in pain and suffering, because there was no Paradise, but only a long evolutionary process filled with disease, death, the struggle for survival, and natural disasters.
- Adam’s children committed bestiality by mating with members of a population of around 10,000 soulless humanoids at the beginning of the human race.
- We do not even know exactly who Adam and Eve were or where they stand in the lineage of the human race.
- The human condition improved only *after* the Fall on account of social and evolutionary development, there having been no Paradise, bodily immortality, or freedom from illness, but only a primitive hunter-gatherer society of hominids from which Adam and Eve emerged.
- Death did not enter human history because of Original Sin, but only the human awareness of death.
- The Protoevangelium is not a real prophecy of the coming Redeemer.



Adam and Eve and their children from a lithograph

The erosion of the idea that the human race descended from a single couple is something that is much more necessary to the theology of salvation in Christian tradition than is the issue of, say, whether God really made the sun stand still for Joshua and the Israelites.

- All Scriptural parallels between Christ and prelapsarian Adam, or Mary and prelapsarian Eve are empty metaphors.
- Every event recounted in Genesis 2-10, at least, would arguably be just as devoid of historical fact as Genesis 1.
- Our Lord’s references to the Genesis account, including His declaration that man and woman were made by God “from the *beginning* of Creation (Mk. 10:6)” —not after billions of years of evolution—are merely ironic.
- The reader can take it from there.

With Genesis reduced to what Flynn calls “poetic trope” (cf. Part II) in order to comply with the dictates of the neo-Darwinian fantasy, the account of the Fall can be shaped continually by the latest developments in evolutionary guesswork, including the “strong evidence for polygenism” to which the Church’s traditional exegesis must conform itself as soon as the evolutionists’ computer simulations provide “a pretty good estimate” of how many first humans there *really* were (Cf. Part II).

Bye-Bye Original Sin

And finally, the conclusion of our case study: Given the neo-Catholic replacement of Genesis with a *Planet of the Apes* scenario, the dogma of Original Sin must come under review. Hence while paying lip service to the dogma, Shea praises an article by John Farrell¹ in *Forbes* “grappling” with the “problem” of polygenism. Farrell, citing Dr. Jerry Coyne [the atheist and evolutionist critic of Genesis discussed in Part II], rightly observes—without, of course, questioning the theory of evolution—that:

the erosion of the idea that the human race descended from a single couple is something that is much more neces-

sary to the theology of salvation in Christian tradition than is the issue of, say, whether God really made the sun stand still for Joshua and the Israelites... The Council of Trent is quite explicit on the topic.² Catholics are required to believe not only that Adam is the single father of the

human race, but that Original Sin is passed on by physical generation from him to the entire human race. *It's not something symbolic or allegorical...*

The neo-Catholic's dilemma is fairly stated. Confronted by it, Farrell concludes that while there are “individual Catholic theologians out there mulling over how to handle the problem,” given the Vatican's silence the only choice left to Catholics is “to fall back on the denialism of Evangelical leaders... or to keep their mouths shut.”

Note Well: As we see here, according to the neo-Catholic view questioning the theory of evolution is Protestant “denialism,” while questioning facts at the dogmatic foundation of the Catholic religion as recounted in Genesis is merely to raise a “problem” to be “mulled over” by “individual theologians.” Thus, our understanding of the sources of revelation must bow to Darwin's theory. This is a perfect example of the neo-Catholic mentality at work. It is exquisitely ironic that the neo-Catholic's *evolutionary fundamentalism* impels him to tamper with the very foundations of the Faith.

But according to Shea, Farrell need not worry, for Flynn has saved Original Sin from Darwin's challenge. Writes Shea: “Flynn's argument is an impressive tour of Thomistic thinking, and a fine example of a Catholic laboring to think with the Tradition.”

The reader may pause here for a moment of uproarious laughter.

Now, why should Catholics be “laboring to think with the Tradition” to accommodate the claims of pseudoscience? Why not accept on faith what Trent and the entire Magisterium affirm about the account of the Fall of man recounted in Genesis? The Genesis account does not offend reason. What does offend reason is a fantasy world of self-organizing polymers and blind watchmakers, where

Catholics find themselves seriously proposing that rational men bred with subhuman mates in the course of evolution even though sacred scripture has nothing to say about this.

Moreover, what about “laboring to think with the Tradition” by presenting logical and empirical arguments *against* evolution, as Pius XII required Catholic discussants to do? (Cf. *Humanae generis* and the discussion thereof in Part II). Out of the question! That would be “fundamentalism.”

Conclusion

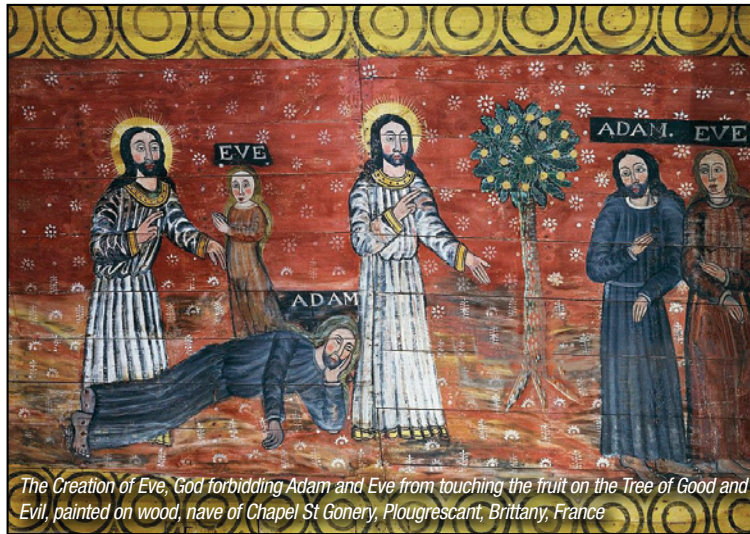
Does every neo-Catholic commentator adopt something like the Shea-Flynn version of Genesis? Certainly not. Many go only part of the way in that direction. But many others go all the way, and what we have examined in this series shows what can happen if one accepts the premise that Sacred Scripture should be interpreted in keeping with a pseudoscience serving the aims of atheist ideologues. As with any attempt to conform the truth to a lie, the result is a distortion

of the truth—ultimately beyond all recognition, as Shea-Flynn demonstrate.

Yet, amazingly enough, having laid waste to the Genesis account to accommodate fake science, Flynn concludes by admitting the very reason no Catholic should attempt the exercise in the first place:

If it ain't falsifiable, it ain't science; so we must allow the possibility that what we think we know about evolution is *all wrong*. That is why it is not a good idea to get too chummy with science, since you never know when she'll pack up her bags and leave you holding the bills (my emphasis).

So, even for the sake of a theory that could be “all wrong” amateur neo-Catholic exegetes are willing to reduce Genesis to a fable. But why? The only reasonable answer seems to be that *they view Genesis as a fable in*



The Creation of Eve, God forbidding Adam and Eve from touching the fruit on the Tree of Good and Evil, painted on wood, nave of Chapel St Gonery, Plougrescant, Brittany, France

The Genesis account does not offend reason. What does offend reason is a fantasy world of self-organizing polymers and blind watchmakers, where Catholics find themselves seriously proposing that rational men bred with subhuman mates in the course of evolution even though sacred scripture has nothing to say about this.

any case. Evolution is just another reason to show how enlightened they are concerning those quaint Bible stories only “fundamentalists” still take seriously.

Recall that neo-Modernism, as the late Father John Hardon explained, “attempts to reconcile modern science and philosophy at the expense of the integrity of the Catholic faith. It has its roots in the Modernism condemned by Pope Saint Pius X”³ (Cf. Part II). Here we encounter yet again the destructive work of the neo-Catholic constituency, aiding and abetting neo-Modernists in their attack on the foundations of Catholic dogma. Having embraced and defended every other *au courant* novelty of the post-conciliar “mainstream”—not one of them actually imposed as binding on the Catholic conscience—neo-Catholics promote a neo-theology of the Fall that undermines the dogma of Original Sin and thus the entire edifice of the Faith. And this for the sake of a scientific fable promoted with, irony of ironies, fundamentalist zeal by the Church’s worst enemies—and by neo-Catholics themselves, for that matter.

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It is my hope that this series of articles will make some small contribution to the long overdue overthrow of the tyranny of evolutionary orthodoxy in post-conciliar Catholic thought.

Notes

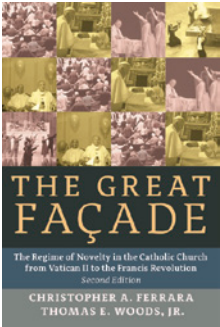
1. <http://www.forbes.com/sites/johnfarrell/2011/08/11/can-theology-evolve/>
2. Cf. Council of Trent, Fifth Session, Decree on Original Sin; DZ 1511 (43rd ed.).
3. Hardon, *Modern Catholic Dictionary* online @ <http://www.thealpresence.org/dictionary/adict.htm>

Christopher A. Ferrara is President and Chief Counsel for the American Catholic Lawyers Association. He is a prolific writer for Catholic magazines and periodicals; he is active in the pro-life movement; his latest book is The Great Facade: The Regime of



Novelty in the Catholic Church from Vatican II to the Francis Revolution (Second Edition). More than twenty talks by Christopher Ferrara can be found on our website www.keepthefaith.org. This series of articles was adapted for The Latin Mass from a series that first appeared in The Remnant.

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