

he slept. He took one of his ribs and filled up flesh for it. And the Lord God built up a woman from the rib which he had taken from the man, and brought her to the man. And the man said : This time, this one is bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh ; this one shall be called woman, because this one has been drawn out of man.' The decree of the Biblical Commission includes ' the formation of the first woman from the first man ' among those points of which the literal interpretation may not be called in question. The way in which the decree is worded led exegetes to conclude that they were free to regard the rib and the use made of it as a symbolic and figurative statement of the physical dependence of the body of Eve on that of Adam. The sacred author, while stating the fact of the formation of her body from that of Adam, was not concerned with the manner of that formation. Clamer gives expression to this interpretation : ' What matters in the Biblical narrative is not the mode in which the creation of Eve is depicted, which may be taken as a free and symbolic setting, but its doctrinal teaching. The decree of the Biblical Commission of 30 June 1909, which includes the formation of the first woman from the first man among the points which must be taken as historical, is not opposed to the interpretation proposed above. The reserved manner in which the decree is expressed shows that it is only the fact itself which is under consideration, and not the details of the narrative, the symbolic meaning of which is in no way ruled out by the fact.'¹ Why the rib is mentioned at all is to show the identity of nature in Adam and Eve, and to give point to the teaching on marriage. As for the manner of Eve's derivation from Adam, Renié calls it ' mysterious ' ² ; and according to Hauret the common opinion is that it was miraculous ³ ; others think that it can be explained within the evolutionary hypothesis.⁴

Since the publication of the letter of Père Vosté a number of Catholic authors have suggested or implied that it was not the intention of the sacred author to make any affirmation about the derivation of

¹ A. Clamer, *Genèse* (coll. *La sainte Bible*), Paris 1953, p. 124

² J. Renié, *Les origines de l'humanité d'après la Bible*, Paris 1950, p. 48

³ C. Hauret, *Origines*, Luçon 1950, p. 100

⁴ Fr A. Michel, quoted by Hauret, *op. cit.*, p. 101, provides an example of the kind of reconciliation between the Bible and science which is envisaged. He says : ' The interpretation of the Biblical text would perhaps be all the easier in the transformist hypothesis of the sudden mutation of two individuals, that of the female being provoked by the male.' This is a reference to the theory that new characteristics appeared suddenly in one or two individuals and were transmitted by them to the rest of the group. Fr Michel's suggestion is plausible at first sight, but does not bear closer investigation. Surely the transmission of new characteristics will be by way of copulation, and these new characteristics will appear not in the mates but in the progeny. If that is so, and if Fr Michel's suggestion is correct, it would mean that the first man mated with an animal. Such a notion, repugnant in itself, is explicitly excluded by Genesis.

the body of Eve. According to them, his intention was to explain the religious mystery of the origin and distinction of the sexes, within the same human nature, with a view to their re-union in marriage. Soubigou, Lambert, Gelin and Chaîne interpret the use of the rib in that sense, and say nothing of Eve's body originating in that of Adam.¹ Fr A. M. Dubarle says that 'the purpose of this account is to affirm that the union of the two sexes in marriage is willed by God, and not to insist on the preliminary origin of one from the other.'² Fr de Vaux calls the verse in question 'a picturesque expression of the intimate relationship between the man and the woman, which explains their mutual attraction.'³ Fr H. Lusseau, who is regarded as a conservative scholar, writes: 'In figurative language . . . the author seems to teach this at least, that God used the body of Adam for the formation of the body of Eve. But in what way? One may suppose that it was used as the exemplary cause. The first woman would have been created on the model of the first man. As distinct from the animals, among which the first man found no helper like to himself, Eve shares the same nature as Adam.'⁴ This interpretation is referred to by Gelin, when he says that between Adam and Eve there is at least a relationship of the exemplar to its copy.⁵ Hauret, who says that the manner of the formation of Eve is the secret of the Creator,⁶ appears to approve of Lusseau's interpretation. 'More and more exegetes and theologians,' he says, 'stimulated by the encouragement of the Encyclical *Divino afflante Spiritu* and emboldened by the liberal directives of the letter to Cardinal Suhard, propose, with the customary reservations, an explanation (of Gen. 2:21-2) in which symbolism plays a larger part' and then he immediately quotes Lusseau, verbatim as above.⁷

This interpretation, it is true, exceeds the limits imposed by the Biblical Commission. It is proposed tentatively, and it would not be proposed at all, if its proponents did not understand that the liberty to make these suggestions had been extended to them by the letter of Père Vosté, and if they did not think that there existed good reasons to support these suggestions. Their interpretation and their arguments are submitted to the judgment of the Church.

The first of their arguments is that the account of Eve's formation in Gen. 2:22 belongs to the same tradition, the Yahwist, as the account

¹ L. Soubigou, *Récit biblique des origines*, II, Angers 1951, pp. 15-17; G. Lambert, 'L'encyclique *Humani Generis* et l'écriture sainte,' *Nouvelle revue théologique*, 1951, pp. 236-41; A. Gelin, *L'ami du clergé*, 1956, p. 533; *Problèmes d'ancien testament*, Paris 1952, p. 63; J. Chaîne, *Le livre de la Genèse*, Paris 1948, pp. 39-41

² Quoted by G. Remy, *De la création à l'ère atomique autour de la Bible*, Paris 1950, p. 101

³ *La Genèse (Bible de Jérusalem)*, Paris 1951, p. 45

⁴ H. Lusseau, *Précis d'histoire biblique*, I, Paris 1948, pp. 55-6

⁵ *L'ami du clergé*, 1956, p. 533

⁶ op. cit., p. 119

⁷ op. cit., p. 118

of Adam's creation in 2:7, and is marked by the same wealth of imagery and anthropomorphisms. In Gen. 2:7 God is depicted as acting as a potter; in 2:22 as a surgeon and builder. This imagery is stripped away when these accounts are compared with that of the Priestly tradition in Gen. 1:27: 'God created man to his image; to the image of God he created him; man and woman he created them.' In this latter account there is no waiting by man for a suitable mate, and no reference to Eve's derivation from Adam. 'Since the Priestly author represents God as acting by the marvellous omnipotence of His word, it is at the same time and in the space of an instant that the man and the woman spring into being, as soon as the divine command has been given.'¹ By the use of this later tradition, in which there is no mention of Eve's physical dependence on Adam, the author seems to imply that his intention was not to use the earlier Yahwist tradition as a vehicle for information on this matter, but as a more graphic and explicit statement of something implicit in the Priestly narrative, namely the relationship of the sexes.

The context of Gen. 2:22 shows what was the perspective of the author. In the context the emphasis lies not on how Eve was formed, but why she was formed. What Soubigou calls *un problème de destinée*² is evident in the account of Eve's origin. We will examine the remote and proximate contexts in that order.

The remote context is comprised by other Biblical texts which show that 'for the Biblical mind, sexual love is an enigma of human nature which inspired feelings of respect mingled with sacred awe, as being a mystery of the Creator. The author of the Book of Proverbs says that 'the way of a man with a maid,' the conjugal union which multiplies life, is a thing which is beyond him and which he does not understand. The Canticle of Canticles, 8:6-7, extolling the love of spouses in words of fervent lyricism, says that its shafts are shafts of fire, and its flames the flames of Yahweh.'³ The description of the formation of Eve from the side of Adam is well in line with these ideas. It is a popular and figurative explanation of the mutual attraction of the sexes, designed to teach that this attraction has been implanted in human nature by God Himself.

Why it has been made an integral part of human nature is explained by the proximate context. It is implanted with a view to the union of the sexes in marriage.⁴ When Adam sees Eve he cries: 'This is why a man shall leave his father and mother and shall cleave to his wife, and they shall be one flesh.' The closeness of the union of man and wife in 'one flesh' is emphasised by the fact that Eve is described as

¹ Lambert, art. cit., p. 241

³ Lambert, art. cit., p. 239

² op. cit., p. 16

⁴ cf. Soubigou, op. cit., p. 16

having been formed out of the flesh of Adam. She is drawn from him as woman, and returns to union with him as wife, as part of himself. 'The spouses effect a new unity, which is, in a way, a reciprocal completion for each of them, one being part of the other.'¹ In this passage of Gen. 2:21-4 'we find inserted, delicately but profoundly, the ideal which the Creator assigns to the essential law of conjugal society, namely, unity and indissolubility. Only one woman is destined by God for a man to complete his being. And their union is indissoluble. Just as it is unlawful to dismember a living body, so it is unlawful to separate two people who, in the union of marriage, have become one flesh, one body.'²

The proximate context also shows that the sacred author was concerned with the fundamental similarity of nature in man and woman. The procession of the animals before Adam and his failure to find a mate among them, as described in Gen. 2:19-20, is regarded as a symbolic condemnation of the sin of bestiality.³ This sin was prevalent among Orientals of the time, sometimes as a semi-ritualistic, semi-magical rite. The Babylonian 'Poem of Gilgamesh' implies that bestiality was natural to man in his primitive state; the first man is represented as finding his pleasure with the beasts, eating, drinking and sleeping with them in a state of insouciant savagery. The Biblical author uses his account of Eve's origin to show how greatly such a conception conflicts with the truth, and how much the sin of bestiality is at variance with the intentions of the Creator and with the nature of man himself. When God leads Eve to Adam, in the same way that he had previously led the beasts, Adam exclaims: 'This time, this one is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; this one shall be called woman, because this one has been drawn out of man.' 'This time' (in contrast to his failure to find a companion among the beasts), and the triple repetition of 'this one,' put the emphasis on the unity of nature in Adam and Eve. Eve too was superior to the beasts, because she had the same nature as Adam. In such a context the symbolism of Adam's rib is used as a concrete expression of the oneness of nature in man and woman. This vivid statement of woman's equality was especially necessary in a milieu in which her status was very low, and in which she was regarded as a chattel, a productive asset, a being inferior to man.⁴

¹ Chaine, *op. cit.*, p. 40

² Lambert, *art. cit.*, p. 239. The Biblical ideal of marriage, inscribed in the origins of humanity, is in marked contrast to the picture presented by the Babylonian poem of Gilgamesh, according to which the first man was introduced to civilisation by a prostitute. cf. P. F. Ceuppens, *Genèse I-III*, Paris 1945, p. 185.

³ Lambert, *art. cit.*, p. 236; Soubigou, *op. cit.*, p. 14; Gelin, *art. cit.*, p. 534

⁴ Soubigou, *op. cit.*, p. 16; Chaine, *op. cit.*, p. 40

The fact that the man gives the woman her name indicates his authority over her. It is not, however, the authority of a superior nature over an inferior nature, as in his dominion over the beasts, but marital authority, exercised within the bounds of the same eminent human dignity. 'When he named the beasts . . . Adam had no thought of using their names to denote any relationship between them and himself. Here (Gen. 2:23), on the contrary, the name of the woman expresses the likeness of her nature to the man's.'¹ The relationship between Adam and Eve is stated lucidly and concisely by Fr Lagrange: 'Man and woman make but the one thing, they share the same nature, superior to all the beasts by reason of the intelligence which thinks and speaks. However, because they have not absolutely the same aptitudes, they are a real complement, one to the other. Man is the first, the woman is created as his companion and his help-mate. The husband will love his wife as a part of himself; the wife will love her husband as her mainstay, the head on whom she depends.'²

To sum up the foregoing interpretation of Gen. 2:21-2, it is suggested that, in his use of the symbolism of Adam's rib, the Biblical author had no intention of making an affirmation about the derivation of Eve from Adam. It is suggested that he used this symbolism as a vehicle for affirmations about the origin and purpose of sexual love and about the oneness of nature in Adam and Eve, in man and woman. If it is conceded that this interpretation is possible, it may still be asked why so highly coloured a manner of conveying these truths was chosen.

Fr Lambert says that various reasons have been given. In the first place there are etymological reasons. According to the primitive mentality, a relationship between words denoted a relationship between the things designated. 'Adam' means 'man'; 'adamah' means 'red earth.' 'Ish' is the word for the husband; 'ishshah' the word for the wife. Therefore, according to the Hebrew mentality, 'Adam' was formed from the 'adamah,' and 'ishshah' was drawn from 'ish'—man was formed from the earth, woman was formed from man.³ There is also a correspondence of destiny, in that man will return to the earth from which he was drawn (Gen. 3:19); woman returns to man from whom she was drawn.

¹ Soubigou, loc. cit.

² 'L'innocence et le péché,' *Revue biblique*, 1897, pp. 348-9. The equality of Eve's nature is evident also in the Priestly account (Gen. 1:26-8). She like Adam was created to the image of God, was given dominion over the animals and was endowed with intelligence. She like Adam owes her nature and origin to God. What is proper to the Priestly account is the definition of the primary end of marriage: 'Be fruitful and multiply.'

³ art. cit., p. 237; Gelin, art. cit., pp. 531, 534

Secondly, 'Thou art my bone and my flesh' was a proverbial Hebrew expression denoting close relationship within the family or tribe. No relationship was so close as that established by marriage, because the consequence of this union is the loosening of the ties between a man and his parents. 'It is therefore between husband and wife that the expression "Thou art my bone and my flesh" takes on its full significance.'¹ It was natural for the sacred author to use these terms in his description of the formation of Eve, as a concrete statement of the closest possible relationship that exists between man and wife. It is as though he had used as his basis, for his account of the creation of Eve, the English expression 'he or she is part of me,' to describe the intimate bonds of love.

Thirdly, 'just as the theme of the Potter-God was not peculiar to Israel but is found nearly everywhere in the ancient and primitive mentality, so the notion of the woman being formed from half of man is found in other literatures besides Genesis.'² This in itself is an indication that the Biblical author did not wish to make the details of this account the object of an affirmation, but was adapting a popular and current notion to his own purposes.

In conclusion it is hardly necessary to point out that the interpretation propounded above, if it is true, opens the way to acceptance of the possibility of the independent evolution of the body of Eve. The possibility that evolution played its part in the formation of her body could be accepted in the same sense and within the same limits as in the case of Adam. What has been said of Adam could be said equally well of Eve; the role played by the evolutionary process would have been the same for both; the necessity for Divine intervention in the infusion of the soul would have been the same for both.

Adam and Eve, parents of humanity

After speaking, in *Humani Generis*, of the liberty of debate as to the possible role of evolution in the development of the human body, Pope Pius XII proceeds: 'There are other conjectures, about polygenism (as it is called) which leave the faithful no such freedom of choice. Christians cannot lend their support to a theory which involves the existence, after Adam's time, of some earthly race of men, truly so called, who were not descended ultimately from him, or else supposes that Adam was the name given to some group of our primordial ancestors. It does not appear how such views can be reconciled with the doctrine of original sin, as this is guaranteed to us by Scripture and tradition, and proposed to us by the Church. Original sin is the result

¹ Lambert, art. cit., pp. 237-8

² Lambert, *ibid.*

of a sin committed, in actual historical fact, by an individual man named Adam, and it is a quality native to all of us, only because it has been handed down by descent from him (cf. Rom. 5:12-19; *Conc. Trid.*, sess. v, can. 1-4).¹

It may not be out of place here to recall that monogenism and polygenism bear different connotations for the theologian and for the anthropologist. For the theologian, monogenism means that the whole human race owes its origin to one human couple, Adam and Eve; for the anthropologist, monogenism means that the human race descended from one stock, one source, irrespective of whether it was an individual only, or a group, which had attained the human level in that source. Polygenism for the theologian means the supposition that the human race sprang from a number of different ancestors, all of them human; polygenism for the anthropologist means the theory that the different human groups owe their origins to different streams of development, these different streams having broken off from a common stock, before this stock had attained the human level. Failure to understand the sense given by anthropologists to the term 'monogenism' has led some Catholic writers to suppose that anthropologists were vindicating the Catholic teaching of a unique pair as progenitors of the human race, when in fact the anthropologists meant that a number of couples, within the same group, had been the ancestors of our race.²

The encyclical excludes polygenism in both the theological and the anthropological sense by insisting on the derivation of the whole human race from Adam. The Holy Father refers explicitly to two sources of revelation, the Epistle to the Romans and the Council of Trent. The Council teaches that Adam, the first man, lost the sanctity and justice in which he had been constituted, that he transferred to the whole human race not only death and bodily penalties but also sin, and that this sin of Adam is one in its origin and is passed on to all by propagation. In the fifth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, St Paul insists on the opposition between the unique Redeemer and the unique transgressor, and this idea is repeated five times, in the eight verses to which the Pope refers, in terms like these: 'For as by the disobedience of one man, many were made sinners; so also by the obedience of one, many shall be made just' (5:19).

What is the position of the anthropologist? According to Fr Gelin³ it is only the English-speaking anthropologists, as a whole,

¹ C.T.S. trans., sect. 37

² G. Vandebroek and L. Renwart, 'L'encyclique *Humani Generis* et les sciences naturelles,' in *Nouvelle revue théologique*, 1951, 348; A. Gelin, *L'ami du clergé*, 1951, p. 295

³ *ibid.*

who believe in polygenism, in their sense of a number of different human races descending from different infra-human stocks. German and French scholars favour monogenism, in the sense of one source for the whole of humanity. They regard the differences between the great groups of human beings as being too superficial to warrant the hypothesis that they had their origin in sources which were already differentiated below the human level. According to M. Henri Vallois, one of the most distinguished French anthropologists, 'there is no doubt that all the Hominids who are known to us have only the one monophyletic origin.'¹ M. Arambourg, a professor of the Museum National, is impatient with what he calls 'the out-moded speculations of polygenism.'² Fr Marcozzi concludes a review of the present position of anthropology by saying that there is no positive argument in favour of the supposition that men appeared simultaneously in different parts of the earth, and no positive argument opposed to the generally admitted supposition that humanity, like every other species, had a 'cradle,' a centre of origin and diffusion. The question whether many couples or only one couple appeared in this centre of origin is a problem which cannot be resolved with the resources of the natural sciences of Paleontology and Biology alone.³

Fr Gelin says that it should not be difficult for anthropologists who favour monogenism, in the scientific sense, to accept the Catholic position. Indeed, in view of the great obscurity in which the anthropologist labours, he ought to be grateful for the light shed on his subject by revelation. Whether the human race originated from one or more couples is a question to which anthropology will never be able to provide a definite answer. The answer has been provided by the Magisterium not because it is the function of the Magisterium to teach science, but because it is its duty to decide on those matters that pertain to the foundations of the Christian Religion.⁴

This assessment of the situation is very just. It may be difficult for the evolutionist who is imbued with materialist principles to reconcile such a conception of the origins of humanity with his conceptions as to how evolution happened. But his approach is vitiated from the start. Man is not a mere accidental part of the evolutionary process—he is its term. And he is its term not by chance but by design, the design of the Creator. Moreover, theories formed to explain the process and causes of evolution labour under difficulties and uncertainties; the currently accepted theory of mutationism has its limitations;

¹ *Paléontologie et transformisme*, Paris 1950, p. 82

² *La genèse de l'humanité*, 2nd ed., Paris 1948, p. 130

³ *De hominis creatione atque elevatione et de peccato originali*, Rome 1948, p. 25

⁴ loc. cit.

and no theory so far formulated to explain evolution enjoys anything like the same certainty as the theory of evolution itself. The scientist does not know the precise manner in which the human race originated, nor does it appear that the resources of his science will ever help him to find out. Anthropologists say that man has been on earth anything from fifty thousand to one hundred and fifty thousand years and perhaps more. What a distance to travel before we come to the genesis of humanity. What chance or what means has the anthropologist of determining, in that far distant past, whether the race sprang from one or more couples? It is not something that can be verified by experiment, nor observed under a microscope. Yet this question of our origins is one that has always exercised the minds of men. In face of the necessary helplessness of science Divine Providence has deigned to provide the answer by revelation. It is not for nothing that the first book of the Bible is called Genesis.

J. O'NEILL

CHRIST JESUS WHO DIED OR RATHER
WHO HAS BEEN RAISED UP—II¹

(Rom. 8:34)

The New Testament clearly teaches that our salvation stems from the resurrection of Christ; and the Paschal liturgy, so close to the revealed sources of our faith, emphasises this same truth in an unmistakable way. Yet it must be admitted that such an emphasis on the resurrection creates a certain difficulty. The vast majority of Western Christians have been taught to regard the passion and death of our Lord as the source of their redemption, and in the prevalent theological system, with its emphasis on the atoning death of Christ, and the infinite satisfaction rendered to the Divine justice for man's infinite offence against God, the Resurrection has tended to appear as nothing more than the complement to the redemptive act of Christ, and as nothing more than the sign of God's acceptance of Christ's sacrifice.² We are all familiar with the versicle: 'By thy holy cross thou hast redeemed the world,' but we are less familiar with another one: 'We worship thy cross O Lord, and we praise and glorify thy holy Resurrection.' They are both used in the Good Friday liturgy, but the first seems to say all that is needed to sum up the mystery of our redemption.

¹ I apologise for the long delay in concluding this article, the first part of which appeared in *Scripture*, x, 1958, pp. 33-43.

² cf. M. D. Chenu, O.P., *La Théologie est-elle une science?*, Paris 1957, p. 45