

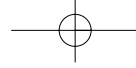
Seventeenth-Century Preadamism, and an Anonymous English Preadamist

I. Introduction

Preadamism, the idea that there were men before Adam, is understandably a theory more often refuted than espoused in the early modern period. In England, it was only defended in print by a handful of thinkers, often with very different aims: by a few Interregnum radicals, for instance; and later, by Charles Blount the Deist, and an anonymous pamphleteer, possibly John Toland. Otherwise, open support for the belief is extremely rare, because to question whether Adam was the first man is, inevitably, to question the accuracy and historicity of the Biblical narrative.

The short manuscript which concludes this survey is a virtually unknown statement of Preadamism and of especial interest because, like the Interregnum examples, it appears to be independent of the continental Preadamism associated with the notorious Isaac La Peyrère, whose *Prae-Adamitae* (Amsterdam, 1655) provoked at least a dozen learned refutations on the continent within a year or so of its publication.¹ English refutations were fewer and later – Edward Stillingfleet’s *Origines Sacrae* (1661) and Matthew Hale’s *Primitive Origination of Mankind* (1677) contain the two major seventeenth-century examples; both, unlike their continental counterparts, in the vernacular. However, the swift publication of an unsigned translation of La Peyrère’s work, *Men Before Adam* (London, 1656) and the appearance of the text, in both languages, in many late seventeenth-century and early eighteenth-century library or library sale catalogues show that La Peyrère’s influence was soon felt in England as a positive thesis. This is further demonstrated by the manuscripts of the merchant, F.R.S., and language-planner Francis Lodwick, another virtually unknown Preadamist.² Lodwick was an obvious disciple of the French heretic, not only on account of his argumentation, but also because his scepticism concerning the integrity of the Biblical text operates to promote not unbelief but rather an eclectic evangelism, shorn of obscurantist theological wrangling. This is in contrast to the writer of Sloane 1022 (now





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bound as Sloane 1022/1115), whom I shall term the Anonymous Preadamist. The Anonymous Preadamist, moreover, argues for the existence of men before Adam on the grounds of a Neoplatonic plenitude, an accent entirely absent from the writings of La Peyrère or Lodwick, and far closer, for instance, to the writings of Lady Conway and her circle, or to John Pordage's *Theologia Mystica* (1683). What the Anonymous Preadamist and Lodwick do have in common, though, is their restriction of such heretical assent to private manuscript musings.

What is presented here, then, is an analysis of the varieties of English and French Preadamism in the seventeenth century, integrating some new material into the discussion; a description of this particular MS; some remarks on the Anonymous Preadamist in light of such a discussion; and finally an edited and a diplomatic version of the Anonymous Preadamist's short text.

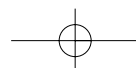
II. Preadamism

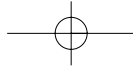
Through the ages many must have asked how Cain could possibly have expected that in the land of Nod, 'every one that findeth me shall slay me' (Gen. 4: 14), if only Adam and Eve existed.³ Or, as La Peyrère wondered as a child, where did Cain's wife come from?

Examples rather than refutations of such a worry are understandably rare.⁴ In England, Thomas Harriot was rumoured to support the thesis, if it be he who bears the brunt of Thomas Nashe's 'I heare say there be mathematicians abroad that will proove men before Adam.'⁵ Later, Thomas Heywood wrote in his prolix *The Hierarchie of the Blessed Angels* that:

There be, to Noble houses make resort;
 And sometimes Elbow Great men at the Court,
 Who though they seems to beare things faire and well,
 Yet would turn *Moses* into *Machiuel*;
 And, but for their aduantage and promotion,
 Would neuer make least tender of deuotion.
 For their Divinitie is that which we
 Call Pollicie: their Zeale, Hipocrisie:
 Their God, the Diuell: whose Imagination
 Conceits, That of the world was no Creation.
 These haue into Gods Works no true inspection,
 Dreame of no Iudgment, Hell, or Resurrection:
 Reckon vp Genealogies who were
 Long before *Adam*; and without all feare,
 (As those doom'd to the bottomlesse Abisme)
 Hold, There was no *Noës* Arke, no *Cataclisme*.⁶

This may reflect hearsay of old rumours concerning Harriot, but the rather unreflective concatenation of Machiavellians, those who assert the eternity





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of the world, those who deny an afterlife, and doubters of the Old Testament narrative sounds more like a general catalogue of woes than any specific charges *ad hominem*. Moreover, Heywood is simply versifying one paragraph of his explicit source, John Dove's *Confutation of Atheism*, and Dove's 'they . . . reckon vp Genealogyes more auncient then *Adam*' is itself a near quotation of 1 Tim. 1: 4, whose 'they' were probably Gnostics.⁷ But Gnosticism is not strictly Preadamist: the recursive genealogies of Gnosticism are of Aeons or angels, not of men.

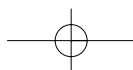
A contemporary source of problematically long genealogy, however, was provided by tales of Chinese chronology: 'They say the World is about a hundred thousand yeares old after their Chronologies, and accordingly deriue a Pedigree and tell of wonders done ninetie thousand yeares before *Adams* creation.'⁸ Paradoxically, as the Chinese chronology was gradually reinterpreted over the century into something approaching compatibility with the various western figures, it caused even more trouble, because while the upper figures of tens or hundreds of thousands of years could be dismissed as fabulous, the lower estimations at least looked credible. That meant that such figures could no longer simply be dismissed, especially considering the argument over the conflicting chronologies of the Septuagint (longer) as opposed to the Vulgate text (shorter) of the Old Testament. The Jesuit Martino Martini's *Sinicae Historiae Decas Prima* (1658) marked a water-shed in European understanding of the problems the Chinese chronology caused. Martini was the first major writer to point out the questions the eastern accounts invited about Biblical universality, and the first to draw explicit and seemingly non-biblical conclusions: 'I hold it as certain that the extremity of Asia was populated before the flood', Martini dangerously declared.⁹

That some rumour concerning Harriot's heretical views on creation was still alive nearer the date of the Anonymous Preadamist's manuscript, though, is suggested by Aubrey's brief life of Harriot, which recorded:

He did not like (or valued not) the old storie of the Creation of the World. He could not beleeeve the old position; he would say *ex nihilo nihil fit*. . . . He made a Philosophical Theologie, wherein he cast-off the Old Testament, and then the New-one would (consequently) have no foundation. He was a Deist.¹⁰

(Although the surviving manuscript evidence does not support any strong scepticism on Harriot's part concerning biblical chronology, it does corroborate his use of the phrase *ex nihilo nihil fit*.)¹¹

Preadamism was later to resurface in the radical decades of the seventeenth century, notably in the writings of Gerard Winstanley the Digger, Laurence Clarkson the Ranter and Thomas Totney who wrote under the prophetic name of Theaureaujohn Tany. Apart from these outbursts, though, Preadamism remained understandably rare, as the consequences of rejecting both the universality and the accuracy of the Mosaic books were too obvious and terrible to be risked.

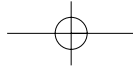


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On the continent, however, throughout the 1640s the dissident Calvinist Isaac La Peyrère started publicising his uncompromisingly Preadamite notions, and his ideas gained rapid currency and on occasion tentative support in French intellectual circles after the 1643 publication of his Messianic tract *Du Rappel des Juifs*.¹² Marin Mersenne's many correspondents wondered who had written this curious book. Jacques de Valois wrote excitedly to Mersenne in 1643, praising the scope of *Du Rappel*, especially its vision of theological harmony, 'sans entrer plus avant en des curieuses questions *quomodo* et semblables'. Martin Ruarus also praised La Peyrère's proposed reduction of theological subtilising, though he had other reservations. Mersenne, however, was also circulating a manuscript version of the work that would later appear separately as the *Prae-Adamitae*, because, as he surprisingly said to André Rivet, he considered that La Peyrère's thesis 'donne clarté à plusieurs lieux de l'Escriture'. But by 1647 he admitted to Rivet that La Peyrère's difficult notion of the 'retroimputation du peché d'Adam sur ceux qui l'ont precedé' was a less than satisfactory argument. Rivet, who had found 'traces de Codur', that is, of Philippe Codurc, in *Du Rappel*, asked Claude Sarrau in 1643 to confirm the authorship, and a decade later, Sarrau was writing to Salmasius with the news that La Peyrère had come to visit him, bearing a manuscript 'sub hoc titulo, *Somnium Nobilis Aquitani de Prae-Adamitis*'. What, asked Sarrau nervously, should he do?¹³

Hugo Grotius, who had obtained a very early manuscript version of La Peyrère's Preadamite arguments, had been sufficiently moved to refute La Peyrère in print as early as 1643, but clearly not everyone was so shocked. Guy Patin, for instance, by March 1642, as Noel Malcolm has uncovered, spoke of La Peyrère as having written a treatise on Preadamism.¹⁴ In 1643, Patin identified La Peyrère as the author of *Du Rappel*, and said that La Peyrère had prepared 'encore un autre livre à faire imprimer, par lequel il veut prouver qu'Adam n'a pas été le premier homme du monde.' And although Patin laughed at 'la légèreté du cerveau' of La Peyrère and his like – such men as thought there was another world behind the moon, or that Christ had not died to save the inhabitants of the *terra australis* or the Americas – later, upon the publication of the *Prae-Adamitae*, he claimed that he found it very persuasive and quite possibly true. Later still, however, the textual scholar Richard Simon was equally critical of both La Peyrère's projects, and enjoyed a rather intellectually bullying correspondence with 'mon cher Préadamite', informing La Peyrère about his equally deluded Cabalistic predecessors. Simon was thereby insinuating, of course, that La Peyrère was largely *unaware* of earlier pre-Adamite discussions.¹⁵ Certainly, in his biographical letter on La Peyrère, he rubbished the latter's learning.¹⁶

When the *Prae-Adamitae* was finally published in 1655, at Amsterdam by the famous Elzeviers, it was immediately greeted by a flood of learned refutations.¹⁷ By September 1656 Gui Patin knew enough to comment that the



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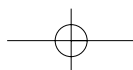
book ‘a été imprimé trois fois, savoir, in-quarto et in-douze en Hollande, et in-octavo à Bâle. Il y a déjà sept réponses différentes de divers auteurs et en différents pays.’ Actually, almost twice that number of refutations had appeared.¹⁸ Individuals with any connection to La Peyrère hurried to assert their orthodoxy – the French astronomer and intelligencer Ismaël Boulliau, for instance, was perturbed that La Peyrère had named him in his published text, and when private letters were published without Boulliau’s permission – in which he had actually further distanced himself from La Peyrère – he became even more perturbed. Such disputes, Boulliau thought, even if he had pointedly registered his dissention, ought never to have left the *respublica litterarum*.¹⁹ In the Low Countries, a Dutch proclamation also quickly banned the printing, reprinting, sale or translation of the Latin version.²⁰ To no avail – in 1661 a Dutch translation did appear, under the title of *Præadamiten*.

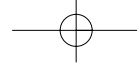
Nevertheless, the close connection between the heretical and the heresiographical ventures, as it were, is indicated by the number of copies of the *Prae-Adamitae* which survive uniformly bound with several of its attendant refutations.²¹ As for La Peyrère himself, the subsequent story of his seizure, imprisonment, ambiguous recantation and conversion to Catholicism is well-known. Even at the time, few people seem to have believed the sincerity of his recantation, and it was gossiped that La Peyrère was a Bordelain Marrano – that is, a crypto-Jew.²² Indeed, few people even believed the sincerity of his initial claim that Preadamism had Biblical foundation; as Vossius the Younger wrote in 1659:

Quamvis autem vel modice sapit, facile animadvertet, fallam istam de gentium antiquitate opinionem, praecipuam, & ni fallor, unicam scribendi causam fuisse. Nam quod locum Apostoli adinet, unde opinionem suam adstruere conatur, minime verisimile exinde ita sentiendi occasionem hausisse.²³

The *Prae-Adamitae* appeared in an unsigned English translation in 1656. At that point, Preadamism became not just a learned European controversy, conducted in Latin, but a vernacular availability in England. The impact of the initial Latin edition, though, had been felt in 1655, when Samuel Hartlib wrote in his diary, the *Ephemerides*, that one M. Finck, or possibly a friend of Finck, ‘know’s also the name of the Author of Prae-Adamitarum as j take it le Pere as j take it or Liperira a french-man.’²⁴ Hartlib is clearly referring to the Latin, continental text of the *Prae-Adamitae*, and his hesitant phrasing and approximate guessing at the spelling of La Peyrère suggest that he was writing down a name he had heard spoken but had not recognised, though he clearly considered it information worth recording.

The English translation which finally appeared in 1656 bore neither printer, publisher nor translator’s names, but on 24 October 1655, the stationers Thomas Underhill and Nathaniel Webb petitioned the Council of State about the impending publication, identifying the printer:





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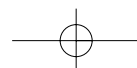
[W]e beg that such course may be taken that your act . . . may not eventually, though contrary to your intentions, prove the greater promoter of the book, as it has often fallen out in the like cases.

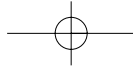
We beg to inform you that the *Praeadamitae*, a Latin book printed beyond sea, and condemned to the fire at Paris and Rome, putting a blasphemous slur on the Bible testimony concerning the creation of man, is lately translated into English, and now printing in London by Francis Leech, of Shoe Lane, and entered at Stationer's Hall. We request its suppression.²⁵

Francis Leech or Leach (one of a dynasty in the London book trade – his wife and two sons were also printers), active in London 1641–58, does seem an unlikely subversive. He printed people as diverse as Digby on Browne, Prynne, Bastwick, William Harvey, Charles I and William Guild. The explanation of Underhill and Webb's behaviour can be sought in their membership of the so-called 'Beacon Firers', the group of six Presbyterian stationers and printers who from 1652–54 proposed a strict system of licensing, publishing lists of Popish and sectarian or heretical books worthy of suppression. Hobbes and the Socinians were prominent in the latter category.²⁶ Underhill and Webb's attack on Leach, then, was a continuation of the Firers' policy. And despite the use on the title-page of *Men Before Adam* of a common fleur-de-lys device, of which family versions had been handed down and recycled by various printers since the early 1590s, the next woodblock pattern and the first decorated capital in the text are indeed identical to parallel patterning and capital-decoration in a verified Leach production of 1655, *The Perfect Conveyancer – Men Before Adam* was Leach's work.²⁷ An order summoning Leach was put out, but nothing appears to have come of it. That *Men Before Adam* finally bore the publication date 1656 does suggest that Underhill and Webb's complaint forced at least a delay, tactical or otherwise, in production. One thing is obvious, though: if the work was 'now printing' in October of 1655, the translator must have worked exceedingly fast.

So Underhill and Webb were right about the printer, at least, but neglected to name the translator. The Stationers' Register, however, records entry of the translation on 8 September 1655 for the standard 6d, specifying both Leach and '[] Whitford, gent' as printer and translator respectively; the translator had indeed worked fast. Moreover, it was entered 'under the hand of Master NORTON warden', that is, Roger Norton, one of the two Wardens of the Stationers, then under the Mastership of Henry Walley. That the translation, though itself unsigned, was actually entered in the Stationers' Register is itself noteworthy, as it rendered the people involved in its production readily identifiable and legally responsible.²⁸

Who was the translator? 'Whitford, gent,' I conjecture, is David Whitford (1624–74), fourth son of the Bishop of Brechin, educated at Westminster and Christ Church, and later royalist soldier, clergyman and man of letters (Luke Fawn the Beacon Firer, by contrast, fought for Parliament).²⁹ In 1655, Whitford published a parallel Greek and Latin edition of Musaeus, Moschus,





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Bion, and Theocritus.³⁰ Again, Whitford is not exactly a subversive character, and perhaps the notice in the Register that he was a ‘gent’ may explain how the book came to be entered at all. Nevertheless, *Men Before Adam* did appear without a named printer, publisher or translator, which is somewhat clandestine, and the whole affair would repay more scrutiny.

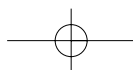
Men before Adam, however, was not the first appearance of the Preadamite thesis on British soil. As has been mentioned, the Elizabethans may have discussed it, and certain interregnum radicals certainly did. Lawrence Clarkson’s account is the most interesting. In 1660, now a Muggletonian, Clarkson recalled, perhaps with some polemical exaggeration, his earlier, wilder days:

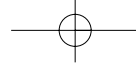
[A]t that time [1650] I looked upon all was good, and God the author of all, and therefore have several times attempted to raise the devil, that so I might see what he was, but all in vain, so that I judged all was a lie, and that there was no devil at all, nor indeed no God but onely nature, for when I have perused the Scriptures I have found so much contradiction as then I conceived, that I had no faith in it at all, no more than a history . . . I neither believed that *Adam* was the first Creature, but that there was a Creation before him, which world I thought was eternal, judging that land of *Nod* where *Cain* took his wife, was inhabited a long time before *Cain*, not considering that *Moses* was the first Writer of Scripture, and that we were to look no further than what there was written; but I really believed no *Moses*, Prophets, Christ, or Apostles, nor no resurrection at all: for I understood that which was life in a man, went into that infinite Bulk and Bigness, so called *God*, as a drop into the Ocean, and the body rotten in the grave, and for ever so to remain.³¹

The Diggers, whom Clarkson tangled with for a time until he was ejected from their community of 1649–50, also appear to have held Preadamite beliefs, but only in passing. Winstanley, whom Clarkson ended up accusing of ‘self-love and vain-glory’,³² claimed as a consequence of the allegorical status of scripture that many of the statements of Genesis are misleading if read historically. Indeed, when Winstanley writes of *five* rivers flowing out of Eden, one for each sense, he is provocatively revising the Biblical text. And although on occasion he can speak of Eden as a physical place which existed 6000 years ago,³³ his usual and enduring allegorical priorities led him to shun historical exegesis. In a slightly earlier work, Winstanley had attacked a literal reading of Genesis on the grounds that scrutiny of the Biblical text can in fact produce the opposite of received doctrine:

Therefore let none speak so discontentedly against Adam, the first man by Creation, that they say lived on earth about 6000 years ago, as though he brought in the misery upon all; for the Scriptures seems to declare, that there were men in the world before that time.

For when *Cain* had killed his brother *Abel*, which in one verse *Moses* seems to say, was the third man in the world, yet in a few verses following, writing of *Cains*





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punishment, declares *Cain's* own words, *Thou hast set a mark upon me, and every one that sees me, wil kil me*: And yet by the story before, there were no more men in the world, but his Father *Adam* and he, now *Abel* being dead. *Gen.* 4. 14.

Therefore certainly this *Adam*, or first man that is spoken of, is he that is within, as I have spoke of, which kils or surprresses *Abel*.³⁴

For Winstanley, the original community was one of peace and brotherly harmony: the 'fall' is merely the fall into private property and individualism. It is striking to observe that Hobbes's apparently contrary thesis that the original state was one of war is nevertheless implicitly compatible with, even favourable of, a similarly Preadamite view, as Popkin has commented.³⁵ To this I would add the observation that this is true likewise of Hugo Grotius, who glossed the Genesis narrative in terms of an original community where all was held in common. Grotius, unlike Hobbes, thus accords with Winstanley not just in terms of Preadamite compatibility, but also in their shared view of an original state of unpropertied harmony.³⁶

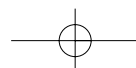
The self-announced prophet Theauraujohn Tany also seems to have held Preadamite views – but, as with Winstanley and Clarkson, as part of a larger matrix of his often idiosyncratically expressed ideas:

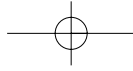
Now *Hamah* was the first Light that gave a being to its adherent; for it was the essential Deity, deited in and unto it self, *in se, & in se, & in se*, infolding, infolding, infolding in it self, he unfolded and we came forth, not into a garden, but upon the species of the earth: Be not ignorant, could a Garden compass and confine his creative? No, no, the creations of numerous men and women at once, and your *Adam* is not man and woman but the whole creation of God, which is his declaratives of his Excellency.³⁷

It would be too simple to say that such men represented a particular brand of Preadamism. Even their heresiographers were slower than they usually were to identify Preadamism as peculiar to the extreme radicals. John Holland did include Preadamism among Ranter beliefs:

They say that the world was created long before the time the Scripture speakes of; for say they when *Cain* fled from the presence of the Lord, he went into the Land of *Nod*, and there he built a City, he could not build a City himselfe, and it was needlesse for him to build a City for his own houshold, one house or tent would have served him; therefore they argue that there were at that time more people in the world then *Adam* and *Cain*, though we read of no more.³⁸

But other heresiographers, such as Pagitt and Ross, were largely content to repeat the old Elizabethan story that peculiarly 'Familists' – an old, rather hazy term by this time – held that 'there was a world before *Adams* time as is now'.³⁹ Rather, what emerges from even a cursory discussion of these radicals is that they can only be thought of as a 'group' in the minimal sense of united by a common distrust of literalist exegesis of the Bible, and such textual scepticism serves very different purposes for each writer. Clarkson's 1650 Preadamism is part of a complete textual scepticism, corroborated by





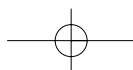
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the final paragraphs of his Ranter work *A Single Eye* (1650), where he accuses the Bible of being the cause of religious strife; Winstanley's Preadamism, however, is part of a call to read the scriptures allegorically, not to reject them; and Tany's Preadamism stems from his larger argument about creation itself as a metaphysical, universal fall of souls from perfection: 'Know the fall is being created, for when we were not created, and uncome forth, we were as he is, that is in perfection'.⁴⁰ So although Preadamite notions were to a certain degree current in England in the immediate years before the impact of La Peyrère, such ideas do not show his influence, nor are they unified in any sense deeper than the mere assertion that there were men before Adam. Rather, they arise from shared doubts concerning the equation between conventional doctrine and conventional exegesis. But the uses to which such scepticism was put diverge from that point forward. Clarkson rejected the Scriptures; Winstanley merely rejected the dominant means of interpreting them; while Tany extemporised upon them.

La Peyrère, in turn, does not seem to have derived his ideas from any English source. Nor did he derive them from Rabbinical sources, as Richard Simon's letters to La Peyrère, regaling him with information on such 'sources', have, as we noted, the tone of a man who considers his correspondent scarcely aware of – indeed incapable of reading – such writings.

Simon, however, recounted an interesting anecdote. One of his friends, he writes, having been informed of the Preadamite hypothesis, claimed that La Peyrère was merely copying English ideas: 'Je me souviens qu'un de mes amis lui reprocha en ma présence qu'il n'étoit point le véritable pere de cet Ouvrage. Il prétendoit qu'il l'avoit composé sur les Memoires d'un de ses freres qui étoit mort en Angleterre.'⁴¹ What does Simon's friend mean? By 'frere', he presumably means 'similarly-opinioned person', rather than 'religious brother' – it is unlikely to be a clandestine visiting Oratorian, who happened to die while in England; that this brother died in England may simply mean that he was English. Simon's anonymous friend was perhaps making the interesting claim that a work of 1655, earlier versions of which had previously circulated in MS, looked to him like continental plagiarism of English ideas, and not the other way around.

Granted, it is unlikely that Simon's friend was correct. La Peyrère claims he generated his system solely by reading the fifth chapter of Romans, by pondering the implications of the ancient chronologies of the non-Jewish races and the modern discoveries of hitherto unknown lands, and by wondering, as a child, about Cain's puzzling activities in Genesis.⁴² The identification of an English 'véritable Pere' of La Peyrère's peculiar brand of Preadamism is unnecessary, but such a thought must at least have sounded plausible, and Simon preserved it. Was earlier English Preadamism a rumour in France? Perhaps they had heard stories about Harriot and his circle, stories similar to those Aubrey recorded.

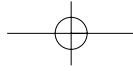


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English Preadamism continued to be refuted in the decades after the Restoration. Stillingfleet's influential *Origines Sacrae*, so claimed its Preface, was written so that 'we may hope to hear no more of men before *Adam* to salve the Authority of the Scriptures by'. Stillingfleet's actual attack on the thesis combined historical, textual and pragmatic approaches. He refuted the Chaldaean chronology, supported by Salmasius, from whom Stillingfleet stated La Peyrère 'hath borrowed most of his arguments as to these things'; he opined that on linguistic grounds we should read, against La Peyrère, that men are all of one *blood* not of one *matter*; and he pointed out that Adam would not have called Eve mother of all the living were she were not so.⁴³ But, as Popkin has commented, Stillingfleet also argued that the Adamic origin of man was necessary not least for theological priorities: how could the effects of the fall be universal if men had polygenetic origins?⁴⁴ We might also note that Stillingfleet, who had claimed in his preface that the Preadamite hypothesis was to 'salve the Authority of the Scriptures' then later claimed that La Peyrère's real intent was to 'undermine the *Scriptures* themselves'. Once again, whether the Preadamite hypothesis was 'really' to salve or subvert remained ambiguous.⁴⁵

From 1677, the influence was also felt of the judge Matthew Hale's widely read *The Primitive Origination of Mankind*, which contained a long attack in the Stillingfleet tradition on Preadamism.⁴⁶ The notion had even found its way on to the stage: two gentlemen in Thomas Duffett's *The Amorous Old-Woman* (1674) jest of the titular crone: 'she has / Out-liv'd her kindred by nine Generations, / And they say remembers ever since *Eve* / Gave suck; and for her Religion she's / Pre-adamite'. It's not a funny joke, but it does assume a certain currency for the term, again suggested by its occurrence in the burlesque *Canidia* of 1683.⁴⁷ Again in the 1670s, Robert Hooke's circle appears to have discussed the Preadamite thesis, under the influence of La Peyrère, whose book men like Hooke, Ray, Halley, Pepys, and Francis Lodwick all owned, usually in Latin.⁴⁸ Francis Willughby, Ray's collaborator, excerpted from La Peyrère in his commonplace book.⁴⁹ Halley in particular was rumoured to believe in the eternity of the world, and went to some trouble in the 1690s to furnish scientific support for an ultimate conflagration, 'there being a caveat entered against me, till I can shew that I am not guilty of asserting the eternity of the world'.⁵⁰ And Hooke records in his journal for 18 Dec 1675: 'To Martins and Garaways club: Ludowick, Hill, Aubery, Wild. Discoursd about Universal Character, about preadamits and of Creation'.⁵¹ This of course does not mean that these men supported the thesis, but it does show that the idea was still being talked about two decades after La Peyrère's initial publication, and it hints at a possible connection between discussions of Preadamism and creation, and of the philosophical language movement.

One of Hooke's group did support the Preadamite thesis, though: Francis Lodwick. Lodwick is best known as one of the philosophical linguists, author



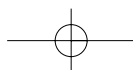
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of *A Common Writing* (1647) and *The Ground-Work* (1652), the first published attempts in English towards a philosophical language.⁵² His published material is strictly linguistic, but Lodwick also carefully preserved a mass of other writings, mainly theological, in manuscript. These demonstrate that his linguistic proposals were part of a much larger social programme: a programme which included the creation of a rationalistic world religion only nominally Christian, and a thorough revision of the common assumptions regarding the creation of the world.⁵³

Lodwick, we saw, owned La Peyrère's work, and his system, though Lodwick played down the Messianic cast of La Peyrère's vision, is clearly an offspring of the French heretic. In Lodwick's utopian work, 'A Description of a Country Not Named', the presumably European narrator is told by Lodwick's ghostly utopians that they hold the world to be 11,700 years older than the point from which 'we reckon the beginning of Time'.⁵⁴ In Vulgate terms that puts the date of creation itself back to c. 15,700 BC. Furthermore, before this time, Lodwick's utopians 'haue a Tradition of a far elder date by thousands of yeares, which they call the uncertain account'. But the utopians insist that such a chronology is nonetheless biblical: 'moses or the Author of the booke of Genesis hauing mentioned the beginning of all things and of mankind slips ouer that large track of Time and immediately falleth on the relation of the immediate Creation of Adam and his Wife Eue.' The proof of this is the one offered by both La Peyrère and the Preadamist: how could Cain, having slain Abel, have feared revenge if there was no one else alive other than Adam and Eve?⁵⁵

Lodwick himself in the same manuscript, reversed, left some 35 numbered theological discourses, of which the first, 'Concerning the Originall of Mankind', reaffirms the 'utopian' belief in Preadamism canvassed in the quasi-fictional part of the manuscript.⁵⁶ There is no reason to suspect that Lodwick differed in any way from the opinions of his utopians: indeed, further writings of his have now come to light which affirm the preadamist model, and attempt to integrate it into a Cartesian view of creation which nonetheless harmonises with the Mosaic account. This, as with La Peyrère, is achieved by inserting a gap of many thousands of years between the first and second creations recorded by Moses.⁵⁷ Lodwick in his essay on the 'Originall of Mankind' also provides further reasons for the Preadamite thesis: namely, the fundamental difference between blacks and whites;⁵⁸ the unlikelihood of blacks born in a hot country, or whites in a cold, to consider migration; and the probability that monogenesis would have left clear linguistic tracks radiating from an originary point. Lodwick thought that this last consideration was disproved by what he saw as the fundamental incompatibility between languages such as Irish, Dutch, Welsh, and Slavonic.

Given Lodwick's interest in universal language, it is interesting to note a comment of his fellow universal linguist and acquaintance, George Dalgarno, the Aberdonian schoolmaster who courted the Oxonian universal linguists



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and published in 1661 his *Ars Signorum*. In a manuscript treatise on interpretation, Dalgarno announced that his theory of Adamic naming, in which Adam creates his own language rather than has it foisted upon him by God, does not, however, 'undertake to convince preadamites and sadducees'.⁵⁹ Although it is unlikely Lodwick would circulate the larger, heretical theories in which he situated his seemingly secularist linguistic ideas, it is fascinating to note Dalgarno's perception that a nominalist view of Adam's language, in which Adam does his best, as it were, rather than names according to some divinely given linguistic order, leads him to posit and reject the Preadamite possibility. Perhaps he had heard some gossip; he certainly knew of and praised Lodwick's endeavours in the field of universal language.⁶⁰

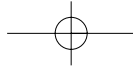
At round about this time, a quite different man also remarked on the threat of the Preadamite thesis. John Bunyan, in his *Exposition of the Ten First Chapters of Genesis*, commenting on the etymology of Eve's name as mother-of-the-living, added that this also demonstrates 'That there was none of the Sons of Men in the World before *Adam*, as some have not only vainly, but irreligiously and blasphemously suggested.'⁶¹ This, we remember, was the argument of Stillingfleet. Five years after Bunyan's death one of the most notorious of the irreligious and blasphemous confirmed Bunyan's suspicion: Charles Blount, Deist and, in 1693, recent or incipient suicide, commented very early on in his *Oracles of Reason*:

Now as one observes very well, in relation to Divine Miracles, there is oftentimes great Errors committed in the manner of reading Scripture; as when that is taken in a general Sence, which ought to be particularly understood: As that of *Adam*, whom *Moses* made only to be the first Father of the *Jews*, whilst others Hyperbolically make him to be the first Father of all Men.⁶²

The 'one' Blount refers to is clearly La Peyrère, and later in the *Oracles* Blount reasserts this position, while interestingly combining this idea with that of the angelic transgression of Genesis 6:

It plainly appears out of the Bible, that there were two Creations both of Man and Woman, and that *Adam* was not the first Man, nor *Eve* the first Woman, only the first of the Holy Race . . . for it was a great space of time, and divers great Actions were accomplish'd betwixt those two Creations: Therefore when it is said — Gen. 6. 2. *That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair, and took them for their Wives*. The meaning is, that the Sons of *Adam* of the second Creation, saw the Daughters of the Men of the first Creation that they were fair, and married them.⁶³

In contrast, the next defence of the Preadamite thesis shows the direction in which many – but not all – amateurs of the new, especially geological, sciences were moving. In 1695, one 'L. P.', a 'Master of Arts', published his *Two Essays sent in a Letter from Oxford, to a Nobleman in London*. His approach to the Preadamite thesis was to redefine scripture's interest in such matters. Citing Galileo, Mersenne, Campanella, Copernicus, Gassendi, Descartes, he commented that such illuminati:



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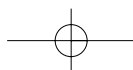
are not esteem'd the worse Christians, because they contradict the Scriptures in Physical or Mathematical Problems; the Sacred *Writers* spoke to a Generation of Men, who were never famous in Arts or Sciences; therefore they adapted all their sayings to the vulgar Idea's of that Time and Nation; their design being not to compose a Natural system of the World, but to establish the true *Theocracy*, and good *Morals*.⁶⁴

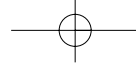
Having thus defined scripture as uninterested in absolute history – a move he had copied from Thomas Burnet, whose geological ideas he supports – 'L. P.' can declare himself freed of scriptural fetters, and so proceed. Such an accommodationist position ('accommodation' is the theory that suggests that God 'accommodated' the language of the Bible to humanity's weak understanding) had been most trenchantly popularised by John Wilkins many years earlier in his *Discovery of a World in the Moone*, where he spoke of the 'absurdities [which] have followed, when men looke for the grounds of Philosophy in the words of Scripture'.⁶⁵ The accommodationist position in no sense swiftly emerged as dominant, however: Newton himself resisted Thomas Burnet's much-discussed geological ideas precisely because they failed to cohere with the Mosaic narrative.⁶⁶ Intermediate figures such as Lodwick produced a mixture of hexameral and antediluvian structure, Cartesian content, and a rationale of welding that rode rather rough-shod over standard exegetical assumptions. Lodwick, for instance, said that the serpent in Eden was obviously a baboon.⁶⁷ But 'L. P.', a full accommodationist, is clearly scornful of any rapprochement:

I see no way at present to solve this new face of *Nature* by old Arguments fetch'd from *Eastern* Rubbish, or Rabinical Weeds, unless some *New Philosopher* starts up with a fresh System; in the mean time let them [the peoples of the new world] all be *Aborigines*.⁶⁸

So, to support his geological priorities, of course there were men before Adam. But he does reject 'equivocal generations' or the idea that the animals of America are hybrids: 'the Number of Creatures, as to their Kinds, have always been the same from the beginning'; 'Time out of mind' there have been blacks different in physique to whites, and white is no more beautiful than black. His rude postgraph to his second essay is *Jovis omnia plena*: 'all things are full of gods', the dangerous judgement of Thales.⁶⁹ This also echoes La Peyrère's description of those who hold the world to be eternal: 'Yea, they would have God and the world to be one thing; and that God had put on the World: And that *Jove*, the greatest of the Gods, was the whole world, a living soul compos'd of living souls, and a God compos'd of gods, as of his parts.'⁷⁰

Who 'L. P.' was remains a mystery, although it has been plausibly conjectured that he was John Toland.⁷¹ He was attacked by John Harris, FRS, who stated that 'L. P.' was neither an Oxonian nor sported those initials. In addition, Harris says that 'L. P.' was one of three English owners of Agostino Scilla's marvellously illustrated *La Vana Speculazione Disingannata dal Senso*





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(Naples, 1670).⁷² Unfortunately, I have been unable to trace any helpful provenance marks in the copies so far consulted, and can neither confirm nor deny the Toland hypothesis.⁷³ What is important is that 'L. P.'s' brand of Preadamism – let it be termed 'second generation' Preadamism – has stopped attempting to wed the thesis to Biblical exegesis. The Gordian knot which most previous Preadamists awkwardly tied is here deliberately cut.

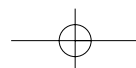
III. The Manuscript⁷⁴

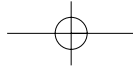
It is against the background just canvassed that the Anonymous Preadamist will be discussed, but before this we first turn to a brief analysis of the manuscript in which he left his jottings, as this one manuscript is all the evidence we have for who the Preadamist was, and when he wrote. I should confess at the outset that I do not as yet have solid answers to these questions.

Sloane 1022, now bound as Sloane 1022/1115, is an anonymous seventeenth-century commonplace book, provenance unknown, of chiefly theological content, suggestive of an educated ecclesiastic. It contains material on coinage, Greek, Latin and Hebrew terminology, tobacco, a section from Richard Baxter, various linguistic or rhetorical matters, Biblical chronology and typology, verse, rabbinical sayings, and other material.⁷⁵ The scribe of these sections I shall call Dominant Hand. It also contains, in a distinct hand, three pages supporting the Preadamite thesis and three more, later, in the same hand, on the relation between the civil and ecclesiastical powers. These are the sole six pages in the hand of the second man, the Anonymous Preadamist. The first portion of the Preadamist's material has so far only received a paragraph of attention by Popkin in his study of *La Peyrère*.⁷⁶

There are few clues as to the date and scribes of this MS. The Baxter transcript has, after the *finis*, the date 'MDCLXVII', and as Baxter's *The Saints Everlasting Rest* was published in 1650, this later date must be that of the scribing, the only such information in the MS. The section represented consists of an eight-page excerpt from Baxter's prefatory dedication.⁷⁷ In addition, the chronology from the creation to the destruction of Jerusalem is attributed to a 'mr John Langesford Preacher of the Gospel in Cornwall' (fol. 27v). It is tempting to think that this Langesford is the author of the major portion of the MS, but as a digest of Baxter is also included, Langesford, like Baxter, was probably copied by the author.

Because Langesford of Cornwall is the only clue of geographical or family provenance in the manuscript, he merits some attention.⁷⁸ Our Langesford must be John Langford, recorded by Edmund Calamy as 'Langsford', vicar of Gwennap in south-west Cornwall from 1653 until 1660, when the sequestered vicar, Richard Cory, was restored. He was a member of the Cornish Association, described as 'peaceable' by the ecclesiastical authorities in 1665, and left a library worth £40, including 'history notes and Heraldry





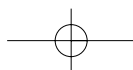
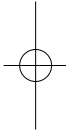
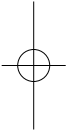
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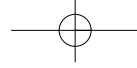
Manuscripts'. This, surely, is our man, though it is puzzling, given his chronological study, that he seemingly attended neither university.⁷⁹ His dates would suggest that he is the 'John Langforde' whose christening was recorded on 21 February 1629 at Lanreath, again near Liskeard.⁸⁰ All these locations connected with the Lang[es]fords, finally, centre on the district of Caradon, although Gwennap is further south. John was a native Cornishman, then, who moved south to preach the word.⁸¹ He appears not to have published his chronology, and so it is possible that Dominant Hand was a friend, and that is how he obtained Langesford's work. Langesford and Baxter, note, were both Nonconformists. Finally, it is not impossible that Dominant Hand is John Langesford himself.

Dominant Hand writes in a typical, now brown-black ink; the Preadamist used a different ink, now blue-black. Dominant Hand is a clear italic/secretary hybrid, and in both this and his content he is an unremarkable character. The pages of interest (fos 15r–16r, 50r–51r) are the six sides of the Preadamist.

The Preadamite document proper is in the third gathering, surrounded by the Matthew lexicon and the chronologicon, which share that gathering and that gathering alone, not spilling out into the others. But the Preadamist's second piece is written in the penultimate gathering, one end of which has the end of the typological tables and dates, the other the start of the notes on logic. The last page of the reversed gathering (45r, i.e. the first in upright foliation) contains notes on Sayings of the Rabbis, which extend into the next gathering. Likewise, the first page (52v, i.e. the last in upright foliation) contains the end of the chronology started earlier in the first reversed gathering. This suggests that the Preadamist hand got there first, and Dominant Hand wrote around the Preadamist's pages, continuing his musings at both ends into other gatherings as required. It is perhaps relevant that all the other gatherings (1–2, 4–5–6–7–8) have continued text between them, demonstrating that, while the Preadamite hand *need* not have written in the MS in its current order of gatherings, Dominant Hand, writing *seriatim* across all the gatherings bar one, *must* have done so. This again favours the hypothesis that the Preadamist is the earlier scribe, and that Dominant Hand wrote around this earlier material. But as the Preadamist's hand does appear in two different gatherings, and as the paper is uniform throughout, the Preadamist was nonetheless working from the same paper stock, perhaps a bundle the later hand adopted and ordered. In addition, we can note that, while Dominant Hand created a reversed MS, by writing from both ends in, the Preadamist's two texts, though located one in the upright and one in the reversed section, are nevertheless both 'upright', as it were, the latter section of the Preadamist not, therefore, following the reversed conventions, which again arguably therefore post-date his scribing.

There is some internal evidence, though again conjectural, to support this hypothesis. The second section by the Preadamist is concerned with the relation between the ecclesiastical and the civil powers, and contrasts the views





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of 'the congregational way' and the 'presbyterian' way. Though this does not establish this as a pre-Restoration document, combined with the above observations, it does make 1667, the only date on the MS, more probably an *ad quem* rather than an *a quo* date, and indeed, the MS may even date from the 1650s. Taken singly, each of these pieces of internal and bibliographic evidence suggests the Preadamist's precedence, and together they favour it.

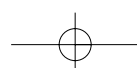
The Preadamist's hand is antisocial, and heavily abbreviated: these pages are very much a private text, not intended for public consumption. Few men, indeed, would dare to publicise their Preadamism. On the other hand, that the MS is heavily corrected suggests that the Preadamist reapproached his work on at least one occasion with a view to its improvement. In this respect, while the MS is private, it is not a casual piece. Furthermore, sections such as the following show that revisions were made for stylistic effect: 'here w^s nothing but con/fusion & ~~Dark~~ Darknes & Ignorance ouerspread y^e/ earth, & how sh^d a reformation be? ~~brought ad/ to passe about,~~ how sh^d y^e be agst creatures be/ so refind from all filth & pollution[?]' Indeed, all the revisions to the MS were made on stylistic grounds, never for the addition of genuinely new material. The Preadamist therefore had a rhetorical attitude to his text: regardless of the apparent privacy of his writing, he was trying to make it read better. The palaeographer, for one, may doubt his success.

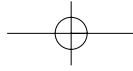
The Preadamist and Dominant Hand, finally, belong to men who would have disagreed. Dominant Hand's two chronologies are strictly Mosaic: the *Chronologia* starts with the entry 'An[no] M[undi] 15 Cain nascitur' (fol. 17r), and concludes with '422 [AD] Macrobius floruit' (fol. 21r), unremarkable, orthodox statements. The later chronology 'from the Creation' starts with Year 1, when 'Adam was created' (fol. 25r). The typological comparison between Adam and Christ, again, is not an exercise particularly compatible with Preadamism, which distinguishes the first Adam from the first man or men. So the Preadamist and Dominant Hand are two different men, possibly of different dates, certainly of different minds. If Dominant Hand is indeed the later scribe, it is a shame he did not interact with the Preadamist's texts, towards which he appears to have shown no interest.

IV. The Preadamist

So what can we know of the Preadamist? He has some connection with, and may be, a Cornish preacher. He is interested in Presbyterian-versus-Independent arguments, and seems sympathetic with the latter. He knows a little Hebrew and has the phraseology of a Neoplatonist. He is just too early to have had any contact with Spinozan ideas, with which his ideas of necessary creativity are aligned.⁸² His exegesis, as we shall see, relies on no main-stream source.

The Cornish connection is tantalisingly uncertain, but it may be noted that Cornwall, so distant from the centres of ecclesiastical and theological leg-





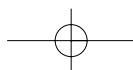
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isolation, was a deeply reactionary county, generally suspicious at every point of the reformation, slow to conform or to unconform, as the situation demanded. In the civil war, anti-Parliamentarian feeling was rife, and after the failed 1648 uprising against the Parliament, in 'the Gear Rout' the cornered rebels hurled themselves into the sea.⁸³

The structure of the Preadamist's observations is noteworthy. Unlike later Preadamists, he is utterly uninterested in geographical or geological arguments for the great antiquity of the world: his is a totally different approach from, say, 'L. P.'. He mentions neither aborigines nor fossils. The thrust of his argument is metaphysical first, and then textual. Like La Peyrère, he insists that his theory is a reading of, rather than an attack on, the Bible. In this, he is a 'first generation' rather than a 'second generation' Preadamist, because his argument works with rather than against the scriptural account. Later Preadamists, to be sure, might claim that their views were not anti-Bible because the Bible was itself uninterested in the issue. But they would not claim, as the Preadamist does, that the Bible explicitly supports such a view – as Spinoza himself notoriously said, the prophets may have been inspired, but they were not therefore natural philosophers. The second generation Preadamists sideline the Bible; the first generation read it. Thus the Preadamist defends his exegesis by appealing to the 'misticall' sense of scripture rather than declaring it irrelevant.

His first series of arguments, though, show clear Neoplatonic influence, and belong to the set of ideas that A. O. Lovejoy famously analysed as the Great Chain of Being.⁸⁴ The Preadamist's vocabulary of necessary communication – 'God who is a most necessary being and most necessarily existing co[u]ld not be and but partly act. And so being a necessary Agent and a good which is most communicative must most necessarily communicate' – repeats the tendency Lovejoy traced from Plato of locating in God's very perfection the necessity of that perfection overflowing, thereby creating the universe. This 'principle of plenitude', by which God, rather than doing nothing other than being perfect, shifts into being a perfection that nonetheless must necessarily create, is also visible in Plotinus, where the slippage from self-sufficiency to necessary creativity is seen in a single sentence: 'Seeking nothing, possessing nothing, lacking nothing, the One is perfect and, in our metaphor, has overflowed, and its exuberance has produced the new'.⁸⁵

The Preadamist, however, puts pressure on this conventional idea. If God is both from everlasting and necessarily communicative, then so too must the world be from everlasting: 'A necessary good must necessarily communicate, which is Ground enough to raise an argument to prove that this world with those Glorious beings that are in it were from eternity because god was so'. Other writers were happy to grant God metaphysical 'necessary communication': in 1657 John Ford, the Mayor of Bath, could write that the divine love, 'being incited by a holy desire of communicating itself, it was necessary to frame a copy of the Intellectual Original which was in his *Idea*, and in his



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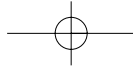
heavenly mind.⁸⁶ But to understand the metaphysical necessity as also a necessity in time was to wed the Platonic notion of overspillage to the notorious assertion of Aristotle in the eighth book of the *Physics* that the world was eternal because every cause presupposes a prior cause. (The eternity of the world was also the opinion of the Pythagorean Ocellus Lucanus, whom Blount, as we saw, used in his arguments for Preadamism.) Such a combination of a classic piece of Platonism and a classic piece of Aristotelianism is also witnessed by Anne Conway's *The Principles of the Most Ancient and Modern Philosophy*, which, though written in the early 1670s, was only published in Amsterdam in Latin in 1690 and in London in English two years later. Chapter 2 of Conway's treatise, for instance, sought to demonstrate:

§.1. *Although Creatures are not Co-eternal with God; yet they had Infinite Times from the Beginning.* §.2. *So that no Number of Years, no not the greatest that any created Intellect can conceive, can reach to their Beginning.* §.3. *Creatures were in one sence from Eternity, and in another sence not from Eternity.* §.4. *Infinity of Times is proved from the infinite Goodness of God.* §.5. *It is an Essential Attribute of God to be a Creator.* §.6. *What Time is, and how the same cannot be in God.*⁸⁷

Matthew Hale also complained specifically about 'the Intrinsic Necessity of Almighty God to do good *ad extra, ad ultimum posse*, this is that Opinion upon which some have built their *Hypothesis* of the Eternity of the World'.⁸⁸

Indeed, Anne Conway is probably the closest writer discussed to the Preadamist, in terms of style as well as of content, despite the later publication date of her treatise than the likely time zone of the Preadamist document. Her friend and collaborator Franciscus Mercurius van Helmont also argued against a material creation *ex nihilo* while at the same time denying the absolute metaphysical co-eternity of creation with God: the relation of the one to the other, he explained, using a typical metaphor, was as a sunbeam to the sun.⁸⁹ Van Helmont's *Two Hundred Queries Moderately Propounded concerning the Doctrine of the Revolution of Humane Souls* (London, 1684) again shares similarities with the Preadamist, but despite their similar literary form of proposing a leading question, the Preadamist then goes on to answer his question, and his Preadamist rather than preanimist thrust is absent from Helmont's work. (Francis Lodwick, in passing, lent the book to Thomas Henshaw in 1688.⁹⁰) The Cambridge Platonist Henry More, too, who corresponded with Conway, is a tempting connection, as he too knew Hebrew and had practised allegorical methods of reading Genesis in his *Conjectura Cabalistica* (1655). His handwriting is close to that of the Preadamist, but not, alas, close enough.⁹¹ Likewise, inspection of various of Conway's Quaker contacts is inconclusive. George Keith, another plausible candidate, again must be excluded on palaeographical grounds.⁹²

To this extent, then, the Anonymous Preadamist shows similarities with the kind of Neoplatonism espoused by More, and the Preadamist's plea that scripture is 'misticall' in those places where its apparent historicity is misleading is compatible with the Cabalistic leanings of More, Conway, Helmont,



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and their various contacts. But the emphasis in these circles was on the preexistence of the *soul*, not quite the same as arguing for the existence of corporal humans walking the face of the earth from everlasting.⁹³ Similarity reveals difference: the Preadamist uses metaphysical arguments to forward a nonetheless *physical* theory.

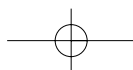
There are similarities to other writers, also: Cain's puzzling conduct after he slays Abel, which the Preadamist adduces, was mentioned by La Peyrère. More interestingly, the Preadamist discusses at some length the suggestive story of the lustful 'sons of the gods' of Genesis 6, who took to wives the pretty daughters of men, a site which had troubled commentators for many centuries. The tradition that these beings were in fact angels had been magisterially rejected by Augustine in *The City of God* (XV. 22–3), who asserted that the sons of the gods were simply the sons of the godly, while the daughters of men were the daughters of the wicked. The Preadamist actually follows this orthodox interpretation, but, of course, with the subversive twist that the two classes of people were of distinct origin, the latter having predated the former by countless ages. This was exactly the exegesis of Genesis 6 Blount offered in *The Oracles of Reason*, published, however, in 1693. La Peyrère adopts the same distinction but, tellingly, he neglects to produce Genesis 6 as evidence that sons of the gods / daughters of men signifies a Jewish/Gentile distinction, surely a particularly unfortunate oversight.⁹⁴ Indeed, it is the fact that a prominent exegesis of Genesis 6 is missing from the *Prae-Adamitae* which encourages the sense that the Preadamist did not rely on La Peyrère's text. La Peyrère's phraseology often assumes that Genesis 6 is being recalled ('marriages of the sons of God must not be made with the daughters of men'), but the French heretic never quite explicitly gets to the English Preadamist and Blount's precise exegesis.⁹⁵

A striking similarity with La Peyrère, though, is the supposition that the peoples of the first creation grew corrupt and it was specifically this decline that prompted the remedy of the second creation:

And hence it has come to pass, that the men of the first creation forgetting their first Creator, and stirr'd up by those Spirits of the corrupted creation, strayed from the uprightness of their first creation, and perish'd in their own thought.

Then God seeing how the world was degenerated and become abominably wicked and sinfull, and so not answering the end for which god had made them . . . bethought himself how to reforme it.⁹⁶

To this extent, then, there are congruities between the Preadamist and La Peyrère: both adduce the Cain story, and both assume that the Adamic creation came about because of the wickedness of Preadamic man. But they also differ in many ways. The Neoplatonic strain is absent from La Peyrère. And whereas La Peyrère simply inserted many ages between Genesis 1 and Genesis 2, the Preadamist confusingly appears to accept that the scriptures say that the world was created 'around 6000 yeares agoe'. Admittedly, he then



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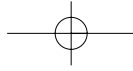
says that this interpretation neglects the ‘new’ creation, but if he had wished to forward a literal explanation for the old dating, as La Peyrère did, he would not have bothered taking recourse to the ‘misticall’ sense of scripture as he does. He would simply have said that there was a gap between Genesis 1 and 2, and that was that. So although La Peyrère and the Preadamist may share a common ancestor, I do not think that the Preadamist had any direct contact with La Peyrère; or, if he did, he chose to develop an approach largely independent of that of the French heretic. Likewise, the Preadamist’s arguments do not resemble those of Francis Lodwick. Lodwick’s writings on creation display an interest in Cartesian vortices, not in Neoplatonist metaphysics. Lodwick was dubious of the trinity, a concept supported by the Preadamist in his section on ecclesiastical government. Again, Lodwick’s views on ecclesiastical government never concerned themselves with Presbyterian-versus-Independent arguments.⁹⁷

Finally, the Preadamist offers a unique ‘proof’ of Preadamism: he quotes Joshua in Hebrew. This is an interesting moment, because here the Preadamist reveals (some) oriental scholarship, and gives us a site that can be compared against other exegetical works. He writes:

[F]urther (not only by reason, but) by scripture to prove that there were men from everlasting and that [they] were w[ic]ked Peruse but Joshua 24.2. you must understand that there was a mixture for the sons of god took to them wives of the sons of men and so at length they became their fathers of old, is **מְעוֹלָם** from everlasting worshipped other Gods[.]⁹⁸

The word that interests the Preadamist, **מְעוֹלָם** *m’olam*, is translated in most early-modern English Bibles as ‘in old time’.⁹⁹ The Vulgate (*ab initio*, but often *a seculo*) and the Septuagint (*ἀπαρχῆς*, i.e. *ἀπο ἀρχῆς*, ‘since the beginning’) are more closely imitative of the Hebrew construction, a compound of the prefixed prepositional *m’*, ‘from’, and the difficult word **עוֹלָם**, *olam*, which Buxtorf in his influential *Lexicon* interestingly glossed as ‘*Seculum tempus homini Absconditum, tam infinitum & aeternum, quam finitum, ut Gen. 17. 8 [etc]*’, without mentioning the site in Joshua.¹⁰⁰ Other influential lexica – those of Kimchi and the handy, London-printed epitome of Valentine Schindler’s larger *Lexicon Pentaglotton* – concur.¹⁰¹ The fullest entry is in the Cambridge orientalist Edmund Castell’s monumental if financially ruinous *Lexicon Heptaglotton* of 1669.¹⁰²

The point remains, however, that although the Preadamist’s derivation – the kind of etymology-within-idiom it usually takes an amateur to spot – is plausible enough, it is not one drawn explicitly for Joshua 24:2 by any of the major lexicographers. The possibility that the bare Hebrew term might hint at the great antiquity of man – rather than act as a typically indeterminate time expression meaning simply ‘a long time ago’ – appears not to have occurred to the commentators either. Calvin himself passed over the Vulgate’s *a seculo*, and the various members of Poole’s *Synopsis Criticorum*

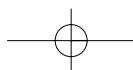


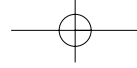
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ignored it too, a habit followed by the popular vernacular commentaries of, for instance, Diodati, Downname, and Jackson.¹⁰³ The *Critici Sacri* take slightly more care, where Vatabulus glosses **מְעוֹדָם** as ‘*A seculo . . . i. olim, vel initio.*’ Masius repeats this: ‘. . . ac si dicas *ab olim, sive à seculo*’, and adds that he suspects that *olim* derives from **עוֹלָם**, *olam*. Drusius, derivative of Masius, repeats the *olim/olam* etymology, and again glosses *a seculo* as *olim*.¹⁰⁴ Uncollected commentators on Joshua likely to be read by a writer educated enough to know Hebrew are likewise unhelpful: Bonfrerius, Brennius, Cajetan, Chytraeus, Ferus, Hugh of St. Victor, à Lapide, Lavaterus, Magalianus, Origen, Rupertus, Serarius, Theodoret and Tostatus, to take some standard examples, all either omit any discussion, pass over the possible implications of *ab initio*, or read *olim*.¹⁰⁵ Tostatus is perhaps the most interested, offering three basic possibilities: *ab initio natiuitatis*, *ab ipso primo huius stirpis*, and *ab initio distinctionis gentis huius*, in other words, from the first birth of that nation, from the first root of it, or from the first time of division, i.e. the Flood. Tostatus opts for the latter, but it is clear from his discussion that he regards in each case the *initium* under discussion as referring to ethnic beginnings, not to the Beginning, as it were.¹⁰⁶ Nor, more relevantly, does La Peyrère himself at any point in the *Prae-Adamitae* take such advantage of this or any other text using *m’olam*, unsurprising given La Peyrère’s apparent lack of Hebrew.

It seems most plausible, then, that the Preadamist was simply one of those who realised that, as one influential Hebraist declared, ‘the translation is as yet very full of non-sense, and almost in every Chapter some falsehood’,¹⁰⁷ and so elected to translate afresh, directly and as closely as possible to Hebrew idiom: hence his ‘from everlasting’, and his unique exegesis of its import.

The conclusion to all this is that this Preadamist represents an independent strain of the thesis. His is a private document, and not in fair copy condition, but revised throughout, demonstrating continued interest. He has several ideas in common with other Preadamist thinkers, but does not seem particularly indebted to the mainstream ideas of La Peyrère. He may have something to do with Cornwall, and his Neoplatonic tone is compatible with the kind of writing practised by Lady Conway of Ragley and Van Helmont, as is his use of ideas such as mystical meanings or processes of refinement. Indeed, the idea that ‘creatures be . . . refind’ recalls the terminology of various interregnum radicals.¹⁰⁸ He is an educated man to the extent that he knows some Hebrew, and the uniqueness of his exegesis of Joshua indicates that he was not merely copying someone else’s scholarship. And by resisting any easy categorisation, the Anonymous Preadamist is an altogether more fascinating, even unique figure.





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V. The Text

Editorial Principles

The Preadamist employs a heavily abbreviated and frequently cancelled hand, with many interlineations. In places the text is almost illegible, and consequently two or three readings below are uncertain. Occasionally text is cancelled that should be left as it stands, and vice versa. As his is a short text, though, both a lightly edited version and a diplomatic transcript, in smaller font, are supplied. The edited text expands all abbreviations, and adds light punctuation where necessary. I have also emended in places where the diplomatic text is uncertain. Such emendations, as well as supplied punctuation or text, are enclosed in [] brackets. Spelling and capitalisation are unaltered in the edited text, but u/v and i/j are normalised. The diplomatic text preserves many abbreviations, most involving a yogh ('y' for 'th') with superscript, e.g. 'y^{os}', 'y^m', 'yⁿ', 'y^s', 'y^t', etc. for 'those', 'them', 'then', 'this', 'that', etc.; but also 'y^o', 'y^r' for 'you' and 'your'. At times the superscript can only be deduced from context. Less obvious contractions include 'ʹ' for 'ye',* 'O' for 'world'/'earth', 'n' with the mark of abbreviation for 'not',* 'r' for 'are', '<' for 'have'/'has'/'had',* 'g' for 'god', 'u' for Lord, 'a' with superior and inferior bars for 'among',* the astrological symbol for 'man',* an almost identical symbol but which from the context must mean 'water' (hence 'deluge'),* and '–', which with a superior dot means '[up]on',* and an inferior dot, 'below' or 'under'.* (Asterisked abbreviations are not represented in either transcript.) Such practice shows the influence of shorthand.

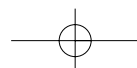
Sloane 1022/1115, fos 15r–16r (‘Whether there were any men before Adam?’)

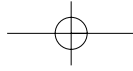
[fol. 15r]

Whether there were any men before Adam?

Answer:

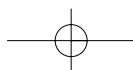
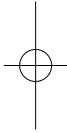
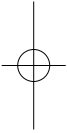
The Great God who communicative is altogether Glorious and transcending in his Goddnes being from eternity ever was of this his goodnes, and that he might communicate what he had to others he created Rational Beings which were vessels capable in some measure to receive it and hence it is that men were from everlasting. God who is a most necessary being and most necessarily existing co[u]ld not be and but partly act. And so being a necessary Agent and a good which is most communicative must most necessarily communicate[.] A necessary good must necessarily communicate, which is Ground enough to raise an argument to prove that this world with those Glorious beings that are in it were from eternity because god was so, for how otherwise co[u]ld it bee that God should be acknowledged ever to be Good,





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can there be a good which is not communicative, can there be any communication which is not to some other, Man thereof of necessity must be acknowledged to be created from everlasting because he being a susceptible creature might partake of that good which the great god most necessarily was to communicate. Certainly God cannot but doe what is best, and seing it is best that the world sho[u]ld be created, and man to partake of his excellent perfections in some measure God could not but doe it, yea he co[u]ld not be and not doe it: Objection: Are Not the scriptures the word of god and are they not true and if so doe they not say that the world was not created around 6000 yeares agoe[?] Answer[:] the scriptures indeed do speake of the creation and that of man, but it being misticall must be understood according to the analogye of the scripture, that is that there was as 'twere a new creation such as shal be at the latter days[:] new heavens and new earth[.] Then God seing how the world was degenerated and become abominably wicked and sinfull, and so not answering the end for which god had made them but were altogether ignorant how to use the meanes god had given them wherby they might in a most illustrious manner be partakers of the glory of their maker and this Ignorance [being] invincible, God, that he might be ever communicating his Goodnes to some one or other bethought himself how to reforme it, wickednes was such that the whole world was but as mere Tohu and Bohu a mere chaos, here was nothing but confusion[,] Darknes and Ignorance overspread the earth, and how should a reformation be? how should creatures be so rekind from all filth and pollution so as in a more full manner to partake of the communicative Goodnes of the unchanging good and gracious God but in such a manner as he did[:] namely God again created a man having first of all prepared a spacious place in the earth for his seat and habitation and new modeld al the Animals which were to be his Attendants withall purging and correcting the rest and furbishing stars and those upper orbs making them most beautifull and splendid and so placed Man in his house viz in the garden of Eden remote from the other Inhabitants which were so sinfull, vile and wicked and gave Man a law and abilityes to keep it and means to continue Man in such a most glorious upright and Holy state, but things were so brought about that (perhaps) the endeavors of those without who envyed the happines of these new Commers tis like they never left soliciting those infernall spirits whom they then adord til they had persuaded them to attempt the rooting Adam out of that excelling place of happines, who went and tempted and overcame [him], who when once being overcome was cast out of this most glorious condition and lived some where without and began to till the ground near unto their former habitation where we find he had children the elder of which slew the younger for which he was driven from his father among those that formerly inhabited the other partes of the earth, he for his wickednes was driven to the wicked, but Caine he was afraid that god would suffer every one that should meet him [to] slay him as he saith in Gen. [4:] 14. but the Lord said whosoever slayeth him vengeance shal be



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taken on him 7 fold see the 15[th chapter] al which clearly imply that there were several beside Adam for he was driven from Adam, and he went among those in the land of Nod where no doubt he found a Noble traitment for he building a citty had the honour of giving it the name, and with those perhaps it was that the sons of God did by mariage joyn themselves, when it is said Gen: 6.2 the sons of God saw the Daughters of men that they were fair and they took them wives of all which they choose: observe the context when was this time when men began to multiply upon the earth and going further out in to the country came among those other Inhabitants, who seeing that the Daughters as it is said, saw that the Daughters of men were fair the sons of God, that is the sons of this new stock which were of late come out of the hand of god and were made after this 1st age and as yet had not over ran themselves in to so much wickednes so that as yet there was a great difference in the conversation of each, they living by themselves and so had the Title of the sons of god, yet when they came out among them they seing the Daughters of those wicked men &c were fair they took to them wives of the sons of men, and this was it that so mightily provoked the Lord to cause water to consume them all saving one of the sons of God – viz Noah who had kept himself from the pollution of the sons of men, but yet further (not only by reason, but) by scripture to prove that there were men from everlasting and that [they] were w[ic]ked Peruse but Joshua 24.2. you must understand that there was a mixture for the sons of god took to them wives of the sons of men and so at length they became their fathers of old, is מעודם from everlasting worshipped other Gods¹⁰⁹ from everlasting this bespeaks the antiquity before Adam, worshipped other Gods that bespeaks their wickednes.
[finis]

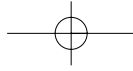
Diplomatic Transcript

[15r]

Wheyr there were any men before Adam?

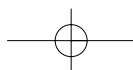
Answ^r

The Great God w^o is altogeyr Glorious & tran=/scending¹¹⁰ in <his> Goddnes being from eternity euer was/ communicatiue of this his goodnes, & in ord^r that he/ might communicate w^t he had to others he cre=/ated Rational ~~creatures~~ <Beings> w^{ch} w^r vessels capable/ in some measure to receiue it & hence it is y^t/ men were from euerlasting. God wo is a most/ necessary being & most necessarily existing cold/ not & be & not <but partly> act. ~~bee: he actes necessarily, & y^t/ he doth bee: he is a necessary Agent~~ & so being/ a necessary Agent & a good w^{ch} ~~was~~ is most com=/municatiue ~~could not be~~ must ~~needs~~ most neces=/sarily communicate A necessary good must neces-/sarily communicate, w^{ch} is Ground enough to raise/ an argument to



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proue y^t y^{is} world wth those/ Glorious beings y^t r in it w^r from eternity bec:/ god was so, for otherwise how cold it bee y^t God/ should be acknowledged euer to be Good, can y^r be/ a good w^{ch} is not communicatiue, can y^r be any/ communication w^{ch} is not to some other, Man y^rof of/ necessity must be acknowledged to be y^s¹¹¹ created/ from euerlasting bec: he being a susceptible creature/ might partake of y^t good¹¹² w^{ch} y^e great god most nec=/essarily gau was to communicate. Certainly God/ cannot but doe w^t is best, & seing it is best yt/ y^e O shold be created, & man to partake of his excel-/lent perfections in some meas: God could not but/ doe it, yea he cold not be & not doe it: Obiect: Are/ Not y^e scriptures y^e wrd of god & r they not true &/ if so doe they n say y^t y^e O ws not created around 6000/ years agoe Answ^r y^e scriptures indeed do speake/ of the creation & y^t of man, but it being mis-/ticall must be *under[s]tood* according to y^e analogye¹¹³ of / y^e scripture, y^t is y^t y^r w^s as tw^r a new creation./[15v] such as shal be at y^e latt: days new heauens & new/ earth yⁿ God seing how y^e O w^s degenrated & become/ abominably wicked & sinfull, & so not answering y^e/ end y^t go for w^{ch} gd had made y^m but w^r altogey^r/ ~~ignorant of ye~~ how to *improue* <use> y^e meanes god had/ giuen y^m wherby they might be in a most illus=/trious manner be partakers of the glory of y^r maker/ & y^{is} Ignorance invincible, God, yt he might be euer/ communicating his Goodnes to some one or oth^r be-/thought hs how to reforme it, wickednes was/ such y^t y^e whole world was but as tn^r¹¹⁴ Tohu &/ Bohu a mere chaos, here w^s nothing but con/fusion & ~~Darke~~ Darknes & Ignorance ouerspread y^e/ earth, & how sh^d a reformation be? ~~brought ad/ to passe about~~, how sh^d y^r be agⁿ creatures be/ so refind from all filth & pollution so as in a more/ full manner to partake of ye communicatiue Goodnes/ of y^e A Chagey¹¹⁵ good and gracious God but in such a/ manner as god <he did> ~~the most wise god brought it about~~ / ['eden' in l.h. margin] namely Go^d agn created a man having first of/ all *purged* <prepared> a spacious place in y^e earth for his seat/ & habitation & new modeld al y^e Animals wch wr to be/ his Attendants wth all <purging &> correcting y^e rest & *mending* <& furbishing /stars & y^{os} upper orbs making y^m most beautifull & splendid>/ y^e & so placed *Man*¹¹⁶ in y^s house viz¹¹⁷ in y^e garden of Eden/ remote from y^e oth^r Inhabitants w^{ch} w^r so sin/full, vile & wicked & gaued *Man* a law & abilityes/ to keep it & meanes to continue *Man* in y^{is} <such a> most glorious/ upright & Holy state, but things w^r so brought/ about y^t ~~---~~ <that (perhaps)> y^e endeauors of y^{os} w^{thout}w^o envy:/ ed y^e hap-pines of these new Commers ~~they wr cast out among y^m~~ tis like they neuer left solliciting y^{os} infernall/ spirits w^m they yⁿ adord til they *had*¹¹⁸ persuaded y^m to attempt/ y^e rooting y^{ose} <Adam> out of y^t <excelling> place of hap-pines, w^o went/ & tempted & ouer came [him],¹¹⁹ & ~~tem~~ w^o wⁿ once being ou/ercome w^s cast out of y^{is} most glorious condition/ & liued some w^r w^{thout} & began to till y^e ground/ near unto y^r former habitation w^r we find he/ *had* children y^e eld: of [16r] w^{ch} *come* slew y^e younger for w^{ch} he ws driven *out*/ from his fay^r among those y^t formerly inhabited the/ ot^r p^{tes} of y^e earth, he



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for his wickednes was dri:uen to y^e wicked, but Caine he was afraid y^t g would/ suffer eury one y^t sh^d meet meet him w^d slay him as he/ saith in 14th. Gen. 14. but y^e u said w^osoeuer slayeth y^{m120}/ vengeance shal be taken on him 7 fold see y^e 15^x al w^{ch}/ clearly imply y^t y^r w^r seueral beside Adam for he w^s/ driuen from Adam, & he went among y^{os} in y^e land of Nod/ where no doubt he found a Noble traitm^t <for he> building a citty/ had y^e honour of giuing it ye name, & wth y^{os} perhaps it/ was y^t ye sons of God did by mariage joyn y^mselues, wⁿ/ it is said Gen: 6. 2 y^e sons of God saw y^e Daught^{ts} of/ men y^t they w^r fair & they took y^m wiues of al w^{ch}/ they choose: obserue y^e context when was y^{is} tn^{s121} wⁿ/ men began to multiply upon y^e earth & going fury^r out in to y^e/ country came among y^{os} oy^t Inhabitants, w^o seeing/ y^t y^e Daught^{ts} ~~was~~ as is said, saw y^t y^e Daughters of men <were fair>/ y^e sons of God, y^t is y^e sons of y^{is} new gene <stock> Tribe w^{ch}/ w^r of late <come out of y^e hand of god & w^r> made af^t this 1st [?] age of g & as yet had not ou^{er} ran y^mselves in to so much wickednes bee <so y^t as y^{et} y^r was> a great/ difference in y^e conuersation of each, <they> liuing by y^mselves & so had y^e Ti/tle of y^e sons of god, yet wⁿ they came out among y^m they/ seing y^e ~~---~~ <Daughters> of yos wicked men &c w^r fair they took/ to y^ms y^m of wives of y^e sons of men, & y^{is} was it y^t so migh/tily prouoked y^e u to cause t¹²² to consume y^m all sauing one/ of y^e sons of God – viz Noah w^o had kept hs from y^e pollution/ of y^e sons of men, but yet fury^r (not only by reason, but) by/ scripture to proue y^t y^r w^r men from euerlasting & y^t w^{te} w[ic]/ked Peruse but Joshua 24.2. u must undrstand y^t y^r was/ a mixture for y^e sons of god took to y^m wives of y^e sons of men &/ & so at length they became y^r fay^{rs} of old, is מַעֲוָדִים from/ euerlasting worshipped oyr Gods from euerlasting y^{is} bespeaks y^e antiquity/ bef. Adam, worshipped oy^t Gods y^t bespeaks y^r wickednes.
[finis]

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Notes

I am grateful for pieces of advice and assistance from Sarah Hutton, Richard Popkin, Richard Serjeantson, and Marcus Tomalin.

- 1 On La Peyrère and his influence, see the *Biographie Universelle Ancienne et Moderne*, ed. J. F. Michaud (Paris, 1843–63), XXXII, 622–3; René Pintard, *Le Libertinage érudit* (Paris, Boivin, 1943), pp. 358–61, 420–4; and the authority, Richard H. Popkin, *Isaac La Peyrère (1596–1676): His Life, Work and Influence* (Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1987). A stimulating recent discussion is to be found in Noel Malcolm, *Aspects of Hobbes* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 2002), pp. 383–431.
- 2 For ownership of (usually the Latin) text, see below on the Hooke circle, but also the catalogues of Arthur Annesley Lord Anglesey, Elias Ashmole, Thomas Britton, Nathaniel Coga, Thomas Creech, Sir Kenelm Digby, and John Locke: Thomas

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- Philipps, *Bibliotheca Angleseiana* (London/Oxford/Cambridge, 1686), English Section, p. 14 (English); Edward Millington, *Bibliotheca Ashmoliana* (London, 1694), p. 18 (English); John Bullord, *Library of Mr. Tho. Britton, Smallcoal-man* (London, 1694), p. 9 (English); [Nathaniel Coga], *Bibliotheca Cogiata* (London, 1694), p. 8 (Latin); [Thomas Creech], *Bibliotheca selectissima* (London, 1700), p. 25 (Latin; it cost 2s 5d); [George Digby], *Bibliotheca Digbeiana* (London, H. Brome and B. Tooke, 1680), p. 5 (Latin); John Harrison and Peter Laslett, *The Library of John Locke* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1971), pp. 147, 208, 214.
- 3 Matthew Poole, *Synopsis Criticorum Aliorumque S. Scripturae Interpretum* (London, Cornelius Bee, 1669), col. 60, citing Oleaster, Piscator and Bonfrerius, offers an orthodox response: 'Quidam de hominibus accipiunt, sive natis, (hinc colligimus multiplicatum jam fuisse humanum genus,) sive nascituris.'
 - 4 See Popkin, *La Peyrère*, pp. 26–41, esp. pp. 35–41; Christopher Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down* (London, Maurice Temple Smith, 1972, repr. Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1975), p. 144.
 - 5 Thomas Nashe, *The Works*, ed. R. B. McKerrow, rev. F. P. Wilson, 5 vols (Oxford, Blackwell, 1958), I, 172; see also II, 116. Nashe linked this impudence to those that used Native American chronology to support this thesis, a clear gesture towards Harriot's otherwise theologically inoffensive writings on the Virginia colony.
 - 6 Thomas Heywood, *The Hierarchie of the Blessed Angels* (London, A. Islip, 1635), p. 19.
 - 7 John Dove, *A Confutation of Atheisme* (London, Henry Rockett, 1605), pp. 4–5.
 - 8 Thomas Herbert, *A Relation of Some Yeares Travaile* (London, Jacob Blome and Richard Bishop, 1638), p. 206.
 - 9 Martino Martini, *Sinicae Historiae Decas Prima* (Munich, 1658, this edn Amsterdam, Blau, 1659), esp. pp. 11–21, quotation from p. 21 ('extremam Asiam ante diluvium habitatam fuisse pro certo habeo'). See further E. J. Van Kley, 'Europe's "Discovery" of China and the Writing of World History', *American Historical Review*, 76 (1971), 358–85, 363; D. E. Mungello, *Curious Land: Jesuit Accommodation and the Origins of Sinology* (Stuttgart, Steiner, 1985), pp. 124–8.
 - 10 John Aubrey, *Aubrey's Brief Lives*, ed. O. L. Dick (Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1972), pp. 281–2.
 - 11 Jean Jacquot, 'Thomas Harriot's Reputation for Impiety', *Notes and Records of the Royal Society of London*, 9 (1952) 164–87.
 - 12 La Peyrère later admitted that he had tried hard to disseminate it; see his *Deprecatio Isaaci Peyrerii* bound as the second and freshly paginated tract of *Epistola ad Philotimum* (Rome, 1657), pp. 4–5.
 - 13 *Correspondance du P. Marin Mersenne Religieux Minime*, gen. ed. C. de Waard, 17 vols (Paris, 1932–88), esp. XI, 3–4; XII, 303–4, 339, 364; XIII, 96, 104, 157; XIV, 549; XV, 9, 305; XVI, 67; Claude Sarrau, *Claudii Sarravii Senatoris Parisiensis Epistolae Opus Posthumum*, ed. Isaac Sarravius (Orange, 1654), pp. 74–5. On the La Peyrère manuscripts, see Elizabeth Quennehen, 'À Propos des Préadamites', *La Lettre Clandestine* 3 (1994) at <http://lancelot.univ-paris12.fr/lc3-5c.htm>; 'Un Nouveau Manuscrit des Préadamites', *La Lettre Clandestine* 4 (1995) at <http://lancelot.univ-paris12.fr/lc4-2i.htm>. Philippe Codurc or Codurcus was later included in John Pearson's *Critici Sacri*. A few years after River's remark, Codurc published his chronological harmony *De Genealogi*,

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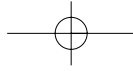
- which conventionally dates creation from Adam's time and was subscribed by the Parisian Faculty. Codurc, an orientalist and theologian, like La Peyrère, apostasised to Catholicism. See *Nouvelle Biographie Générale*, ed. Jean C. E. Hoefler (Paris, Didot, 1852–68), XI, 30–1; Philippus Codurcus, *De Genealogi Domini Nostri Jesu Chrismi a SS. Mathaeo et Lucae Conscripta Philippi Codurci Dissertatio* (Paris, 1646), pp. 6, 29.
- 14 Malcolm, *Aspects of Hobbes*, p. 393.
 - 15 Simon, *Lettres Choisies de M. Simon*, ed. M. Bruzen la Martiniere, 4 vols (Amsterdam, 1730), II, 1–26 (Lettres 1–3 [20, 27, May, 4 June, 1670]); III (Lettres 7–9, all signed 1671).
 - 16 Simon, *Lettres*, II, 30 ('Letter à Monsieur Z. S., Quelques particularitez touchant l'Auteur & l'Ouvrage des Préadamites, Paris 1668').
 - 17 A. C. J. Willems, *Les Elzevier: Histoire et Annales Typographiques* (Brussels, 1880), no. 1188; Pierre Bayle believed that there was a lost 1653 edition, on the basis of a Leiden library auction catalogue of 1696 where a 1653 8vo of the work was described as *Editio optima* (Bayle, *The Dictionary Historical and Critical of Mr Peter Bayle* [London, 1737, repr. London, Routledge/Thoemmes, 1997], IV, 529–30). This seems more likely a misprint.
 - 18 Gui Patin, *Lettres de Gui Patin*, ed. J-H. Reveillé-Parise, 3 vols (Paris, J-B Baillière, 1846), II, 252. See Bayle's list of refutations, and Popkin, *La Peyrère*, pp. 80–1.
 - 19 Henk J. M. Nellen, *Ismaël Boulliau (1605–1694): Astronome, Épistolier, Nouvelliste et Intermédiaire Scientifique* (Amsterdam & Maarssen, Apa-Holland University Press, 1994), pp. 424–9.
 - 20 W. P. C. Knuttel, *Catalogus van de Pamfletten-Verzameling berustende in de Koninklijke Bibliotheek* (Utrecht, Hes Publisher, 1978), Knuttel no. 7681 ('Verbod van te drukken, herdrukken, verkoopen of vertalen van seecker Boeck in verscheyde Formaten, ook in diversche Talen ghetranslateert . . .'). See also 'Den President ende Raden over Hollandt, Zeeland[t] ende Vrieslandt, allen den geenen die desen sullen sien ofte hooren lesen, Saluyt, etc.' (The Hague, 1655).
 - 21 One Bodleian copy, for instance, includes four refutations: those of Hilpertius, Hulsius, le Prieur, and Ursinus (Bod. 8o B 257* Th).
 - 22 Patin, *Lettres*, II, 264, 's'il n'est pas juif, car plusieurs l'en soupçonnet'; Simon, *Lettres*, II, 18. If Simon indeed believed La Peyrère to be a Marrano, his anti-Semitic anecdotes, in another letter to La Peyrère (II, 14–17) must have been offensive. See also La Peyrère's own comments on his project in his *Apologie de La Peyrère* (Paris, T. Joly, 1663), p. 8–25.
 - 23 Isaac Vossius, *Dissertatio de Vera Aetate Mundi* (The Hague, Adriaan Vlacq, 1659), p. 50 ('However unassuming it may look, it is easy to discern that the sole and principal cause of writing was, unless I am mistaken, that fallacious notion of the antiquity of nations. For that place in the Apostle on which he tries to establish his opinion can in no sense furnish an occasion for that way of thinking').
 - 24 Hartlib, *Ephemerides* (1655, Part 3, towards the end of the period 21 Apr to 13 Aug) in *The Hartlib Papers*, ed. Judith Crawford *et al*, 2 CD-ROMs (Ann Arbor, Michigan, UMI Research Publication, 1995), 29/5/42A. See also Scott Mandelbrote in Jim Bennett and Scott Mandelbrote, *The Garden, the Ark, the Tower, the Temple: Biblical Metaphors of Knowledge in Early Modern Europe* (Oxford, Museum of the History of Science in association with the Bodleian Library, 1998), pp. 194–6.

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- 25 *Calendar of State Papers Domestic* (1655), p. 393.
- 26 See Luke Fawn *et al.*, *A Beacon Set On Fire, or the Humble Information of Certain Stationers, Citizens of London to the Parliament and Commonwealth of England* (London, for the subscribers, 1652); the non-popish writers to which Fawn and his Firers objected were Hobbes, Joshua Sprigge, John Biddle, and the Racovian Catechism. The Beacon Firers followed this with *A Second Beacon Fired* (London, for the subscribers, 1654), with a similar appendix.
- 27 Donald Wing *et al.*, *Short-Title Catalogue*, 2nd ed., 4 vols (New York, Modern Language Association, 1994–8), IV, 535–7; R. B. McKerrow, *Printers' and Publishers' Devices in England and Scotland 1485–1640* (London, Chiswick Press for the Bibliographical Society, 1913), Devices 267–71, the first of which dates from c.1693 (Leach uses a worn version of 265 or 267 on his title–page); Edward Hendon, William Noy, Robert Mason and Henry Fleetwood, *The Perfect Conveyancer, or Severall select & choice presidents such as have not formerly been printed* (London, George Thompson, 1655), sig. A2r pattern and capital = Isaac La Peyrère, *Men Before Adam* (London, [printed by Thomas Leach], 1656), pattern of sig. A2r and capital of sig. B1r.
- 28 *Transcript of the Register of the Worshipful Company of Stationers from 1640–1708*, 3 vols (London, privately printed for the Roxburghe Club, 1913–14), II, 11. See also Adrian Johns, *The Nature of the Book: Print and Knowledge in the Making* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1998), pp. 213–30 for a discussion of the nature, use and importance of the Stationers' Register.
- 29 On fighting stationers, see Johns, *Nature of the Book*, pp. 148–50.
- 30 *Dictionary of National Biography*; Musaei, Moschi & Bionis, *Quae Exstant Omnia Quibus Accessere Quaedam Selectiora Theocriti Eidyllia Authore Davide Whitfordo* (London, for the author, 1655; 2nd ed. 1659).
- 31 Laurence Clarkson, *Lost Sheep Found* (London, for the author, 1660), pp. 32–3.
- 32 *Ibid.*, p. 27. Winstanley attacked Clarkson, though not by name, in *Fire in the Bush* (London, 1650), in Gerard Winstanley, *The Works of Gerrard Winstanley*, ed. G. H. Sabine (Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1941), p. 477.
- 33 *A New-Years Gift for the Parliament and Army* (London, 1650), in *Works*, p. 376.
- 34 *The New Law of Righteousness* (London, 1649), in *Works*, p. 210. See also pp. 157–60, 176, 202–3.
- 35 Popkin, *La Peyrère*, p. 45.
- 36 Hugo Grotius, *The Illustrious Hugo Grotius of the Law of Warre and Peace*, 2nd edn (London, William Lee, 1655), 198–201. See also Henry Neville, *Remarks upon the Most Eminent of our Antimonarchical Authors and their Writings* (London, 'the Booksellers of London and Westminster', 1699), pp. 160–1, for Preadamite jibes in this context.
- 37 [Thomas Tany], *Theauraujohn His Theousori Apokolipikal, or Gods Light Declared in Mysteries* (London, Giles Calvert, 1651), p. 7. For an attempt to systematise Thereaujohn's theology, see Ariel Hessayon, "'Gold tried in the fire': the Prophet Theaurau John Tany and the Puritan Revolution' (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Cambridge, 1996), pp. 184–93, 327–41.
- 38 John Holland, *The Smoke of the Bottomlesse Pit* (London, John Wright, 1651), p. 4.
- 39 Ephraim Pagitt, *Heresiography*, 5th ed. (London, William Lee, 1654), p. 85; Ross, *Pansebeia* (London, John Saywell, 1653), p. 404.
- 40 Tany, *Theauraujohn*, p. 12.

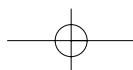
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- 41 Simon, *Lettres*, II, 27.
- 42 *Men Before Adam*, 'A Systeme', sigs F1r–F2r.
- 43 Edward Stillingfleet, *Origines Sacrae* (London, Henry Mortlock, 1662), pp. 80, 533–8. There were five editions to 1680. The blood/matter issue turns on the Hebrew אָדָם, which, voiced one way means 'red', and another, 'man', 'quia fuit creatus . . . Pulvis ex terra. Gen. 2. 7.' אָדָם is also 'the difference of one letter' from אָדָם, 'blood'. See Stillingfleet, *Origines Sacrae*, p. 534; Johannes Buxtorf, *Lexicon Hebraicum et Chaldaicum* (Basel, Ludovicus König, 1621), pp. 7, 141–2.
- 44 Popkin, *La Peyrère*, p. 89; Stillingfleet, *Origines Sacrae*, p. 534.
- 45 Stillingfleet, *Origines Sacrae*, sig. [b3]r, p. 537. Compare Matthew Hale, *The Primitive Origination Considered and Examined According to the Light of Nature* (London, William Shrowsbery, 1677), p. 185.
- 46 Hale, *Primitive Origination*, pp. 91, 184–203.
- 47 [Thomas Duffett], *Amorous Old-Woman* (London, Simon Neale and B. Tooth, 1674), 2.1 (p. 5); R. D., *Canidia, or the Witches* (London, Robert Clavell, 1683), canto II (p. 46, second pagination), in the context of where Cain's wife came from.
- 48 Edward Millington, *Bibliotheca Hookiana* (London, 1703), p. 8 (Latin); Thomas Ballard, *Bibliotheca Rayana* (London, 1708), p. 7 (Latin); Edmond Halley, *A Catalogue of . . . the Libraries of a Late Eminent Serjeant at Law, and of Dr. Edmund Halley* (London, [1742]), p. 51 (Latin); Robert Latham, ed., *Catalogue of the Pepys Library at Magdalene College, Cambridge* (Cambridge, D. S. Brewer, 1998), I, 103; British Library MS. Sloane 859 (Francis Lodwick's second library catalogue), fos 12r, 23r (Latin and English). La Peyrère was also famed, though, for his geographical work on Greenland and Iceland: in 1664 Boyle, for instance, offered to get a copy for Oldenburg of the former work, *Relation du Groenland* (1647, 1663), but Oldenburg found that it was so scarce 'that I should hardly find it to be sold in all London' (*Correspondence of Robert Boyle*, ed. Michael Hunter, Antonio Clericuzio and Lawrence M. Principe, 6 vols (London, Pickering & Chatto, 2001), II, 369, 391. See also Thomas Birch, *The History of the Royal Society of London for the Improving of Natural Knowledge from its First Rise*, 4 vols (London, A. Millar, 1757), I, 452.
- 49 Nottingham University Library, MS Middleton LM15, pp. 557–59. A copy of the *Prae-Adamitae* is listed in the Willughby library catalogue (MS Middleton I 17/1, fol. 24r). I am grateful to Dr David Cram for alerting me to these papers.
- 50 Simon Schaffer, 'Halley's Atheism and the End of the World', *Notes and Records of the Royal Society of London*, 32 (1977), 17–40; Letter to Abraham Hill (22 Jun 1691), in E. F. MacPike, ed., *Correspondence and Papers of Edmond Halley* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1932), p. 88.
- 51 H. W. Robinson and W. Adams, eds, *The Diary of Robert Hooke M.A., M.D., F.R.S. 1672–1680* (London, Taylor and Francis, 1935), cited by date within text.
- 52 Vivian Salmon, *The Works of Francis Lodwick: A Study of his Writings in the Intellectual Context of the Seventeenth Century* (London, Longman, 1972). See Hooke's diary for numerous mentions of his older friend.
- 53 See William Poole, 'A Baboon in the Garden of Eden: The Private Heresies of Francis Lodwick', *Times Literary Supplement*, 27 December 2002, 10–11.
- 54 This should be compared with Gabriel de Foigny's *A New Discovery of Terra Incognita Australis* (London, John Dunton, 1693) and Denis Vairasse d'Allais's *The History of the Sevarites, or Sevarambi* (London, Henry Brome, 1675).



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- Foigny's Australians, for instance, are genetically distinct from Europeans, deriving from three male protoplasts created directly by God (pp. 120–1). This creation happened 5000 years before the European version. The second French edition (1692) omitted this section entirely. See also Bayle, *Dictionary*, s.n. 'Sadeur'.
- 55 British Library, MS. Sloane 913, fos 2r–v. Compare *Men Before Adam*, 'A Systeme', 3.5 (pp. 153–63). See also my forthcoming edition of Lodwick's *A Country Not Named* (Tempe, AZ, MRTS).
- 56 MS. Sloane 913, fos 91v–88v.
- 57 MS. Sloane 2903, fos 156r–162v.
- 58 In this, Lodwick anticipates both 'L. P.', whom we shall discuss, and John Atkins, *The Navy Surgeon* (1734), and refutes in anticipation Lom D'Arce, *Nouveaux Voyages* (1703), writers noted by Popkin, *La Peyrère*, pp. 123–4, 137–8.
- 59 Christ Church MS 162, fol. 117r, edited as 'On Interpretation' in David Cram and Jaap Maat, eds, *George Dalgarno on Universal Language* (Oxford, OUP, 2001), pp. 393–407, 397. Compare Lodwick, MS. Sloane 2903, fol. 157v. In this connection, it may be relevant to note the overblásé turn of phrase of the Scottish language theorist Thomas Urquhart: 'Moses, in a book commonly said to be of his own writing, intituled himself, *the meekest man upon the face of the earth* . . . [Num. 12:3]', Thomas Urquhart, *Logopandecteisio, or an Introduction to Universal Language* (London, Giles Calvert, 1653), p. 37.
- 60 George Dalgarno, *Ars Signorum* (London, for the author, 1661), p. 79; British Library Add. MS. 4377, fol. 148r. For further commentary see William Poole, 'The Divine and the Grammarian in the 17th-Century Universal Language Movement', *Historiographia Linguistica*, 30 (2003), 273–300.
- 61 John Bunyan, *The Miscellaneous Works*, vol. 12, ed. W. R. Owens (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1994), p. 152. *An Exposition* was first published in the posthumous 1692 *Works*, as an unfinished work left in MS. It may date from the later years of his imprisonment, and as it remained unfinished at Bunyan's death he may have worked on it until he died in 1688 (p. xxv); pp. xxxiii–xxxvii of Owens's introduction discuss La Peyrère.
- 62 Charles Blount *et al.*, *The Oracles of Reason* (London, 1693), p. 8
- 63 Blount, *Oracles*, pp. 218–9. This occurs in a letter (pp. 210–26) comprised mainly of extracts from Ocellus Lucanus, the Pythagorean philosopher and (pseudo)author of *De Universi Natura*, republished in Cambridge in 1670, in which Ocellus asserted that all things had neither a beginning nor an end: 'Universum quidem, ut ego arbitror nec interitum umquam est, nec ullum aliquando habuit ortum: cum fuerit semper futurumque fit' (Ocellus Lucanus *De Universi Naturâ* [Cambridge, John Creed, 1670], p. 8).
- 64 L. P., *Two Essays sent from Oxford to a Nobleman in London* (London, R. Baldwin, 1695), p. ii.
- 65 John Wilkins, *Discovery of a World in the Moone* (London, Michael Sparke and Edward Forrest, 1638), p. 40. Accommodation was not a novelty of the scientific revolution, it just became more belligerent. See, e.g., Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* Pt I, Q. 38, Art. 3, quoted in Thomas N. Kuhn, *The Copernican Revolution: Planetary Astronomy in the Development of Western Thought* (Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1958, repr. 1997), p. 110, for a scholastic example.



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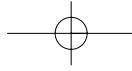
- 66 Scott Mandelbrote, 'Isaac Newton and Thomas Burnet: Biblical Criticism and the Crisis of Late Seventeenth-Century England', in Force and Popkin, eds, *The Books of Nature and Scripture* (Dordrecht, Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1994), pp. 149–78; and Schaffer, 'Halley', 19–21.
- 67 MS. Sloane 2903, fos 156r–162v.
- 68 L. P., *Two Essays*, p. 23.
- 69 *Ibid.*, pp. 26–7, 47. See Robin Waterfield, trans., *The First Philosophers: The Pre-socratics and the Sophists* (Oxford, OUP, 2000), p. 13. The sentiment was preserved in Aristotle's *De Anima*.
- 70 La Peyrère, *Men Before Adam*, 'A Systeme', 3.5 (p. 155).
- 71 Robert E. Sullivan, *John Toland and the Deist Controversy: A Study in Adaptations* (Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1982), pp. 114–15, 174–6, 281 n. 24; Yushi Ito, 'Hooke's Cyclic Theory of the Earth in the Context of Seventeenth Century England', *British Journal for the History of Science*, 21 (1988), 295–314, 307, n.69 and refs there.
- 72 John Harris, *Remarks Upon Some Late Papers Relating to the Universal Deluge, and to the Natural History of the Earth* (London, R. Wilkin, 1697), pp. 53–4; Agostino Scilla, *La Vana Speculazione Disingannata dal Senso* (Naples, Andrea Colichia, 1670).
- 73 Many thanks to the various helpful librarians who checked their copies: unhelpful have been their copies, located in Cambridge University Library (3 copies); the Cambridge University Earth Sciences Library; the Bodleian; the Wellcome library; the John Rylands; the British Library (2 copies); the V&A; the British Geological Survey; the Smithsonian; the University of Arizona; Linda Hall Library; University of Wisconsin; the Osler Library. This is not exhaustive: there are other copies, including many on the continent.
- 74 My thanks to the British Library Manuscripts Room staff for their help, and to the British Library for permission to publish this transcription.
- 75 Frontispiece half-sheet, blank; fol. 1r 'A computation of Forrein Coines here in mentioned'; Latin–Greek–Hebrew wordlist of rhetorical terms; fol. 2r–v Greek–Latin wordlist for Αν–, Απ–, Αμ–; 3r–7r 'Ten Directions set downe by mr Richard Baxter to be faithfully & constantly obserued and practised by all who yt desire to enioye The saints euerlasting rest'; 7v–10r 'Carmina quaedam e libro Oeconomiae selecta'; 10v–11v 'Vires tabaci sunt istae . . .'; 11v–13v Latin notes on orthoepics and orthographics and punctuation; 14r–v 'Significationes verborum Graecorum in pri: cap: Math:.'; 15r–16r Preadamite Thesis; 17r–21r 'Cronologia pars specialis'; reversed, for the final five gatherings: 64v–r Latin maxims, calculations; 63v (non-reversed): 'Peterlob'; lines on Prometheus purging the earthy minds of men; 62v 'Let us Compare Christ with Adam' [compare William Guild's *Moses Unvaild* (1620)]; 62r–52v Numerological and typological remarks and tables on the Bible; 51r–50r (unreversed) ecclesiological material in the Preadamist's hand; 49v–46v notes on Logic; 45r–3r 'Dicta Rabinorum'; 41v–39v 'Antient sayings'; 39r37r remarks on Hebrew; 37v–28r remarks on theological and other terminology; 27v–25r (non-reversed) 'A Chronology of yeares from the Creation to the destruction of Ierusalem by Titus. By mr Iohn Langesford Preacher of the Gospel in Cornwall'; 24v–22r 'De Necessitate & Contingente'. Fos 1v, 21v, 51v and 52r are blank.
- 76 Popkin, *La Peyrère*, p. 40. Popkin thanks Dr David Kubrin for bringing the MS to

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- his attention.
- 77 Richard Baxter, *The Saints Everlasting Rest* (London, Thomas Underhill and Francis Tyton, 1650), sigs. A3v–a3r.
- 78 One Edward Langford, baptised at St Cleer, Cornwall, in 1614, educated at Exeter College from 1631–42, is described as the second son of Emanuel, of Liskeard, Cornwall, and this seems the likely family for our John. In Cambridge a Humphrey Langford matriculated as pensioner from King’s College in 1655, son and heir of William, of Langford Hill, Marhamchurch, Cornwall. He eventually became M.P. for Camelford, all north-east Cornwall locations (J. and J. A. Venn, *Alumni Cantabrigienses* (Cambridge, CUP, 1922–54), III, 43; Joseph Foster, *Alumni Oxonienses* (Oxford, Parker and co., 1888–92), III, 876–7. Another Emanuel [sic] Langford published a sermon he had preached before the Commons in 1698, probably not a relation of the Cornwall Emanuel, as he is described as the son of a London gentleman (*Alumni Oxonienses*, III, 877). Not to be confused with the Denbighshire Langfords, also ecclesiastics and writers.
- 79 A. G. Matthews, *Calamy Revised* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1934, reissued 1988), pp. 313–4; Matthews, *Walker Revised* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1948, reissued 1988), pp. 95, 315.
- 80 *International Genealogical Index*, s.n. Langford (online at <http://www.familysearch.org>).
- 81 In Caradon, St Cleer is the adjacent parish to Liskeard; Marhamchurch and Camelford are in North Cornwall, the district adjacent to Caradon; Lanreath is two parishes away from Liskeard and St Cleer; Gwennap, further afield, is in the district of Carrick, two districts south of Caradon. See Roger Kain and William Ravenhill, *A Historical Atlas of South-West England* (Exeter, University of Exeter Press, 1999).
- 82 Rosalie Colie, ‘Spinoza and the Early English Deists’, *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 20 (1959), 23–46; Colie, ‘Spinoza in England, 1665–1730’, *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, 107 (1963), 183–219.
- 83 In the Civil War, Cornwall twice repelled parliamentary forces and was itself roughly treated in turn, and much iconoclasm was visited upon the ecclesiastical architecture of the county. At St Nighton the parliamentary soldiers baptised a horse, and the number of priests ejected after 1646 was predictably high. But the reactionary character of the Cornish was not at all ‘popish’ by the mid century: the 1672 census of Sparrow recorded barely one per cent of dissenters, and barely a tenth of one per cent papists. On the other hand, Quakerism earned some followers. See H. Miles Brown, *The Church in Cornwall* (Truro, Oscar Blackford Ltd, 1964), pp. 43–61; Mark Stoye, *West Britons: Cornish Identities and the Early Modern British State* (Exeter, Exeter University Press, 2002), esp. pp. 9, 26, 113–33 on the Gear Rout, and pp. 58–60, 66–90 on relations with Parliament.
- 84 A. O. Lovejoy, *The Great Chain of Being: A Study of the History of an Idea* (Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1936).
- 85 Plotinus, *Enneads*, 5. 2. 1 (in the translation of Stephen McKenna (Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1991), p. 361).
- 86 John Ford, *An Essay of Original Righteousness and Conveyed Sin* (London, 1657), p. 2.
- 87 [Anne Conway], *The Principles of the Most Ancient and Modern Philosophy*, trans. J. C. (London, 1692), p. 8.

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- 88 Hale, *Primitive Origination*, p. 92 (pp. 70–127 in general concern themselves with rebutting eternalism, either the world or man).
- 89 F. M. van Helmont, *A Cabbalistical Dialogue* (London, Benjamin Clark, 1682), pp. 4–5. For a contemporary discussion of views on the eternity of the world see La Peyrère, *Men Before Adam*, ‘A Systeme’, 3.5 (pp. 153–63).
- 90 MS. Sloane 859, fol. 77r.
- 91 More’s letters to Conway are in British Library MS. Add. 23212.
- 92 British Library, MS. Add. 23217, autograph letters to Conway and Helmont of Thomas Bromley, Joseph Cooper, William Penn, George Keith, Lillias Skene, Charles Lloyd and F. P. See fol. 21r for Keith’s autograph (1677). None of the other correspondents in this volume convincingly match the Preadamist’s hand either. Here it might also be noted that the hand is not that of Henry Stubbe, another possibility (see the autograph at Bod. MS. Savile 104, fol. 1r).
- 93 See Jan van den Berg, ‘Menasseh ben Israel, Henry More and Johannes Hoornbeck on the Pre-existence of the Soul’ in Yosef Kaplan, Henry Méchoulan and Richard H. Popkin, eds, *Menasseh ben Israel and his World* (Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1989), pp. 98–116, for a discussion of the preanimism of Menasseh, Henry More, George Rust, Joseph Glanvill and Edmund Elys.
- 94 *Men Before Adam*, ‘A Systeme’, 2.6 (pp. 88–94).
- 95 *Ibid.*, 3.2 (p. 140).
- 96 *Ibid.*, 1.7 (p. 32); the Anonymous Preadamist, below.
- 97 MS. Sloane 2903, fos 158r–60v; MS. Sloane 899, fol. 32r.
- 98 Joshua 24:2: ‘And Joshua said unto all the people, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, *even* Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor: and they served other gods.’ (A.V.)
- 99 Geneva, Matthew, Great, Bishops, A.V.; ‘afore time’ (Coverdale); ‘from the beginning’ (Rheims-Douai)).
- 100 Brian Walton, ed., *Biblia Sacra Polyglotta* (London, Thomas Roycroft, 1657), s.l. Josue 24:2 (p. 84); Buxtorf, *Lexicon*, 553–54; the construction occurs elsewhere too, as at Gen. 9:12, Is. 63:9–11, Am. 9:11, Mi. 5:1, Mal. 3:4.
- 101 David Kimchi, *Thesaurus Linguae Sanctae sive Dictionarium Hebreum* (Paris, 1548), cols. 360–2; [William Alabaster], *Lexicon Pentaglotton* (London, Cornelius Bee and Laurence Sadler, 1635), col. 335 (Schindler’s original was published in 1612, Frankfurt-am-Main).
- 102 Edmund Castell, *Lexicon Heptaglotton* (London, Thomas Roycroft, 1669), cols 2774–5.
- 103 John Calvin, *A Commentarie of M. John Calvine, upon the Book of Josue* (London, George Bishop, 1578), fp. 101v (‘he bringeth them to their [sic] first beginning’); John Diodati, *Pious Annotations upon the Whole Bible* (London, Nicholas Fussell, 1643), p. 144; John Downname, *Annotations upon all the Books of the Old and New Testament* (London, printed by Evan Tyler, 1657), no pagination, *ad loc.*; Arthur Jackson, *Annotations upon the Remaining Historical Part of the Old Testament* (Cambridge, Roger Daniel, 1646), p. 87.
- 104 John Pearson, ed., *Critici Sacri, sive Doctissimorum Virorum in SS. Biblia Annotationes et Tractatus* (London, Cornelius Bee *et al.*, 1660), cols 1954, 1958, 1980.
- 105 The standard is the list of John Wilkins, *Ecclesiastes*, 5th impression, corrected and enlarged (London, Samuel Gellibrand, 1669), p. 59: Jacobus Bonfrerius,



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- Josue, Judices, et Ruth Commentarius* (Paris, 1631), pp. 178–80; Johannes Brentius, *Brevis et Pia Explicatio in Librum Josue* (Frankfurt, 1553), pp. 85–7; Thomas de Vio, Cardinal Cajetan, *In Omnes Authenticos Veteris Testamenti Historiales Libros Comentarii* (Paris, 1546), p. 37; David Chytraeus, *Operum Tomus Secundus in Historiam Iosuae* (Leipzig, 1599), pp. 98–100; Johannis Ferus, *Annotationes Piae et Doctae in Exodum . . . Josue* (Cologne, 1571), p. 292; Hugh of St. Victor, *Opera Omnia*, 3 vols (Paris, 1526), I, ffs. clxix–clxx; Cornelius à Lapide, *In Iosue, Iudices, Ruth Commentarius* (Paris, 1642), pp. 91–3; Ludovicus Lavaterus, *In Librum Iosue Invictissimi Imperatoris Israelitarum Homiliae LXXIII* (Zurich, 1565), ffs. 155v–7r; Cosmas Magalianus, *In Sacram Iosue Historiam Commentariorum Tomi Duo* (Turin 1612), pp. 273–5; Origen, *Tropologiae* (Solingen, 1537), no discussion; Rupertus, *Opera Omnia*, 2 vols (Cologne, 1602), I, pp. 447–53, *424–*426 (mispagination); Nicholas Serarius, *Iosue* (Mainz, 1509), pp. 458–83; Theodoret of Cyrus, *Opera*, 2 vols (Cologne, 1573), I, 69–74.
- 106 Tostatus, *Commentaria in Iosue, Iudices, et Ruth*, in *Opera Omnia*, 13 vols (Cologne, 1613), V, 306.
- 107 Christian Raue, *A Discourse of the Oriental Tongues* (London, T. Jackson, 1649), p. 197.
- 108 Radicals who talked about refining include Isaac Penington, *The Great and Sole Troubler* (London, Giles Calvert, 1649), p. 31; Tany, *Theauraujohn*, p. 35; Clarkson, *Lost Sheep Found*, p. 53.
- 109 מְעוֹלָם: *m'olam* ('from the beginning'). See Walton, ed., *Biblia Sacra Polyglotta*, s.l. Josue 24:2 (p. 84).
- 110 transcending] altered from transcends
- 111 Uncertain. 'Yn' with single strike-through; 'Ys' ['thus'] by context.
- 112 good] altered from god
- 113 analogye] altered from analyge
- 114 Uncertain. This is the same graph as the later uncertain 'tns' – see below
- 115 Uncertain. The context seems to require 'unchanging', and so the 'A' graph may be an abbreviation for the negative, and the termination an abbreviation for '-ing'. There may be a mark of abbreviation above the 'a'; otherwise the text may simply need emending.
- 116 Graph = cross with two transverse bars, the bottom one curved down towards the right, perhaps a chemical symbol.
- 117 house viz] written over two now illegible words.
- 118 Abbreviation for 'had' or 'have' = '<', rotated slightly anticlockwise.
- 119 [him]] indeterminate interlinear mark, possibly a barely formed 'ym'
- 120 Or 'yll'
- 121 Conjecture. The graph approximated 'tns'; compare the graph immediately preceding 'Tohu & Bohu' *supra*.
- 122 Graph = cross with squiggle from base to right – close to the symbol for 'man' earlier: here, by context, though puzzling as a graph, standing for 'water'.

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