



Book Section Reprint

THE STRUGGLE FOR TROGLODYTES¹

Boris Porshnev

"I have no doubt that some fact may appear fantastic and incredible to many of my readers. For example, did anyone believe in the existence of Ethiopians before seeing any? Isn't anything seen for the first time astounding? How many things are thought possible only after they have been achieved?"

(Pliny, *Natural History of Animals*, Vol. VII, 1)

INTRODUCTION

BERNARD HEUVELMANS

Doctor in Zoological Sciences

How did I come to study animals, and from the study of animals known to science, how did I go on to that of still undiscovered animals, and finally, more specifically to that of unknown humans?

It's a long story.

For me, everything started a long time ago, so long ago that I couldn't say exactly when. Of course it happened gradually. Actually – I have said this often – one is born a zoologist, one does not become one. However, for the discipline to which I finally ended up fully devoting myself, it's different: one becomes a cryptozoologist. Let's specify right now that while Cryptozoology is, etymologically, "the science of hidden animals", it is in practice the study and research of animal species whose existence, for lack of a specimen or of sufficient anatomical fragments, has not been officially recognized.

I should clarify what I mean when I say "one is born a zoologist. Such a congenital vocation would imply some genetic process, such as that which leads to a lineage of musicians or mathematicians. But there was nothing hereditary in my becoming a zoologist. On my father's

¹ *Editor's Note:* This book section was originally published in *L'Homme de Neanderthals est toujours Vivant [Neanderthal Man Still Lives]*, by Bernard Heuvelmans and Boris Porshnev, 1974, in French. It was translated into English by Paul LeBlond, 2016-2017. Heuvelmans' translated portion was published as *Neanderthal: the Strange Saga of the Minnesota Iceman* (Anamolist Books, 2016). Much of Dr. Porshnev's original publications have remained relatively inaccessible to English-speakers, although portions have been summarized and restated by such authors as Tchernine, Shackley, or Bayanov. Given the progressive attitudes and insights into the study of "relict hominoids" by Dr. Porshnev it is deemed opportune to reprint the translation of this now classical work, with the translator's and copyright-holder's permission.

side, I stem from lawyers and philologists; on my mother's, from a constellation of actors, painters and musicians: a happy marriage of arts and reason, of rigor and sensitivity, and up to a point, of deductive work and scientific detective enquiry required by any judicial issue, with the intuition required for its resolution. That might explain how from being a zoologist I became a cryptozoologist, up to the point of being dubbed, the "Sherlock Holmes of Zoology".

If I think that I was born a zoologist, it is because even when probing deep in my memories, I can't discover a beginning for my passion for animals. It seems to me that it has always been so. That said, my earliest striking recollection – the only one perhaps from the first year of my life – related to a large fish stranded on the pebbles of Trouville: it couldn't have been longer than a meter, but to my childish eyes it seemed enormous. Who is to say that it wasn't the spark of my interest in "sea-monsters" to which I devoted two books? As to my first toy, besides the traditional teddy bear, it was a small untearable canvas book of an animal alphabet. Being English-made, it went from A for aardvark to Z for zebra. Perhaps it was not such a coincidence that my doctoral thesis focused on the dentition of the aardvark and that later some zoologists ended up thinking of me a "drôle de zèbre". "Odd bird" indeed who has never accepted with eyes closed what he was told or ordered to believe.

All told, it would be more appropriate to say that I am a zoologist because I have been subject at an early age to an imprinting. Just like those baby geese of Konrad Lorenz that followed the first living being they saw after hatching, taking it for their mother, I was drawn in by the animals of my first alphabet book, believing them to be close relatives. That would certainly explain the deep love I have for them, and the fact that I feel the most perfect connection with those said to be my remote kin. Undoubtedly, this could also shed some light on the nature of my main concern, which has haunted me from the beginning of my studies: the problem of the origin of Mankind.

How I later became a cryptozoologist is easier to explain, perhaps as I said, because of my heredity.

Let's skip quickly over those rather classic episodes of the career of every budding zoologist. As for me, they went from hunting butterflies to raising ladybugs, spiders and white mice; from the transformation of kitchen sinks into aquaria for tritons, sticklebacks and diving beetles; to welcoming under the family roof all needy animals, be they rats or hedgehogs, garter snakes or swifts or even stray dogs; from excursions through the woods and the dunes of the sea-shore to the daily visits to that marvelous zoo in Antwerp, where I spent my holidays with my maternal grand-parents. That faithful attendance which usually focused on the monkey's cage had long-term repercussions. My first concern after I got married and had a place of my own was to acquire a capuchin monkey, something that I had dreamed of since I was a child, but this was clearly not the playmate that normal parents would choose for their child when they lived in an apartment. That little monkey was the first of a series of simian children and friends which have brightened my life: I see in them a reminder of Paradise Lost, and they have thought me a real wisdom.

Such a passion was fostered early by an enthusiasm for the whole of the zoological literature, available first in the communal library and then in that of the college. At the age of twelve, I had already read Fabre and Buffon, Cuvier and Darwin. As a distraction from the more difficult parts of their works, I read stories about Red Indians, hunting stories (which prematurely made me hate all killers), as well as the charming popular works of naturalist Henri Coupin, particularly that entitled "les Animaux Excentriques." That book clearly was trigger for my later investigations, for having reread it recently, I had the surprise and the pleasure of finding in it all

those extraordinary creatures which appear today in my own books, from the gigantic octopus and the sea-serpents to moas and dodos, pterodactyls and dinosaurs, megatheriums and pithecanthropes.

During my studies at the school run by Jesuits, I often put aside the study of Latin, Greek and apologetics to enjoy the fruits of the Tree of Science, and my tastes in literature made me prefer Extraordinary Studies by Poe to Alphonse Daudet's "Lettres de mon Moulin", Voltaire to Bossuet, Jules Verne to Madame de Sévigny, and Sherlock Holmes to Ruy Blas or d'Artagnan. My real heroes were not called Napoleon or Jeanne d'Arc, but Marco Polo and Humboldt, du Chaillu, the Homer of gorillas, and Robert .F. Scott, the martyr of Antarctica. And to Saint Francis of Assisi, who humbly lowered himself to the level of animals, I greatly preferred Tarzan, who was one with the animals, and sorely grieved at the tragic death of the she-ape who had nursed and raised him.

For amusement, in literature as well as in cinema, I clearly opted for crime stories and exotic adventure stories. Three novels of my youth have played a significant role in the gestation of cryptozoology: Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea by Jules Verne, which opened the doors to the secrets of the sea, Les Dieux Rouges (the Red Gods) by Jean d'Esme, whose work evoked the reality of ape-men in Indochina, and, above all, Conan Doyle's Lost World, which imagines the survival of the varied fauna from past ages on an isolated high plateau in South America.

The background was in place, the climate well established, and the tragi-comedy was about to begin.

My doctoral thesis in science followed in the orthodox tradition of classical zoology. It had to do, as I mentioned, with the dentition of the aardvark. Of course, some whispered that having chosen to study the teeth of an animal which was supposed not to have any, being an Edentate, showed a perverse taste for the paradox, for a sense of humor that has no place in science. Actually, this choice was for me almost natural, perhaps unavoidable. I wanted to specialize in the study of mammals, my kin. Among mammals dentition is the most characteristic feature, the first that should be well understood: the shape of the teeth plays the same role in the identification of mammal genera as fingerprints do in the identification of individuals of our species. And, among the teeth of mammals, the most mysterious, the most incomprehensible, the most difficult to classify, were those of the aardvark, the "Earth-Pig" of the Transvaal Boers, a strange digging, termite-eating ungulate. Formerly, it used to be classified among the Edentates, a group which brought together all terrestrial mammals without anterior teeth or having no teeth at all, or having in any case only atrophied teeth, without enamel. But rest assured: the aardvark does have teeth, although they are most bizarre: they are like stacks of innumerable little tubes, hexagonal ivory prisms resembling the alveolae of a bee hive. They had even been compared to the teeth of some fossil rays! This dentition would clearly be the focus of my research. I am already known for my fascination with enigmas, but not because I enjoy the fog of mystery or the shadows of the unexplained. On the contrary, I consider an enigma as a challenge to be met. Mysteries attract me because they provoke the urge to solve them.

It took me more than two years to solve the problem of the aardvark's dentition. I studied all the skulls available in France and in Belgium and dissected an intact head that my mentor, Dr. Serge Frechkop had the good fortune of finding in the Congo. I conducted a series of longitudinal and transversal sections of teeth and of whole mandibles. What I found – which I had already suspected from the situation of the aardvark in the family tree of Ungulates – was that its dental tubes were simply the sheaths of the extremely subdivided fingers of the pulp. In other words, the aardvark's tooth was one in which the cusps of the crown were highly

multiplied. For example, the hippopotamus' third molar has 4 cusps; the warthog has around 25; some Asian elephants have up to 90 and armadillos have hundreds (up to 1,500 in the second molar). The armadillo's tooth, in spite of its appearance, thus fits within the usual pattern of mammalian teeth, of which it is an extreme case. From a tooth that was regarded as mysterious, thought perhaps to have a non-mammalian origin, I succeeded in understanding as a normal tooth that could have evolved from the simpler teeth of other mammals. The "monster" had been tamed.

If I have written at length about a problem which seems far remote from that of the hairy wild men, it's because it is characteristic of my way of thinking. Using as a pretext that I venture off the beaten path in areas haunted by fantastic creatures and legendary beings, some people label me as "wacky" and pre-occupied with matters of little interest. If they had a sense of humor, they would say that "Heuvelmans is that zoologist who wrote his doctoral thesis about the teeth of an Edentate and has now become a specialist in the study of non-existent animals" (Like Cyrano de Bergerac, I can make my own jokes about my scientific "sense"). I would answer that the unknown, which does not exist at least in textbooks, is always confusing, somewhat disquieting, even terrifying – in a word, fantastical. It is the privilege of innovators to face the Unknown. Should we be surprised that, in his time, was criticized for having tried to explain the world of animals on the basis of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*? Let us never forget that myths are perhaps the reflection of obscure and misunderstood realities, and that in any case, they are patterns pre-existing in our mind (Carl Jung's archetypes of the collective unconscious?) into which we try to fit, willy-nilly, facts that belong to Science. It is indeed correct that Darwin only proposed a rational explanation for the ancient myth of avatars, a phenomenon the poet (Ovid) grasped only vaguely and interpreted through his imagination. Similarly, I am not after sea-serpents to exorcise an antique incarnation of the Demon of External Darkness, but rather matter-of-factly to try to discover if the real animals behind this myth are to be classified as Fish, Reptiles or Mammals, which parts of the ocean they inhabit, what is their mating season, what they eat, whether they are gregarious or solitary, etc.

We are finally approaching, through a wide centripetal spiral, the very topic of this volume.

Throughout my studies, I acquired the habit, shared I believe with many of my colleagues, of storing in a special file, as much by interest as for amusement, newspaper clippings and bibliographic references about strange or unexplained facts about the world of animals that might one day become a subject of research. Within this grab-all, there were sensational articles about the Loch Ness monster, serious psychological studies on wolf-children, stories about mass strandings of giant squids on some remote beach, live toads found within old rocks, showers of fish, the kidnapping of black women by salacious gorillas, mammoths glimpsed in the Siberian taiga, a strange bear terrorizing East Africa, midget Pithecanthropes in Sumatra, and even a dragon hunt in the Swiss Alps. There were also photos of an ape-man supposedly discovered in the Atlas Mountains, a scaly rhinoceros shot down in Sumatra, and a legged fish said to have survived from the Devonian era. There were also articles, especially related to that last one – the famous coelacanth – discussing the scope and wealth of zoological discoveries still to be made. Just to mention really new large animals, since the day of my birth the current existence of the following had been established: the Congolese aquatic civet; the freshwater dolphin of Toung-Ting Lake; the pygmy chimpanzee; the Congolese peacock; the Kouprey or grey Cambodian bull; the golden langur. After seventy years of efforts, the first live specimen of the giant Panda had been captured; many new beaked whales had been discovered, and the coelacanth had been fished out of the relatively shallow waters where it had been hiding since the dawn of time.

Within that motley collection, there was much that could be cast aside. I must admit, since it is not easy to rid oneself of the burden of an education peppered with dogmas and preconceived ideas, that there was not much that I kept. It was with a strange sense of make-believe that I saw early in 1948 an article in the Saturday Evening Post entitled "There Could Be Dinosaurs". At first, I didn't even think of clipping it out to include in my special archives: it looked too much like a science-fiction story cleverly presented as an authentic document. What led me to hesitate was the name of the author: Ivan T. Sanderson. I knew that he was a well-known naturalist who had led the Percy-Sladen expedition in Cameroon and had contributed a plethora of new species to the natural history department of the British Museum. I had also read his fascinating book on rare animals of the African jungle: *Animal Treasure*. Was it possible that he might also be an author of science fiction stories? (Actually, Sanderson wrote a number of novels for young readers.) To find out, I read the article carefully and made marginal notes. Among the experts quoted figured Carl Hagenbeck, the director of the Hamburg zoo, as well as its principal purveyor, Joseph Menges, professionals unlikely to engage in tall tales. I researched the sources of all the information and even added to them along the way in a process that lasted a few years. It was worth the effort: the result was clear: Sanderson had invented nothing. His work was based on information gathered by prominent people, such as Sir Henry Johnston, the governor of Uganda who had contributed to the discovery of the Okapi, the German explorer Hans Schomburgk and the English naturalist John G. Millais. As incredible as it seemed, one could legitimately wonder whether there might exist in the heart of Africa survivors of the great aquatic dinosaurs of the Secondary Era, or at least animals that closely resembled them.

This was such a big deal that I decided to gather in one volume, fully documented and quoting all its sources, the scattered information available on the existence of large animals still unknown to Science. That work took me four years and led to the publication in 1955 of *Sur la Piste des Bêtes Ignorées (On the track of Unknown Animals)*, which was widely translated. The small book that I had planned had grown into a two volume opus. Even then, I had to omit the part, still incomplete, dealing with "unknown animals" of the sea. Exhaustively researched and completed, that part gave birth successively to *Dans le Sillage des Monstres marins: le Kraken et le Poulpe Colossal* in 1958 and then to *Le Grand Serpent de Mer* (published jointly in English as *In the Wake of the Sea-Serpents* (1968)). And when comes the day when I will publish everything I now have in my files on animals unknown to science, I will surely need ten volumes: that's ignorance that takes a lot of room.

Thus, over about twenty years, a new science, which I soon came to name Cryptozoology, was born and matured. A methodology—a system of study and systematic research—emerged from my tentative first steps and opened the door to powerful methods of screening the evidence. It was a desperate effort, because at the rate at which the world fauna shrinks and species disappear one after the other like fruits still unripe blown away by the technocratic hurricane, one had to act quickly. Even if the only fruit of this methodology were to be the upsetting revelation which is the topic of this book, I believe the cryptozoological adventure would have been worthwhile.

Only a detail, but an important one: this Ivan Sanderson, the author of the article in the Saturday Evening Post which had prompted me to write *On the Track of Unknown Animals* was the same Ivan T. Sanderson, who would be at the center of the discovery of the specimen that crowned all my theoretical research. He will have been the alpha and the omega of this saga.

The current episode is, of course, only one among many in cryptozoological research, but it is undoubtedly today the most important, because on the one hand it pertains to the fundamental

problem of our own origins, and on the other because it was settled by the careful and detailed examination of a concrete specimen and thus received a genuine zoological baptism. *Homo pongoides* is, in a way, the proof of the effectiveness of the cryptozoological method.

How did an eminent Soviet historian and philosopher, who was essentially concerned with discovering the anatomical, physiological, ecological and social conditions which led to the emergence of *Homo sapiens* ever get involved in this cryptozoological adventure? How did the in-depth research of professor Boris Porshnev in the USSR, combined with the work of Sanderson in the USA, and mine in France managed to achieve such success? That's what I shall now describe.

The original edition of my book *Sur la Piste des Bêtes Ignorées* (1955) included a number of chapters dealing with man-like unknown creatures. A whole section of the book was indeed entitled "The human-faced beasts of Indo-Malaysia", where I reviewed the problem of the *nittaewo*, the hairy Ceylonese midgets exterminated around 1800 as well as that of the similar *orang pendek* apparently still present in Sumatra. I also mentioned phantasmagoric gnomes from Indochina, with a tail, and forearms as sharp as cleavers; I also wrote of hairy men of normal stature and appearance recently observed on Christmas 1953 in the Malacca Peninsula. Finally, I spoke at length on the mystery of the Himalayan snowman, much in the news in the 1920s and back in the limelight in the 50s: no alpinist could venture to climb Everest without finding its footsteps in the snow. I rebelled against its ridiculous nickname, based on an error in translation: in my mind, there was nothing Abominable in the Snowman, it was not a man and did not live in the snows. Besides all that, I had devoted two complete chapters to similar humanoid and hairy creatures seen in other parts of the world: an anthropoidal great ape found in South America, and furry dwarves from East Africa, variously named *agogwe* or *mau*.

Following the flood of correspondence following the publication of my book, and given the continuing progress of my bibliographic research, I was able to enhance significantly the information contained in these various chapters in the English edition which appeared in 1958 as *On the Track of Unknown Animals*, and even more so for the extended English edition of 1962. In the meantime, it occurred to me that the problem of the Snowman was much more complicated than was imagined, and that it encompassed three kinds of rather creatures; also, that rumors about the existence of wild hairy men throughout South America, from Colombia to the Guyanas, in northern Chile, in Bolivia, in northern Argentina and in various states of Brazil; finally, in Africa, rumors of hairy dwarves were current not only on the southeast side of the continent, but also on the other side, in Côte-d'Ivoire. I was even soon to receive additional information about the presence of tall "hairy men" from the Congo, still Belgian at that time.

In my book I did not think for a moment of identifying all these creatures scattered over most of the planet, which actually had only two traits in common: that of looking more or less like humans, and that of being also very hairy. There were too many differences between them: some were minuscule gnomes, other of the size of an average human, and other still were real giants; some had a receding brow, others a skull like a brick; some were always bipedal on flat ground, others sometimes ran on all four; some left small triangular footprints, others large prints where the big toe was well to the side, and others left huge prints, long and narrow, with very long toes; finally – and this was of little importance – some were reddish, others puce, and some gray or even deep black.

I commented on each of these types in isolation, within their regional context, and merely expressed some speculative hypotheses on the nature of those best described. The famous ameranthropoid of the Columbia and Venezuelan hinterland appeared to me to be a cebid

monkey (a family which includes all American monkeys except marmosets and tamarins) having perhaps reached through convergent evolution a form and a stature comparable to those of the great apes of the Old World. I was wondering whether the small *agogwe* of Tanzania and Mozambique might not be relict australopithecines. I agreed with my eminent colleague (and later friend) Dr. W.C. Osman Hill in his hypothesis (expressed as early as 1945) that the Sri Lankan *nittaewo* and the Sumatran *orang pendek* might be related to the extinct Javanese pithecanthrope. I expressed for the first time the idea that the larger Himalayan Snowman was likely to be related to *Gigantopithecus*, a giant anthropoid ape of the mid-Pleistocene from the Chinese province of Kwangsi, and I supposed that the others were relics of the fossil Siwalik fauna, so rich in monkeys. Not for an instant did the idea that one of these "hairy men" might be a real human cross my mind: from all we knew, they lived like wild animals, had no articulated language, and did not use tools or fire. At best, some had the reputation of throwing stones or hitting with sticks, which even chimpanzees do. I had actually deliberately left out of my files all creatures which clearly seemed human, such as the *maricoxis* encountered by Colonel Fawcett in the southwest of the Matto Grosso: while they were strangely hairy for Indians, they used bows and arrows.

Ivan T. Sanderson, with whom I had begun to correspond regularly since 1957 generally agreed with my views. It was he who, as early as 1950, had first thought of the Himalayan snowman as a survivor of the old simian fauna of the Siwaliks.

However, the whole perspective shifted when Professor Boris F. Porshnev stepped in.

He relates in the first part of the French work *Neanderthal Man is Still Alive* that in January 1958, his interest suddenly focused on the snowman following the sighting of one in the Pamir. So, when the highly condensed Russian translation of my book appeared in Moscow, Porshnev, who was very familiar with French, and a prominent Soviet expert in the history of France, was eager to consult the original version of the book. He quickly got in touch with me. That was the beginning of a close friendship and fruitful collaboration which substantially enriched my knowledge of the subject. In 1961, he came for the first time to visit me in Paris where, as the newspaper say — and it was true — we had a frank and fruitful exchange of views and survey the problem. It was two years later that appeared the admirable monograph *The Present State of the Problem of Relict Humanoids* where the Russian scientist expressed his personal views of the situation.

One must say that Porshnev and I were both quite convinced of the existence of wild hairy men in the broadest and loosest sense. However, there was a point on which we never managed to agree: I saw the Himalayan snowman as an anthropoid ape while Porshnev saw an actual human, more specifically a Neanderthal man survivor from the recent Pleistocene.

There was a good reason for this divergence of opinion. For my part, I had researched the reports of western travelers — British, French, Austrians, Swiss, Italians, Americans, etc. — most of them alpinists approaching the Himalayan peaks from the southwest side of the mountain range, as well as the reports from their informers from Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan and Kashmir. As for Porshnev, he had focused his attention on reports originating from areas on the northeast side of the Himalayan range: both from states of the Soviet Union: Tadjikistan, Kirghizstan, Kazakhstan and the Siberian vastness — and from Tibet, Sinkiang, Outer Mongolia and China and finally the Caucasus, on the doorstep of Europe.

On the south side of the mountain range which divides Asia in two distinct zoogeographic zones (the Palearctic and the Oriental) the focus of my own research gave me the impression of being a strangely bipedal monkey (of course so is the gibbon). Its squarish head suggested the

presence of a sagittal crest, like that of the gorilla or perhaps the existence of a standing tuft of hair as on the coconut-shaped head of young orangutans. The *yeti*, as it was called in Nepal, was also said to run on all four when in a hurry. Finally, a whole series of behaviors – scratching, flashing teeth as a means of intimidation, a perverse taste for destruction, the manifestation of a powerless rage by bouncing up and down on the spot while pulling off tufts of grass – emphatically suggested an ape. I have observed many and even raised some. However, north of the Himalayas, Porshnev observed in his snowman characteristics which suggested a real human: body proportions, a non-opposable big toe, long head-hair, and consistent bipedalism (except of course when climbing steep slopes).

We could not agree because we were obviously not talking about the same thing. That's what I finally understood. In the Himalayan region, I had already tried to show in my book that three distinct types of creatures were confounded, perhaps by legend. The creature studies by Porshnev seemed to be a fourth type, clearly human, which the Soviet scientist had excellent reasons to consider as Neanderthal.

That's not the end of the story! Things got even more complicated in 1958. At that time, Ivan Sanderson had undertaken an extensive journey through North America to document his work *The Continent We Live On*. He was already on his way when many of his correspondents, of which I was one, sent him newspaper clippings mentioning the discovery in the Klamath Mountains of northern California of absolutely enormous human footsteps. This incident was related to an ancient enigma which had long attracted the attention of Canadian researchers like J.W. Burns and René Dahinden. For centuries, the Indians of British Columbia claimed that hairy giants which they called Sasquatch lived in the Rocky Mountains; various sightings by pale-faces had confirmed it. Sanderson left to conduct an enquiry on the newly discovered footprints; journalist John Green, in Agassiz, BC, began to devote much of his time to this problem and was quickly followed by a bevy of enthusiastic amateurs. A new saga was launched: that of Bigfoot.

The oversized tracks made by that giant didn't have any resemblance to those of the *yeti*. However, the press soon dubbed their author as "the American Abominable Snowman"! Thus arose more confusion which, alas! Porshnev soon supported.

Nevertheless, when in 1961 Sanderson finally published his expected vast synthesis of the problem, *Abonimable Snowmen: Legend Comes to Life*, he wisely proposed to classify various types of hairy hominoids seen on five continents (or rather zoogeographic zones) in four categories: 1) Sub-humans (i.e. Neanderthals); 2) Proto-pygmyes; 3) Neo-giants; 4) Sub-hominids (i.e. anthropoid apes).

In the mind of the Scottish-American naturalist, the Sub-humans were the almas and other hairy Asian wild men researched by Porshnev; the Proto-pygmyes included the *orang pendek* from Sumatra, *teh-lma*, the smallest of the Himalayan snowmen, as well as the African *tgogwe* and the *tuendes* of tropical America; the Neo-Giants were represented by the *sasquatch*, aka Bigfoot, and the largest Snowman, *tzu-teh*; and finally the Sub-hominids by the *mi-teh*, the mid-sized snowman. Some of Sanderson's attributions were arguable, but he certainly had the merit of clarifying a business that was wallowing in confusion.

In contrast to the splitting process which Ivan and I adopted, Boris Fedorovitch lumped together the various types of hairy bipeds found here and there on the planet. To him, they were all small relict populations of Neanderthals, diversified by their adaptation to different local conditions.

I often pointed out to him during our conversations and in our correspondence that there were among the various types traits which were difficult to reconcile with the idea of a single

species. Differences in hair color were of no consequence: after all, Senegalese, Swedes, Mongols and Bushmen all belong to the same species. Even differences in stature could be explained: in central Africa, Wambutti pygmies and giant Watutsi are very different neighbors, but are nevertheless just as much *Homo sapiens*. One might even be able to explain by reason of age or sexual dimorphism some differences in color and stature as well as some diversity in structure. For example, it once took a long time to realize that all described species of orangutans boiled down to three types: large adult males, much smaller females and immature juveniles. However there were among the wild hairy men some traits which implied at least some specificity. Individuals with a square head could not belong to the same species as those of the same gender with a sloping forehead and a flat head. Individuals from the same species could not sometimes leave footprints longer and narrower than those of modern man, and other times shorter and wider, and sometimes plainly triangular.

To which my friend Porshnev answered with a variety of arguments. First of all, he said, we are not measuring the magnitude of individual and racial variations of the species and we have no knowledge of the workings of its foot. He added that we already had our work cut out to convince people of the existence of a single species, and that we would never manage to achieve acceptance of a pleiad of hairy savages. He thought that until we had more information, it would be wise to suppose, as a working hypothesis, that there was only one species, a relict Neanderthal.

To which I answered that such wisdom might eventually turn out to be a folly which we would sorely regret. As a matter of fact, hairy wild men had been mentioned since times immemorial. Both the Bible and the Babylonian Epic of Gilgamesh mention them. Classic antiquity had its satyrs and silvans, the Middle Ages their *wudéwasa* and Men-of-the-Woods. From the Renaissance on, in a period of progressive exploration of the world, travelers had seen them in many areas. To the point that Linnaeus himself had included them in his *Systema Naturae*. It was the discovery of the great apes, first the chimpanzee and the orangutan, and much later the gorilla, that was to relegate them to legend. Actually, all the great apes had originally been described as "wild men" or "hairy men" or "men of the woods". Nineteenth century science thought that it had explained once for all by these discoveries a thousand-year old enigma. Henceforth, all new stories of wild hairy men were thought to be the result of errors or hoaxes.

One had to avoid a repeat of such a mistake. If the first specimen to be discovered were to be identified as a Neanderthal the problem would be considered solved and any subsequent attempt to search for a living *Gigantopithecus*, Pithecanthrope, *Australopithecus* or any unknown anthropoid ape would be considered a folly. And if, on the other hand, the first specimen captured and identified turned out to be an unknown species of ape, the hypothesis of the survival of Neanderthals would be subject to ever-lasting ridicule.

Furthermore, I thought that we should from the very beginning adopt the attitude of scientific researchers, not of diplomats. Diplomacy, often based on white lies, cannot co-exist with Science, which is entirely devoted to the search for Truth.

Anyway, Porshnev was not absolutely opposed to the idea of there being many species of wild men. But he was actually interested in only one of them. There was somewhat of a preconceived idea in his approach, which he readily admitted and which will be clear in his part of this book: his interest was uniquely the problem of the origin of man, and if the object of our research had not been a Neanderthal, he would have had no interest at all in the question. Although the problem of anthropogenesis was also important to me, I could not as a

cryptozoologist adopt such an attitude.

If, from my point of view, Porshnev's approach to the problem was somewhat misguided, one must recognize that in identifying one type of hairy biped with Neanderthal man, he had taken the first step ahead of the rest of us: he showed remarkable flair, one of those flashes of genius at the base of scientific revolutions.

Because, finally, his hypothesis had everything going against it. Wherever they were seen, hairy wild men were always described as real animals, living like animals, without any of the features that distinguish man: articulated language, tool-making, the use of fire, and organized social life.

Did Neanderthals have language? On this matter, anthropologists differ. We have good reasons to believe that these prehistoric men had a rather rough stone-tool making industry, showing a high degree of manual dexterity, that they used torches, that they sometimes lived in bands of many families, that they used cosmetics and wore jewels, that they buried their dead with grave offerings and even had a cult of the Bear.

That doesn't really jive with the image of a man-beast. That is why I long had a strong aversion towards my Soviet friend's hypothesis. It took the full deployment of a brilliant demonstration of his theory to shake my aversion. And I finally bowed to the evidence when I had under my very own eyes the irrefutable proof of the current existence of creatures anatomically similar, in the smallest details, to the Neanderthal of long ago: a skin and bone specimen.

In *Neanderthal Man is Still Alive*, we first hear professor Boris F. Porshnev's broad autobiographical account of the question on which he spent most of his efforts over fourteen years of his life. In the second part of the book I relate how Ivan Sanderson and I came to examine the perfectly preserved corpse of one of these creatures, which I then spent years studying.

The reader will first benefit from a panoramic view of the question before being invited to a closer examination. He should not succumb to the temptation of leaping over the first part to immediately attack the second under the pretext that it is concerned with a tangible and measurable anatomical specimen rather than with legends, hazy testimonies and equivocal footprints. To insist on a specimen would be a grievous mistake that many people make when dealing with this kind of investigation. A specimen, as we shall see, has only subsidiary value, as an a posteriori verification. It is actually impossible to understand and appreciate the identification and study of an individual without having first assimilated the complex background of the problem.

Before passing the microphone to my friend Boris, I would like to emphasize another point, practical rather than theoretical and with strong moral implications where I cannot agree with him, nor with Sanderson. They both advocate as the next step in our study to seek a new specimen, shooting one down. I strongly object to such an attitude. Porshnev justifies it by claiming that the creatures that we are looking for are not really human, at least in the philosophical sense of the term. Whether that be so or not is quite irrelevant in my view.

We have no moral right to dispose of the life of other creatures beyond the necessity to feed ourselves: that is a stark law of nature and we are certainly not, alas, herbivores. We have even less the right to kill when dealing with intelligent and feeling beings, capable of emotions and suffering. We even have a duty to protect them, as they are rare and menaced with extinction. The loftiest demands of Science can never justify murder or torture. One may also doubt whether killing one of these creatures would be of appreciable benefit to our knowledge. George Schaller

has taught us much more about gorillas by observing them for a year in their natural habitat than a century of massacres and captures often taking place in atrocious conditions.

To believe that possession of a specimen, an "irrefutable proof" of existence, could convince the scientific world of the existence of such creatures is a mark of great naivety and ignorance of the history of zoology and particularly of anthropology. The second part of this volume will show once again that when a sample embarrasses Science, and does not fit within the scope of traditionally accepted facts, the representatives of Science do not even bother to examine it. Even if they had to, they would immediately claim that it must be a clever hoax or an abnormal individual. Public and scientific opinion does not seem ready to receive such an upsetting revelation as the existence on our planet of another form of humans.

Thus, the best we can do at this stage is to inform the broad public as well as scientists to make them aware and to prepare them for accepting the situation. That is even, for Porshnev and myself an imperative duty. Brecht essentially said it in one of his plays:

"He who knows nothing and says nothing is only ignorant, but he who knows and says nothing is a criminal."

BERNARD HEUVELMANS

PART ONE

THE STRUGGLE FOR TROGLODYTES²

BORIS PORSHNEV

Doctor of Historical Sciences
 Doctor of Philosophy

² NOTE to the 1974 French edition. The first part of this book is the translation, by Cyrille de Neubourg, of the Russian text of Professor Boris Porshnev's published in 1968 in the magazine *Prostor* (*Space*). This work was supervised in its entirety by the author's main collaborator, Doctor Marie-Jeanne Koffmann. The few corrections that were made were approved by the Soviet scientist. Sub-titles have been added to help make the contents clearer to the reader. Original footnotes are all due to Bernard Heuvelmans, who assumes full responsibility for their content. To make sure that this text is clearly understood, note that Professor Porshnev always uses the term hominoid in its etymological sense of "a creature in the form of a human, looking like a human" and not in the more specific meaning which it has formally acquired in systematic zoology, that is a representative of the superfamily Hominoids, which includes both the family of pongids, or anthropoidal apes, and the family Hominids. Professor Porshnev frequently uses the term paleanthrope to denote a neanderthalian: the words are synonyms. Other synonyms to be remembered are:

- archanthropian, or archanthrope = pithecanthropian or pithecanthrope in the broadest sense.
- paleanthropian or paleanthrope = neanderthalian or Neanderthal in the broadest sense.
- neanthropian or neanthrope = modern man or *Homo sapiens*, in the most restricted sense.

One last detail. Arguing that the modern name of the valley of the Neander is spelled Neanderthal and not Neanderthal, some purists would write "neanderthalian." That is a mistake. "Neanderthal man" is the French transcription of the scientific name *Homo neanderthalensis* and it is normal that such a transcription from Latin to another language should respect the original spelling. There is no need to take into account the philological or geographical changes which have taken place since their creation. It is just as inappropriate to speak of "Neanderthal man" as to rename Rhodesian man (*Homo rhodesiensis*) Zambian man. So, in French, one should write: "The man of the Neanderthal was one of the first known Neanderthals." The spelling Neanderthal is used everywhere in this English language version.

"They were laughing at me; they did not even want to take the matter into consideration: they were afraid of passing for scientific heretics. But when the facts became so obvious that it was no longer possible to doubt them, I had to put up with something worse than objections, criticisms, sarcasms and persecutions: I was faced with silence.

"They did not deny the facts: they wouldn't even debate them, they were simply forgotten. Or then they looked for explanations more outlandish than the facts themselves.

"I wasn't too concerned about the objections, but the obstinate refusal to examine the evidence and the verdicts of impossibility pronounced without the least understanding were most painful."

JACQUES BOUCHER DE PERTHES,
Pioneer of the study of the upper Paleolithic

CHAPTER ONE

REPUGNANT AND RIDICULOUS

The Snowman in Public Opinion

The "Abominable Snowman". the name brings forth a smirk.

In an article where he was summing up the subject, a clever journalist had found this subtle title: *"Branded with the hot iron of ridicule."* This formula justly describes the shunning which strikes those who believe that, on the contrary, a smile is out of place on this matter. The article appeared under a different, rather Wildian title: *On the importance of being serious.* (*Literaturskaia Gazeta*, 25 Jun 1966).

The Snowman? Everyone without exception has heard of it. Sometimes someone will tell you pretentiously: "I have read *everything* on the subject." If there is one scientific problem that everyone can discuss and on which everyone can offer his opinion, it is indeed that of the Snowman. People do not hesitate to ask each other: "How about you, do you believe in it?"

That is alas the deplorable consequence of a long story. Millions of people have been informed by newspapers and magazines, not by reading the conclusions of scientific symposia or serious monographies, as would normally be the case for any other scientific problem, but by more or less fantastic stories of encounters in nature with "something" bizarre and unexpected. The readers of such nonsense have even been invited to speak instead of scientists, who remained strangely silent on the matter. Of course, they accepted with enthusiasm. The problem of the Snowman soon became a subject of universal expertise.

If that is the case, it is obviously the fault of scientists who have deliberately ignored the issue. The ostrich with its head in the sand comes to mind as a potential expert! Of course, it's difficult to be an expert when one has refused to look at the evidence and is not up to date on the subject. It's much easier to dictate to everyone to behave like an ostrich, as a sort of monopoly.

Let the public, who thinks they are well informed, have as much fun as they wish.

However, should one care to reflect honestly, it is quite possible, without too much of an effort of imagination, to grasp the scope of the scientific revolution which could be triggered by this "amusement for frivolous adults" as the search for the snowman is seen by public opinion.

The Darwinist revolution took place at a time when the fossil ancestors of man were almost unknown. It is only later that it became possible to prove that humans had, over a long period of time, descended from a whole series of links from some kind of ape, looking somewhat like modern anthropoids. Nearly all the ancestral intermediary or even collateral forms have disappeared. Within our common family tree, as bushy as it is, few branches have reached to this day: on the one hand, four kinds of anthropoidal apes which have diverged widely from the ancestral form, and on the other the one and only living human species on Earth: *Homo sapiens*. Not surprising that such a gap should be imagined to lie between them.

As to those intermediate forms that have disappeared, a veritable mountain of fossil bones and relics of their life have accumulated since the days of Darwin. As to their psyche however, what confidence can we have that the indirect interpretations made by anthropologists and prehistorians are correct and unshakable?

Suddenly, in a flash, there arises the probability that for a hundred years we have been sorely mistaken: that one of the species thought to be fossil is not quite extinct; that it has survived to this day and moreover seems to be as far from *Homo sapiens* as it is from the anthropoid apes. How many apparently correct hypotheses will crumble in the light of this discovery, and how many unsuspected truths will come to light?

Should the species in question be anatomically similar to neanderthals, but without the specific character which distinguishes human language from all animal communication systems, we will be closer to understanding the mystery of speech. In the realm of human sciences, speech remains the fundamental unknown, as was formerly in physics the nature of the atomic nucleus. The nature of human language is, by analogy, the nucleus which is to be probed. Thanks to a living fossil, we will be in a highly favorable position to tackle the final mystery of biological evolution.

Should that species truly lack speech, its muteness will support certain hypotheses relative to human articulated language. We will have the opportunity to study its physiological bases, lacking in apes. Such a verification of general theory is as essential in anthropology as experimental research has been in physics. If it turns out that neanderthals could not have had articulated speech, it will no longer be possible to classify them as human. At this point, the history of man will be significantly abbreviated. "History" will become restricted to the brief period of existence of *Homo sapiens*: no longer two million years or more as is currently believed, but a mere 35,000 years. And of all these millennia, most will be swallowed by the dark beginning of what was only a "preface". History will only encompass the last few millennia. But at the same time, it will reveal itself as an impetuous process. Actually, as an impetuously accelerating process!

Such is the brutal avalanche that research on the Snowman could trigger. Even the word research is tainted here with a nuance of misplaced frivolity. This is not a matter of winning a bet. There is much work to be done, but no upsetting discovery or spectacular bombshell to be expected. The sensational discovery is already a matter of the *past*!

The tragedy is that no one actually tries to deny it and to refute all that. It suffices to brand the whole topic with the infamous stigma of ridicule.

It might actually be that the hottest point of this strange issue is its moral aspect. Science has

its problems; the relationship between scientists and their moral obligations is also a problem.

From the very first months of my interest in the enigma of the Snowman, I followed a strict rule: to gather and exhibit, openly, *all* data related to the issue. Never have I tried to sort out what I thought might be more or less reliable. I systematically gathered *everything*, realizing that if there was a kernel of truth, it would reveal itself through the mass of information. However credible, or unreliable might witnesses be, it is inappropriate to adopt a degree of credibility which is usually subjective. One has to accept as a basis the entirety of what is available, helter-skelter: reports of encounters, vague rumors, fantastic legends, pieces of bones, tufts of hair, footprints, antique imagery, and so on. One will then see what gradually emerges from this mish-mash.

This is the way the foundations of our research have been set and continue to grow. To this day, they comprise seven books (with an eighth in preparation³). Call them what you like: dossiers, corpus, indices, and references. We call it our "informational materials". What labor these documents have cost us! A mountain of correspondence, the constant concern of not suggesting to informers what is expected of them, as well as ensuring that they do not influence each other. That last problem is practically impossible: information arrived by hundreds, thousands, from regions and countries far remote from each other, and at different times.

Carefully transcribed and numbered, information arriving from all kinds of people follow each other in our documents. They are classified only by geographical areas: Nepal, Sikkim, Indochina, China, Mongolia, Northeast Asia, Northwest America and, finally, various regions of the USSR: around Lake Baikal, the Sayan Mountains, Kazakhstan, central Asian republics, Yakoutia and the Caucasus. In general, the information is transcribed as it was received, neither reworked nor commented upon: therein lies the fundamental honesty of our study.

Right from the start, then our work is marked by a concern for scientific truth. If you take the trouble to read through everything we have gathered in what has become a travelogue through space and time, you will find out that the same leitmotiv occurs from one end to the other: there existed in the past, and there exists still today certain creatures with perfectly defined physical characteristics and behavioral traits. The thousands of testimonies we have gathered all fit in the same mold of a biological entity.

The opposite side has however not followed the rules of the game. None of the leaders of anthropological science has bothered to read through our seven volumes of information, or the voluminous monography about the problem written – horror! – by a "non-anthropologist". By the same token, all those zoologists and anatomists who have dared to join us and screen every grain of information through the filter of biological thought, have been ridiculed. Such an attitude is justified by pretending that all that is not worth reading, that it is merely a collection of lies, fantasies: a gigantic mystification.

The American writer and zoologist Ivan T. Sanderson, has applied his commercial savvy to calculate how much it would have cost some gigantic occult consortium through the centuries to buy the testimonies of innumerable witnesses over the whole planet. And to what aim? Only to confuse some scientists today?

So, all these stories are pure folklore! The circle is closed shut: those who would bother to browse through our documents would soon find that they contain little in the nature of myths and legends, but it's easier not to be informed. It is so much less trouble to conclude that some "non-anthropologists" have gathered an anthology of old-wives' tales, which they naively accepted as truth.

³ At the time, only four had been printed and published.

Actually, our informational material contains a stack of proofs satisfying the rules of strict logic. Our study has come a long way since we simply asked our original question: "Does this 'something' exist or not?" Today we know what it is without having had to capture one, just as in physics, the Swiss theoretician Pauli discovered and defined the neutrino thirty years before it could be observed.⁴ We now understand why the solution of the problem was beyond the means of the 19th-century and the early 20th. What was needed to solve it was access to the latest zoological and anthropological ideas, modern technology, and the level of coordinated organization that only a modern state can provide.

At this point, a struggle of a different kind has to be faced. At any cost, public opinion must be sensitized and its support demanded. This is why I am now ready to lift the curtain.

This text is a plea. It is an effort to describe the slow evolution of our investigations: the doubts, the enigmas and their solutions, the actors and their thoughts.

What I have to do here is to present the problem as clearly as possible, and as appealingly as possible so that the reader will read to the end. I will of course have to limit myself to a bare minimum of facts. Everyone will then be able to draw their own conclusions on the basis of first-hand information. I appeal to everyone's common sense. From the very dawn, Galileo and Descartes have invited people to reason.

⁴ An even more classical example, in astronomy, is the discovery of the planet Neptune, by Jean-Joseph Le Verrier. In July 1846, the French astronomer had calculated that certain irregularities in the trajectory of Uranus were due to the presence of a further planet, the position of which he could calculate with precision for a specific date. On the following 23 September, at the Berlin observatory, Galle pointed his telescope towards the calculated position: there it was! Le Verrier had calculated with precision its mass, as well as the shape and dimensions of its orbit.

CHAPTER TWO

UNEXPECTED ENCOUNTERS

The joining of data from the Himalaya and Mongolia, of the Present and the Past

It sometimes happens that a new scientific idea is born from the encounter of independent data, as a spark arises when two electric wires accidentally touch. Sometimes the truth is found at the junction of two distinct paths.

At the beginning, I didn't pay much attention to all I read about the Snowman of the Himalayas. I couldn't imagine how in such an inhospitable milieu a wild creature could find food, be it vegetarian or carnivore. In fact, I began to take an interest in the question only at the memorable instant when a spark arose from the confrontation – not so fundamental, as it turned out – of a detail about the Snowman and of an aspect of my former studies on the interaction between prehistoric men and their environment. *kyik*, the ibex, the mountain goat was the spark.

Late in 1957, A.G. Pronin, a hydrologist, revealed to the press that he had seen the Snowman from afar in the Pamir region, in the Balaind-Kyik valley. This name means the valley of the thousand ibexes. Two years earlier, I had concluded a study about the alimentary resources of fossil neanderthals who had lived in a cave found by Soviet prehistorians at Techik-Tach, in central Asia. There were there an enormous number of ibex bones. Having carefully studied the biology of these ungulates and their role in the local ecology, I had reached the conclusion that, to the bewilderment of prehistorians, neanderthals were absolutely unable to kill those acrobats of mountain crags, even by pushing them into the void. What! To scare them enough on their familiar home territory that they would stumble? Might as well try to make an eagle fall off the sky by shouting "boo!" Everything in the inherited physiology of the ibex protected them from a fatal fall.

Something else had also become clear. The panther, the main expert killer of ibexes, kills many more than it can eat. Within its hunting area, many species of predatory birds and carnivores share the spoils. The only problem for the neanderthals was to get there first and to fend off their competitors, which was not difficult. Each carcass, or what was left of it, was transported to the cavern as soon as possible. At the excavation site, neither nails nor teeth such as ours could have transformed the corpse of an ibex into edible food. Only stones, properly split into shards could cut and scrape the skin, the bones and the sinews. When meat was not available, they rummaged through nearby bushes for berries and dug up roots from the hill sides. This reconstitution of the alimentary regime of the men of Techik-Tach was only an episode, a link in the cycle of my studies.

It also turned out that neanderthals did not kill cave bears, although they knew them well for having lived near them, and that they readily appropriated the mass of food that these animals provided when they died.

I also could show that in earlier periods the mighty mountain streams of the glacial age carried downstream, to sand banks and estuaries, an enormous biomass of ungulates which were harvested by pithecanthropes specializing in this kind of occupation.

This corpus of research fitted harmoniously within a broad synthesis wherein the fossil

predecessors of *Homo sapiens* were in no way human beings, but animals, disgusting scavengers, repulsive to the point of horror, but brilliantly adapted to the difficult crisis faced by the ecosystem during the ice ages.

From all that, there appeared a tiny spark on the screen of my consciousness when I saw the scanty information about the Snowman of the Pamir. In the old days, the Techik-Tach people had lived in a valley where ibex were abundant. No matter that today there remain very few of these goats in "the valley of a thousand ibex", the name speaks of a great abundance in the past. Might not the hairy biped seen by Pronin have ventured there, moved by some ancestral instinct, or perhaps following its own hazy memories of some decades back? My association of ecologically inspired ideas was stimulated by a description of the valley of Baliand-Kuik, as presented in the press: lots of berry-bearing bushes, an abundance of marmot burrows.

Of course such a spark arising from an association of ideas has in itself no compelling strength of scientific persuasion. However, in my inner mind, it ignited a long smoldering doubt: had the neanderthals rapidly disappeared since the arrival of *Homo sapiens*, or had they slowly degenerated? And what if, by any chance, they had not *completely* disappeared?

It is from that moment that I took a serious interest in the Snowman!

Everything I could learn in the press about the *yeti* in the Himalayas – reports by sherpas or lamas of the Buddhist monasteries, descriptions of footprints, presumed "scalps", food leftovers, excrements, and information as to its distribution in the many mountain ranges reaching the Himalayas – begged for a supporting counterpart within a new realm of observations. Even when taking into account Panin's report from the Pamir, the matter, in spite of the vast areas involved, was nevertheless localized, and focused on the same mountainous area. It's only later that I realized with what impatience I was waiting for something new: a junction with a completely independent path, an absolutely unhoped-for meeting.

And then, one day, a young boy asked me: "How about those *almas* of Rosenfeld's book *The Parade of the Almas*, do they have anything to do with the Snowman?" All the credit for a great discovery belongs to this little boy. In due diligence, I browsed through that science-fiction novel, a rather rambling story published in 1936.⁵ One of the protagonists is a Mongol scientist, Jamtsarano who tries to understand the mystery of these *almas*. Was he a fictional or a real person? I discovered that some time earlier, in 1930, the same author, M.K. Rosenfeld, had published a factual account entitled *By Car Through Mongolia*. That same professor Jamstarano appeared there. There were even extracts from his reports on these extraordinary creatures, wild men who actually lived in Mongolia. That scientist had gathered abundant information about these beings from the local population, and their description agreed with that of the Buryat professor Baradyine about his own encounter with one of these *almas*.

Mongol lore was far from my ken and I still had some doubts as to the real existence of Jamtsarano and Baradyine, but some specialists reassured me and informed me. Yes, Professor Tsyben J. Jamstarano was actually an eminent Mongol scientist, with a world-wide reputation. It was him who had created the Academy of Sciences of Exterior Mongolia.

Fine. But where was I to find information about these *almas* in a more exhaustive and detailed format than in M.K. Rosenfeld's travelogue? His widow's attempts to find his travel notes, in the hope of discovering further information, were in vain. As to Jamstarano himself, I was informed that he had also died and that his archives had disappeared. However, he had disciples. One of his closest collaborators was professor Rintchen, of the Mongol Academy of Science, to whom I immediately wrote. His answer finally reached me from Ulan-Bator: "Yes,

⁵ And put in film by V.A. Schneiderov in 1937.

said doctor in philological sciences Rintchen, you are correct. I am the only man still alive who is fully acquainted with the abruptly interrupted research of the most respected professor Jamtsarano on the *almas* of Mongolia. I am also aware of all the details of the sighting by professor Baradyine that were never published. My last meeting with him on this subject was in Leningrad in 1936.

Everything that I could gather on the sighting by explorer Badzar B. Baradyine, a distinguished Soviet orientalist, was subsequently published in these terms: "It happened in April 1906 in the desert of Alachan, in the camp of Badyn-Djaran. One night, a little before sunset, the guide of the caravan uttered a shout of distress. The caravan halted immediately and everyone could see on a sand dune the silhouette of a hairy man that looked like an ape. Bent forward, with its long arms swinging, he was standing on the crest of the sandy hill, lit by the setting sun. For about a minute he looked at the human beings and then turned around and disappeared among the dunes. "Baradyine asked the guides to go after him, but none would decide to do so. It was a lama from Urga, Chirab Siplyi, a genuine athlete, member of the caravan, who went in pursuit of the *almas*, as the Mongols called it: he thought that he could wrestle with it and overcome it. But, wearing his heavy Mongol boots, Chirab did not manage to catch up with the *almas*, who soon disappeared beyond a dune.

"This priceless observation by B.B. Baradyine provoked a great interest among the Russian educated classes, but it was only spoken of, never published. Actually, within the account of his voyage, which was to be published in 1908, Baradyine was obliged, "to avoid a scandal " to omit mention of this incident, on the insistence of the president of the Imperial Society of Geography, S.F. Oldenburg, permanent secretary of the Academy of Sciences.⁶ So, official science quickly buried a most remarkable discovery."

In passing, it's precisely in that same year, 1906, that coincidentally the English naturalist Henry Elwes made a similar discovery in Tibet. He also observed a living individual. His report was to suffer a similar fate. The manuscript where Elwes described his encounter and which contained detailed information on the appearance of the anthropoid, its footprints and the places where it was seen, went through the hands of some English scientists and of Elwes' relatives shortly before the First World War and then disappeared.

So, whereas at the beginning of the 20th century humanity was ready for a revolution in physics, it was not ready for a revelation in anthropology. Here and there, signals flashed in vain. It is however of great importance that they should have appeared at that time and that leaders such as Baradyine and Elwes had already seen with the eyes of naturalists what was still unacceptable. We shall see later that in the 1880s the famous Nicholas M. Prjevalsky had also been blind to the idea.

That kernel of truth was however not completely lost. Badzar Baradyine had told the incident to his friend Jamtsarano, emphasizing that his Mongol co-travelers had told him that to meet an *almas* was as rare as seeing a wild horse⁷ or a wild yak. For years, Jamtsarano prepared an expedition. But where, and for what purpose? Each report of an encounter *mass*, from the

⁶ Sergei Fedorovitch Oldenburg (1863-1934) was a famous Russian orientalist whose works on Buddhism, ancient Indian literature and people of the far-east are still authoritative. Continuing in his post after the revolution, he remained the permanent secretary of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR until 1929.

⁷ This is the mongols' *takhi*, the only real wild horse, whose discovery in 1881 was to immortalize the hard-to-pronounce name of explorer Prjevalsky. It is fortunate that the good colonel Prjevalsky had not been more forthcoming, for our textbooks would now speak not only of a horse by his name but also of a Man of Prjevalsky.



Starting at the end of the 1800s, a handful of Mongol scientists led field studies on the wild men. Academician Doctor Rintchen (seen here with his wife in Ulan Bator) is the last survivor of this group pioneers and is still actively studying the *almas*, today on the verge of extinction.

end of the 19th century to 1928, had been situated on a special map.

"On should note, added Rintchen, that the name of the observer was already written in the margin. Most of them were caravan leaders or itinerant monks who had, while crossing these regions, heard of these strange creatures or had seen them or had noticed their footsteps."

The date of observation was also noted. Jamtsarano's method was as follows: each witness was invited to describe the appearance of the *almas* that he had encountered, and Soëltai, a painter subsequently collaborating with the Committee of Sciences of the Popular Republic of Mongolia, took part in the interview and transcribed the description into a colored image. Eventually, a robot-image of each observed creature was developed.

Alas, none of these drawings nor the map has reached us. One of those who participated in the enquiry, academician Djordji Melren, summed up as follows the results pertaining to the distribution of sightings: " At the beginning of the fourteenth sixty-year period (in the Mongolian calendar, i.e from 1807-1867), *almas* were still spread from the northern limits of the Khalkha, within the Galbin Gobi and the Dazkh Soudjin Gobi, as well as in Interior Mongolia. They were very numerous in the camping territories of the Khochoun of the Ourates of the Middle, in the confederaiion of Oulab-Tchab, in the Gourban Bogdin Gobi, in the Chardzyn Gobi of the Khochoun of Alachan in Badyn-Djaran and in many other places".⁸

⁸ This text requires some explanation kindly provided by my friend academician Rintchen. *Khalkha* is the name of the Northern Mongols, but also that of their territory, today Exterior Mongolia, or the Mongolian Popular Republic. The Galbin Gobi and the Dazkh Soudjin Gobi are regions of the northern

Subsequently, still according to Djordji Melren, their numbers decreased so that at the end of the fifteen sixty-year period (1867-1927) they were only found in a few areas. Since the beginning of the sixteenth period (from 1927 on), encounters only occur in the Gobi desert and in the Kobdo (or Khovd) province. Mongol researchers must have concluded that the area of distribution of the *almas* had significantly shrunk; in fact, they were on their way to extinction.

For his part, academician Rintchen summarized in the following terms the results of the enquiry on the appearance of the *almas*, also known by the more literate as the *Kümüin görügesü*, meaning the "wild man".⁹

"The *almas* are very similar to people, but their body is covered with reddish hair that is not so dense that one cannot see the skin through it, which is never the case with wild animals of the steppe. They are of the same stature as the Mongols, but they are slightly bent over and walk with their knees slightly bent. They have massive jaws and a low forehead. Their eyebrows are very pronounced compared to those of Mongols. The women have such long breasts that when they are sitting down on the ground, they can fling them over their shoulder to nurse their baby *almason* standing behind them. [Also to feed them, clinging to their back, when they are walking (B.P.)]"

Additional features include: feet turned slightly inwards, extremely rapid running, inability to make fires, to which must be added some characteristic behaviors.

A similar summary was provided by Djordji Meiren, who added that some Mongolian Buddhist monasteries has preserved the hide of *almas* and that he had seen one himself. "The hair was reddish and curly and longer than they ever are in men. The skin had been removed from the body by cutting along the spine, so that the chest and the face were left intact. The face was hairless, with bushy eyebrows and it had long unruly hair on its head. The nails were present on fingers and toes; they resembled those of people. "

These carefully worded writings were the result of a long tenacious labor by the young Mongolian scientific school before it split in a variety of disciplines.

In addition to those whose names have already been mentioned, another person participated in the Mongolian investigations: Andrei Dimitrievich Simukov. He had been a member of the last expeditions of P.K. Kozlov, the famous central Asian explorer, before becoming an eminent explorer of Mongolia. It was he and professor Rintchen (who was young at the time) who had been chosen by Professor Jamstarano to go searching for the *almas* in the Mongolian deserts. The expedition was to leave in 1929. The Science Committee cancelled it.

Of course, Simukov knew, as well as the others, about the plethora of preparatory data. Subsequently, during his own travels, he continued to accumulate additional information, particularly on footprints. Then once more, everything was forgotten. Simukov died and his scientific journals were used, without even mentioning his name, for a doctoral thesis by another geographer who – supreme ingratitude – was then to reject the whole issue of the *almas*.

By 1937, the final embers of the fire previously lit in Mongolia finally died out. One after

Gobi that are part of that republic. The Ourates are a clan living near the northern boundaries of the Gobi; they are distributed in three khochouns (prefectures): the Ourates of the East, the Middle and the West. These various prefectures of the Ourates as well as those of the Alachan include in the north a part of the northern Gobi. The Gourban Bogdin Gobi and the Chardzyn Gobi are parts of the Gobi belonging to southern Mongolia or Interior Mongolia (an autonomous region of the Popular Republic of China).

⁹ Pronounced *khoun gorouèssou*. This word *khoun* (man) is the origin of the people we call the Hun. As do many people everywhere, the Huns simply called themselves "the men".

the other, all the protagonists had passed away.

However, my letter awoke the memories and the immense vitality of the only survivor, academician Rintchen. Abandoning for a moment our chronological progress, I wish to express my praise for his work. Today, Rintchen is a dignified elder, with enormous drooping Mongolian-style mustaches, always wearing his shimmering national costume. A man of great erudition, he has familiarized himself with a number of western cultures, as well as Russian and Mongolian, and is reputed as a first rate orientalist. In spite of his many activities and wide scope of responsibilities, he has always found time and energy to devote to the *almas*, from 1958 to today. The worldwide outburst of interest in the Snowman brought Mongolian science out of its isolation. In 1958, Rintchen published in the magazine *Sovremennaiia Mongolia* (Contemporary Mongolia) an article entitled: *A Mongolian relative of the Snowman?*

Thanks to him, research began to take a biogeographical perspective. The area of distribution of the *almas* in Mongolia clearly coincided with the last refuge of other wild mammals menaced of extinction, such as the wild horse, the wild camel and the wild yak.

During recent years, academician Rintchen and his collaborators have made substantial efforts to gather additional reports on the *almas* from the local population. They learned that small *almas* had often been spotted in the Gobi desert, sometimes alone, sometimes with their mother. (An important fact from a biogeographical point of view, as it indicated the presence of an area of reproduction.) An adolescent caught in a trap had been taken pity of and released. Foreign hunters had shot at an *almas* who had calmly watched with curiosity the impact of bullets on the ground near it. Their Mongol guides had intervened in time to prevent wounding the creature. Males as well as females had been encountered. There was even a place, called Almasin Dobö where one had found their abandoned shelters.

The notes of these encounters, gathered by ethnographers Tsoödol, Damdin and Rintchen, would fill a whole volume. Ranchers, hunters, school children, learned persons with responsible roles, all brought forward their descriptions and personal information. The essential was always confirmed, while the details were very diverse, surprising, but nevertheless common place.

Finally here's a passage from a letter sent to me by the president of the Mongolian Academy of Sciences, B. Chirendyb: "I wish to inform you that the Academy of the People's Republic of Mongolia, which pays the greatest attention to the problem of the *almas*, has been striving for the past three years to gather information, photos and other documents about them, and devotes the necessary means to this line of research."

An eminent Darwinian biologist, Professor G.P. Dementiev, an honored Soviet zoologist, has joined a Mongolian colleague, professor D. Tsevegmid, to sketch a portrait of what he inappropriately calls the Snowman:

"They are powerful animals, with wide shoulders and long arms. Contrary to what Prjevalsky said, they do not have claws, either on the fingers or on their toes, but nails. That is why, according to the Mongols, it is easy to distinguish *almas* foot prints from those of bears: there is no trace of claws, and the toes are rather similar to those of anthropoids which agrees with the findings of the English explorers of the Himalayas.

"Their hair is brown or grey (again contrary to what Prjevalsky had to say on the matter), rather thin and particularly rare on the belly. The hair that covers their head is particularly thick and darker than that over the rest of their body. The females are easily recognized by their very long breasts.

"It is difficult to give precise dimensions of the size of these animals: they are about the same size as humans. Locomotion is usually bipedal, but occasionally on all four. Its habits are

nocturnal (which reminds one of Linnaeus' *Homo nocturnus*).

"Fearful, wary and in no way aggressive, the *almas* also does not seem particularly sociable. His food is partly vegetal and partly animal, in the latter case consisting mostly of small mammals. The *almas* does not possess an articulated language; it is incapable of uttering the least word. He has no industry, neither tool, nor fire.

"Overall, those characteristics are of great interest but require confirmation."¹⁰

There are indeed many points to verify, discuss, refine and complete. But let's get back to my story. We were at the stage, in 1958, when a second set of observations had reached my eyes, completely independent but probably parallel to the date about the Snowman from the Himalayas. It is only then that I became convinced that "something" existed besides ourselves, "something" quite specific. The idea had not crossed my mind until then that the Snowman and the *almas* were not just similar creatures, but actually the same beings, occupying a wide geographical area of central Asia and possibly migrating from one end of the continent to the other. The parallel evidence had sufficed to transform a hypothesis into a scientific certainty.

I hastened to draft a report on the unexpected Mongol source which established the basis for a scientific generalization. I presented it to the Special Commission for the Study of the Snowman of the Praesidium of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR.

I also published an article on this subject in *Komolskaïa Pravda* on July 11th, 1958.

Surprisingly, the descriptions of the *almas* strongly supported my hypothesis on the possible survival of Neanderthals. I emphasized it in my report as well as in my article. The same diagnostic applied to doctor Rintchen's report. I wrote: "Anthropology has long since established from the examination of fossil bones that among prehistoric hominids, it was precisely the neanderthals who stooped, had their arms hanging lower than those of modern man, pronounced eye-brows, a low and sloping forehead and massive jaws. The skeletons of neanderthals also reveal that they walked with their knees slightly bent. It is obvious that no anthropologist had been able to suggest all these traits to professors Jamtsarano and Rintchen or their modest informers. The anatomical data simply precisely coincided, that's all."

However, anthropologists could not know about those features of neanderthals that had rotted away in the ground: their skin, hair-covered but without down, which distinguishes the primates from other fur-bearing animals; the long breasts, which like the upright posture distinguished the *almas* as well as humans from all known monkeys and apes.

A triangle had formed: *Yeti, Almas, neanderthalian*. The qualifier "snow" was no longer appropriate since *almas* are found in grassy deserts as well as in saxaul bushes. Further, the anatomical description of neanderthals had to be dissociated from the archaeological concept of Mousterian culture since neither the *almas* nor the *yetis* made any stone tools, although they knew how to throw them.

Another unexpected encounter occurred, this time between today's battlefields and mediaeval history.

Towards the end of the 14th century, a Bavarian soldier named Johann Schiltberger was captured by the Turks. He was first sent to Timour Lang (Tamerlane) and then to the Golden Horde as a gift to khan Edigheï, then in Mongolia. Schiltberger managed to return home in 1427 and compiled an account of his travels wherein one finds the following passage:

"In the Arbouss Mountains [at the eastern end of the Tien-Chan range] live wild men

¹⁰ A French translation of the article by Dementiev and Tsevegmid was published in the November-December 1962 issue of the magazine *Science et Vie*. However, because of some imperfections, we preferred a new translation.

without fixed abode. Their body is entirely covered with hair, except their hands and face. They wander through the hills, like other animals, eating leaves and herbs and anything they can find.

"The lord of that country offered as a gift two of these wild men to khan Edigheï – a man and a woman who had been captured in the hills – as well as three wild horses, no higher than donkeys, who live in the foothills of those mountains."

Prjevalsky's horses! And neanderthalian *almas*! Schiltberger emphasized that he had seen these with his own eyes.

Thus we had a vertical verification through five centuries. Without any doubt, neanderthals were still living at that time.

Here is also a confirmation at the other end of the chronological scale, in the present time.

The shop master of a Moscow factory, G.N. Kolpachnikov, was wondering whether a strange incident which he remembered might be of interest to Science. He consulted his local Party committee, who sent him to me. I visited him at home and took careful note of his words.

During the fight against Japanese aggression launched in 1937, Kolpachnikov was the communication officer for a Soviet unit in eastern Mongolia.¹¹ One night, near the Khalkhin-Gol River, he was called over by a nearby detachment. The sentries had spotted two silhouettes walking down a ridge. Taking them for enemy scouts, they had shot both of them, after the usual warnings. They then noticed that they were some kind of apes.

At dawn, reaching the area in an armored car, Kolpachnikov, after examining the corpses curled up on the ground had, as he put it, "experienced some kind of discomfort". These were not enemies, but some strange looking beasts. He knew very well that there were no anthropoid apes in the Mongolian Popular Republic. So what could they be?

Brought over by the interpreter, an old Mongol said that such wild men were sometimes seen in the mountains. The old man was terrified of approaching the corpses. Here's what Kolpachnikov remembered about them. They were about of the size of a man. Their body was covered with reddish hair, thick in places, whereas the skin was visible through it elsewhere. He remembered heavy head-hair falling over the face, as well as bushy eyebrows. The face was like a coarse human.

What could have brought these creatures to the combat zone? Was it the stench of the cadavers? The temperature was between 40° and 45° C. and there had not been time to take away the dead.

I was to learn later that other officers had also seen the two creatures that were shot down. However in a battle field, there is little time for devote to natural history and it was not possible to send those corpses to the rear for further examination.

¹¹ The actual incident occurred in the spring of 1939.

CHAPTER THREE

"NOTES WITHOUT SCIENTIFIC IMPORTANCE"

The pioneering work of Professor Khakhlov

One day, during a meeting of the Commission for the Study of the Quaternary, the subject of the Snowman came up. Someone mentioned that Khakhlov had once taken an interest in that question.

Was this another of Ariadne's treads, one among the many broken ones? Who was this Khakhlov?

I was told he was a zoologist. New enquiry, new information. It turned out in the end that Khakhlov was a professor at the university, a doctor in biological sciences, and the author of papers on ornithology and compared anatomy. He was still alive and in good health. I ended up finding his address in Moscow. I sent my assistant, Mrs. E.A. Telicheva to visit him in the suburbs of the capital. "Yes! Yes! She announced triumphally on her return: This is an important thread in our research network!"

Soon, I went myself to visit Vitali Andreïevich Khakhlov. And there he was in front of me, an emeritus scientist, retired and white with age. Half a century ago, while still a student, he had discovered a New World and been rewarded only by a rebuff. For forty-five years, he tried to forget, not to touch his wound. But it was not I who came to stick a knife in his wound by reminding him of the past: the news media took care of it. As soon as news of the Snowman appeared in the press, professor Khakhlov had come ablaze: this was the occasion for victory and rehabilitation! He hastened to write an article on his former studies and to send it to the magazine *Priroda (Nature)*. But the article had been brusquely sent back. Once more, the old man had to yield.

Listening closely to professor Khakhlov, I took notes. He excitedly brought back from the depths of his memory the jewels of a long buried treasure. Alas, his notebooks from long ago had been lost in the chaos of the years. He might perhaps be able to find traces in his personal archives.

In 1907, Khakhlov was a student; he found himself in Zaïsan, not far from the border between Russia and Xinkiang, in Chinese Turkestan. It is there, during a trip to the Mouztau glaciers that he first heard from his Kazakh guide about the existence of a "wild man" in Dzungaria. For some reason this mention captivated the young man's imagination. With growing curiosity, he began gathering information from the local Kazakh population. The information was very matter of fact and he had imagined a number of clever trick questions to ensure that what he was told was factual.

Finally, Khakhlov communicated the results of his enquiry to his supervisors at the university: M.A. Menzbeer and P.P. Suchkin.¹² The first answered with frigid incredulity, but the second warmly encouraged him and recommended that he continue gathering information on such a fascinating subject. Suchkin wrote to Khakhlov and told him that central Asian explorers,

¹² Mikhail Alexandrovich Menzbeer (1855-1933) and Piotr Petrovich Suchkin were both members of the Academy.

like Kozlov, had also heard of the creature in question and had provided him some information about it.

Thus it was that, starting in 1911, temporarily putting aside his university research, the young explorer crisscrossed for two or three years parts of Dzungaria near Lake Zaisan and the Tarbagatay mountains. Everywhere he went, he questioned the natives and carefully took note of everything that might have anything to do with the "wild man". He learned that the *ksy-gyik*, as it was called, was most abundant somewhat to the south, where the *at-gyik* (the wild horse) and the *tie-gyik* were also found.

Once he began to understand the situation, Khakhlov organized a small expedition, sending two Kazakhs into Xinkiang, with the mission of sending him, in Russia, in leather bags, and in formalin, the head and the limbs of a *ksy-gyik*. However for such cross-border activities, official documents were necessary. That is why, in 1914, with Suchkin's permission, Khakhlov sent a request for funds to the Academy of Science in St. Petersburg. Long dreary months passed until at last, he heard (indirectly) that it had simply been decided not to answer his letter, arguing that his project showed a complete ignorance of anthropology.

He and Suchkin tried again, approaching this time the Geographical Society, but by then the First World War had started and there was no question of sending an expedition abroad. Khakhlov was also forced to return to the university, in Moscow. Since then he never had the opportunity to return to this "youthful folly."

The most important point in this autobiographical account (confirmed, as we shall see, by archival research) was the support provided by an authority like Suchkin. Who were those travelers who had heard of the wild man in central Asia? It is certain that following Suchkin's words, Khakhlov had begun his report by these words: "There is absolutely nothing new about this question. There are already information about wild men in some travel accounts in central Asia." However there is very little in published sources.

At best, Suchkin might have read something in the accounts of American explorer William W. Rockhill, or heard about it from Grumm-Grjimaïlo,¹³ especially since the latter had often been visited by Jamtsarano. It is also possible that Suchkin might have heard, at the time, of the observations of Baradyine. One can only speculate as to the identity of the other travelers, excepting of course for Kozlov, mentioned by name by Suchkin to his student Khakhlov.

Piotr Petrovich Kozlov¹⁴ was certainly aware of something important. His favorite disciple, Simukov, which we mentioned above as one of Jamtsarano's assistants and a traveling companion of Rintchev, would never have planned an expedition in search of the *almas* without his master's explicit permission. In 1929, during a private conversation, archaeologist G.V. Parfenov heard from Kozlov himself the following declaration: during one of the Russian expeditions in central Asia, the Cossack Egorov, chasing after a wounded yak on the slopes of the Tian-Chan, had come upon a group of wild men, covered with hair and uttering inarticulate cries. Prjevaslky had never mentioned that in his reports!

This new path gradually led us more deeply into the past. Kozlov's own master, colonel Nicholas Mikhailovich Prjevalsky had two or three time been on the verge of a prodigious discovery. During his first voyage in central Asia, in 1872, he had already gathered information, in the mountains, on what he called the *khoun-gouressou* (man-beast). He even offered a bounty

¹³ G.E. Grumm-Grjimaïlo (1860-1930) was a geographer, orientalist, zoologist and explorer of central Asia, and author of many travel accounts.

¹⁴ P.K. Kozlov(1863-1935) was one of the most famous explorers of central Asia. He participated in the expeditions of N.M. Prjevalsky, M.V. Pevtsov and V.I. Roberovsky. Then, from 1899 to 1901, he led an expedition in Mongolia and Tibet, and from 1907 to 1909, the expedition in Mongolia where he discovered the ancient city of Khara-Khoto.

to the first hunter who should bring him one. However, in order to collect the bounty, someone brought him a stuffed bear, and he concluded that the *khoun-gouressou* was only a variety of bear. Unfortunately, Prjevalsky was not aware of the illustrations of the *khoun-gouressou* subsequently discovered in Tibeto-Mongol medical textbooks, and had not had the opportunity to compare them with the – quite different – silhouette of a bear.

The episode mentioned above, involving the Cossack Egorov, took place in 1879, during Prjevalsky's third voyage. During his fourth expedition, the explorer finally learned a lot more about the "wild men" in the vicinity of the reed fields of Lake Lapnor and the marshes of the lower Tarim, but he naively believed that they were merely the feral descendants of Buddhists who had fled into that area in the 13th century.



In Mongolia, China and Tibet, where the *almas* subsist to this day, they were represented in a matter-of-fact way, among other identifiable animals, in the learned treatises of the 1800s such as in the Beijing edition of a medical text, and in the Ourga (Ulan Bator) edition of the same text.

What was then that New World that Khakhlov had discovered? He answered that question himself in his 1914 report. While it is true that the matter was not *absolutely* new, all that previous travelers had communicated were the stories told to them by the natives, while Khakhlov had gone further, describing in some detail the external anatomy and the biology of these creatures, thanks to an original methodology.

Khakhlov translated the Kazakhs' reports in terms of comparative anatomy. The Kazakhs themselves had often answered his questions about the various parts of the creatures' bodies in terms of comparisons with those of people or other animals. Using line drawings, the zoologist

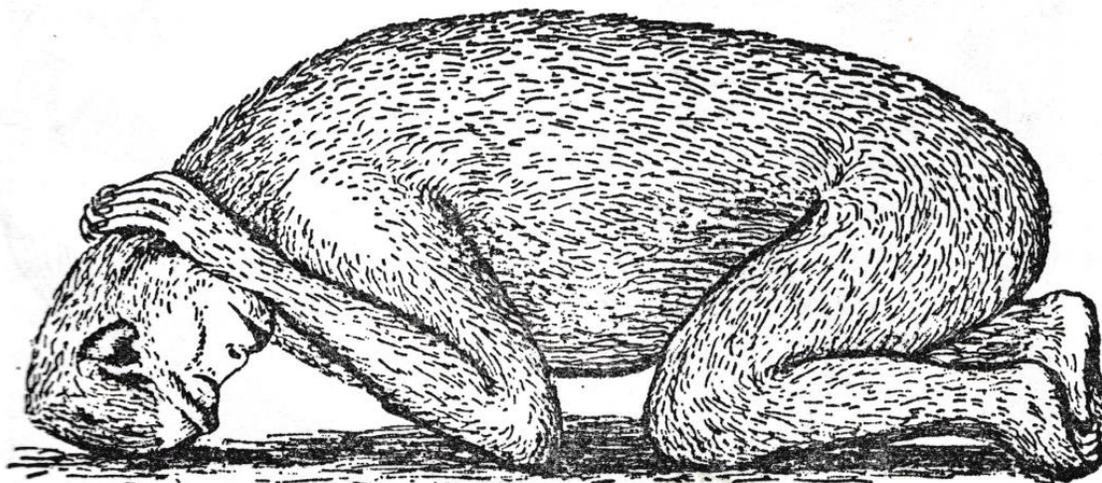
sketched all the details described to him about the head, body and limbs and stopped only after his drawing had met the full approval of the witnesses. He had also shown them, for comparison, drawings taken from books that illustrated anthropoid apes and prehistoric men. The Kazakhs always chose the latter, although with some hesitation. Both principal eyewitnesses, who never met, were interrogated in this fashion. It was as if the muddy waters had suddenly cleared and the bottom gradually become visible.

A year earlier, one of these witnesses was letting his horses browse, in the company of local shepherds' flocks, on the flanks of the eastern Tian-Chan range, when a hairy man had gingerly approached the animals. He was captured among the reeds, tied up and beaten up, but had merely squeaked, like a hare. An elderly, experienced Kazakh had explained that it was a "wild man", which it couldn't speak and was harmless to humans. It was examined with great care before being set free.

The other witness had carried out a much longer examination, in the hills. He had observed every day, for a whole month, a young captive female tied up at the end of a chain, near a mill. She was still young, completely hairy and could not speak, but began to yelp and bared her teeth when a human approached. During the day, she slept, always in a position often seen in very young children: like a camel, in the words of the witness, lying on her knees and elbows, with her forehead on the ground and her hands on her nape. It's not surprising that the skin of her knees, elbows and forehead were calloused, like "camel's sole".

She accepted only raw meat, but also ate vegetables, seeds, and flour patties; she also chewed on those insects that ventured nearby. She drank by putting her lips in the water and sucking (like a horse), or by dipping her hand in and licking the water that dripped from it.¹⁵

Finally, she was released. She ran away quickly, with her feet curved inwards and swinging her long arms, soon disappearing forever in the reeds.

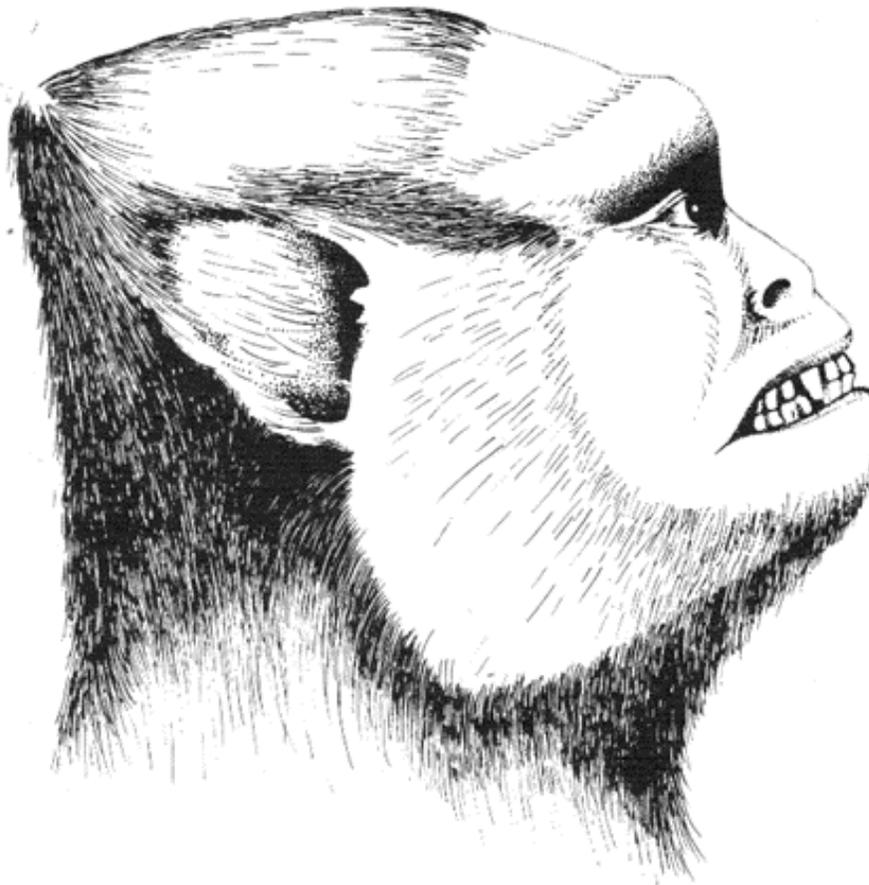


The *Ksy-gyik*'s sleeping position (after Khakhlov).

Here is a much abbreviated anatomical description of the *ksy-gyik*, as it follows from the reports gathered by Khakhlov. The forehead is almost missing. In its place, heavy eyebrows jut forward; behind them, there is a narrow strip of rough skin beyond which hair are growing. The

¹⁵ Many monkeys drink in this manner, including the tropical American spider monkeys and gorillas.

head is elongated towards a point at the rear. The neck is massive, the muscles of the nape are extremely powerful. The nose is flattened and the nostrils wide. The cheekbones are prominent. The bottom of the face is heavy and jutting, but the Kazakhs would say, pinching their chin that "The *ksy-gyik* doesn't have a chin like this" and they would show in a gesture how the lower jaw receded. They widened their mouth as far as they could and said: "The *ksy-gyik* has an even wider mouth." However their lips are very thin: the very dark skin of the inner mouth is visible only when the *ksy-gyik* bares its teeth. The incisors lean forward, "as in a horse." The skin of the face is hairless and dark



Profile of a *ksy-gyik*'s head (after Khakhlov).

The body is covered with hair, reddish brown or grayish, reminiscent of the fur of a young camel. The shoulders are inclined forwards which gives a stooped appearance. The arms do not hang on the side of the body, but a little forward. Overall, the silhouette of the *ksy-gyik* is characterized by the length of the arms and the shortness of the legs. In order to quickly climb up rock faces, it reaches forward with its arms and pulls itself up. The palm of the hand is free of hair; the hand appears long and narrow because the thumb is only weakly opposing: thus, to free itself from a lasso, the *ksy-gyik* would try to grab the rope with its five fingers in the shape of a hook. The sole of the foot is also hairless. The big toe is more displaced to the side than in humans, larger and shorter than the others (We notice that in the upper limbs, the opposability of

the thumb is lower than in humans, while in lower limbs, it is the contrary). Both fingernails and toe nails appear long, and strongly cambered. The foot is extraordinarily wide and the toes can



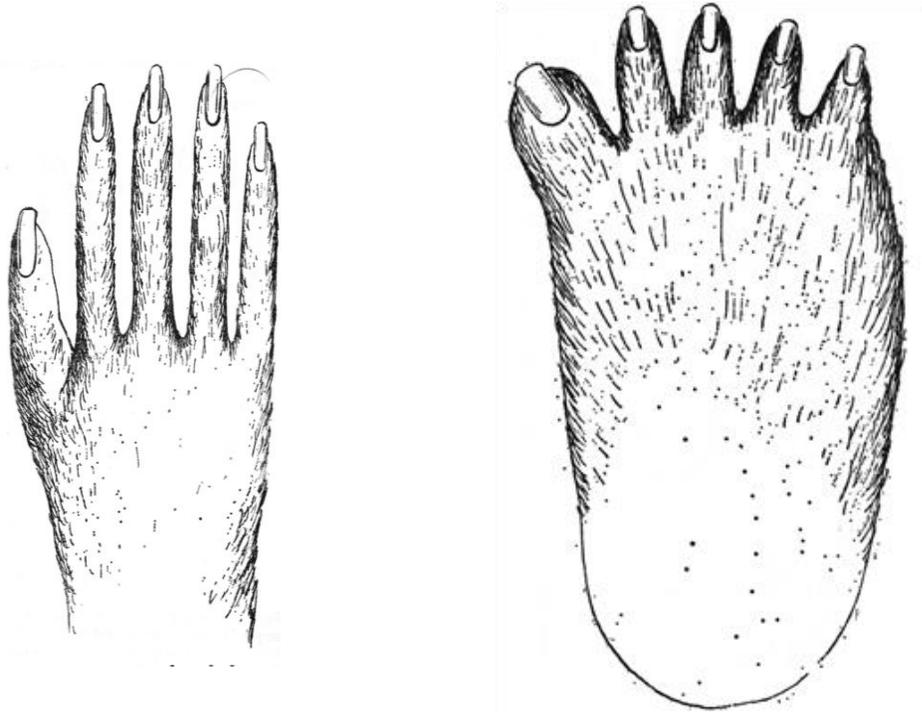
Characteristic profile of a *ksy-gyik* (after Khakhlov).

splay like a fan.

Khakhlov gathered a plethora of additional information about the *ksy-gyik* among the Kazakhs. It turns out that it is found just as frequently near mountain glaciers as in sandy areas, as often in the deserts as near water, be it lake or river. Actually, the *ksy-gyik* seeks, if one might say, the absence of humans: when they take their sheep up in the mountains in the summer, they descend from the hills into the plains, and does the opposite in the winter. He is seen alone, or with a mate, with our without kids. Most of the sightings do not take place in bright daylight, but at dawn, or sunset, or at night.

No permanent den has been found, but temporary shelters have been seen here and there. *ksy-gyik's* food consists of roots, shoots and berries, birds' eggs, lizards and turtles. The basis of their diet nevertheless consists of the small rodents that inhabit the mountains and the sandy deserts.

One can readily imagine how excited the young zoologist must have been after discovering all these characteristics, as well as many other biological traits. In those days, he could not have



The hand and foot of the *ksy-gyik* (after Khakhlov).

known enough of the anatomy of the neanderthals to appreciate how it emerged from all the naive and clumsy descriptions. However, he became more and more convinced that this creature was not a human being, but an animal, possibly a primate very similar to Man, and very high in the evolutionary path leading to humanity. "An antediluvian man" he wrote in a spark of intuition. Perhaps, it did not at all look like what was shown in textbooks!

Professor Khakhlov contributed two reports to our Commission. They are of great value, but were written in 1958 and 1959. To strengthen the evidence, I felt that I should search for the original reports, nearly a century old.

At my request, G.G. Petrov consulted a great number of files dating from 1913 and 1914 in the archives of the Academy of Science of the USSR, in St. Petersburg. Not the least trace of anything by Khakhlov. I went to Leningrad myself. We looked everywhere for Khakhlov's preliminary note: in the files of the zoological museum, where they should have been; in the minutes of the Praesidium, or of one of the sections; in the administrative records of the most diverse of the Academy's institutions. Still nothing. When there was practically no hope left, I asked, to leave no stone unturned, for the 1914 dossier entitled: *Notes without scientific relevance*.

So it is that cheek by jowl with proposals for trips to the moon and essays similar to Chekov's "*Letter to a learned neighbor*", I finally discovered, buried under indifference and the dust of ages, Vitali Andreïvitch Khakhlov's report, signed in far-away Zaïsan and dated July 1st, 1914.

From attached documents and marginal notes I had no difficulty tracing back the path that had led the document to the *Notes without scientific relevance* file.

It happened in the mid-summer. After having read the title, "*On the question of the wild man*", the person who was at the time the permanent secretary had not forwarded the letter to the zoological section, as Suchkin and Khakhlov expected, but to the historico-philosophical section. It had thus fallen into the hands of ethnographer academician V.V. Radlov. It was he, whose competence in the matter was as remote from biology as the Sky is from the Earth, who had thrown the news of the discovery to the waste basket.

Zoologists have a custom: whenever they wish to introduce a new species within the classification, they give it a Latin binomial name; if no one else has done it before, that name is authoritative, even if the properties of the species have not been defined correctly. What matters is that there has been an effort as scientific description.

Thus, besides its intrinsic interest, Khakhlov's memoir also seems to have priority in the matter. "The content of those stories, obtained directly from the reports of eyewitnesses is sufficient, wrote Khakhlov, to exclude them from the realm of mythology or imagination. The existence of such a *Primihomo asiaticus*, as one could call it, leaves no doubt."

Now that this discovery has been confirmed, official science should have recognized the priority of the name suggested on June 1, 1914, by our compatriot, which signifies "Asiatic primordial man". Unfortunately for Khakhlov, a first suggestion for baptizing the creature had already been put forward in the 18th century by the great Swedish naturalist Carl von Linne (Linnaeus).



The hairy wild men from Asia have been known since antiquity. Carl von Linné, the father of scientific classification (shown dressed as a Lapp) did not hesitate to include it in his *Systema Naturae* (1758) as *Homo troglodytes*.

It was recently found that confirmation of Khakhlov's great discovery happened soon after he sent off his letter to St. Petersburg. Quite recently, a kholkhoz member from Kazakhstan, P.I. Tchoumatchenko, published in a local paper a reminiscence from the beginning of the 1914-1918 war. More precisely, it was a memory of a rural district chief of the Zaisan area, collected and noted down by Tchoumatchenko. Young Khakhlov's enquiries had, thanks to the influence of that chief's father, benefited from the support of the Zaisan authorities, and were probably well known in the district. In order to be seen favorably by the district chief, some Kazakhs had captured one of the creatures in the bush near the Manass River. It had been brought to the district chief and tied up for the night by a rope around its neck. It was noted that it was from sheer stupidity that it hadn't thought of untying his collar and fleeing.

The captive was a male, about the size of a 14-15 year old adolescent. It was entirely covered with light hair, stiff and short, blue-gray in color, reminiscent of the pelt of a 2-3 week old baby camel. Its hands and feet were much like those of humans. It walked erect on its hind legs, but sometimes ran on all four. Its head and face were much like a human's but with a much lower forehead.

Unfortunately, on the day following its capture, news arrived that war had been declared on Germany. The authorities had more important concerns. "As it didn't look like a wild beast but rather more like a wretched human," the Kazakhs took it back to the Manass River and let it go.

The younger Khakhlov never heard anything of that and today, in his old age, he is angry and would rather not hear of the occasion missed.

It was important to keep searching the archives, especially to determine the role played by Suchkin in Khakhlov's discovery. I have noticed that the old man's bitterness was not uniquely linked to the narrowness of mind and routine attitude of the pre-revolution of Academy leaders. Something else had hurt him. In 1928, academician Suchkin had made a presentation at a session of the Russian Geographical Society in which he had developed an original idea: that it was in the high plateaus of central Asia that the transformation of ape into man had taken place. While demonstrating that the limbs of the transitional creature must have been adapted to climbing rocky slopes, the speaker had knowingly winked at him, his old student, present in the room – Khakhlov remembered it well. But neither in his oral presentation, nor in the paper published in *Priroda* has Suchkin said anything about the information on the central Asian wild man that P.K. Kozlov and later V.A. Khakhlov had provided him.

I absolutely had to find the proof that Khakhlov had actually communicated to Suchkin his personal knowledge of the problem.

At that time, Suchkin was a professor at the University of Kharkhov. It is only later that he became an academician. Considered as one of the greatest Darwinian Russian zoologists, he combined his teaching with original research on ornithology and paleontology. Towards the end of his life, he published a few papers in which he attempted to reform anthropology. Half of his personal documents are kept at the same place as his scientific papers, namely in the archives of the Academy of Sciences of Leningrad. Was I likely to find there Khakhlov's letters? If there had been many, there remained at least a few. Even a single one, sent from Zaisan on December 18, 1914, was enough to tell me everything I wanted to know. It was the answer to a letter from Shuchkin, sent from Kharkhov, on November 24th, 1914. It was clear from its contents that there had been other letters in which the problem had been discussed as well as practical research options. Khakhlov kept repeating that the evidence showed that this was not mythology, but facts. It was also clear that the unsuccessful approach to the Academy of Sciences had been made jointly with Suchkin, and that both of them had afterwards worked together to get another institution, namely the Eastern Siberian Section of the Russian Geographical Society, to sponsor an expedition. Judging from Khakhlov's answers, it was clear that his professor had sent him

additional information about wild men in the Kobdo area, in Mongolia. Perhaps Suchkin had obtained that information himself during his expedition in the Altaï and in Mongolia from May to August 1914.

The collaboration between the two researchers was well established. But, there was another question. Was it possible that the information received from Khakhlov and others might have been the seed, even the starting point of Suchkin's original ideas as to the origin of mankind?

To prove this, it was not sufficient to know that, after hearing from Khakhlov, Suchkin had answered with a twenty-seven page treatise devoted to the origin of man. Another bell was ringing.

So, I went back to the archives of the Academy of Sciences, but now in Moscow, where the other half of Suchkin's documents are kept. I finished by digging up the notes relating to a series of conferences that he presented from 1915 to 1919 on the zoology of vertebrates in Kharkhov and in Simferopol, in Crimea. The most original part is precisely on the origin of man, which would have evolved not from tree-dwelling forms, as is commonly believed, but in cold tree-less regions.

A complementary idea was later presented in *Priroda* in 1922 in a series of articles entitled *The Evolution of terrestrial vertebrates and the role of geological-scale climate changes*. The structure of man's foot is a sign of an ancient adaptation to the life of a rock climber from which had developed the erect posture. Man had passed through that phase in the Tertiary era in the high mountains of Asia, but he was just another one of many mammals until they were decimated by the great glaciations of the Quaternary, which he survived by mastering fire.

Five years later, Suchkin published a new article, the last one¹⁶, in which he partly disowned his earlier ideas. Falling back within the general consensus, he admitted that man had, after all, developed from tree-dwelling forms. It was the rapid disappearance of forests following the geological uplift of central Asia that had forced early humans to adapt to a life of rock-climbing and to eventually become bipedal.

Suchkin's death on September 17th, 1928, brought an end to speculations destined to completely upset current anthropological ideas.

If we overlay Suchkin's three main ideas, we shall see that what they have in common is the certainty that Man's ancestor became bipedal in Asia's mountainous areas. It turns out that this was not a conclusion, but a premise of Suchkin's research, which he had repeatedly tried to drive as a wedge into the resisting system of natural sciences.

Suchkin did not succeed, but nevertheless managed to create deep cracks into the edifice. His penetrating meditations on the evolution of the human hand and foot beyond life in trees opened the door to the studies of his young collaborator, G.A. Butch-Osmolovski, who became one of the greatest anthropologists.

So, what happened is that one of Khakhlov's supervisors, academician Menzbeer, noticing that these information were contrary to accepted anthropological ideas, had simply rejected them. His other supervisor, academician Suchkin had tried to revolutionize anthropology by using these data. Since then, the question of anthropogenesis has remained under suspense. At the apex of the unadulterated intoxication with Darwinism among Russian scientists, Khakhlov's discovery appeared as an incongruity. The young zoologist did not realize that his representation of the "antediluvian man" appeared rash and scandalous in the light of the refined Darwinism advocated and policed by western prehistorians and anthropologists. That approach was

¹⁶ New data on the most ancient terrestrial vertebrates and the conditions of their geographical distribution. (in Russian). *Annals of the Russian Paleontological Society*, Leningrad, vol. 6, 1927.

essentially based on the knowledge of the anatomy and of the stone tools of fossil ancestors. However, the erudite gurus of the young science had managed to isolate the problem of the origin of Man from the Principle of Causality.

Suchkin had found a way to invalidate academic theories on the appearance of Man, theories which never considered that the birth of our species might have been related to changes in its environment. He had begun to seek the cause of the phenomenon, either through changes in the nature of the ambient fauna, or in the disappearance of the original vegetation, changes which he attributed in turn to geological causes.

That was indeed a promising approach. However, there was something that Suchkin could not have been aware of at that time. At the end of the Tertiary, Nature was blooming with complex and abundant life. In particular, there were thousands of tree-dwelling species of monkeys. To feed them all, there had to be a superabundance of fruits, leaves, buds, insects, larvae, etc. In the Sukhumi preserve, a single band of monkeys completely cleans up in no time at all a grove of giant trees. One can just imagine how harsh the competition between these thousands of species of monkey must have been when their unbounded numbers began to significantly reduce the biomass of their forest kingdom.

At the same time, another change was happening at the ground level. The number of predatory carnivores began to lag behind the tsunami of herbivores: giant pachyderms of all kinds, elephants, hippos, rhinos, mighty horned beasts and fleeting deer. The meat-eaters were not up to the task of the necessary holocaust. The beast that still managed to kill the largest prey, the saber-tooth tiger, was engaging through over-specialization into an evolutionary cul-de-sac and was degenerating. At the beginning of the Quaternary, the Villafranchian fauna exhibits a deep and enduring rupture of the equilibrium in favor of the large herbivores. But they were certainly not immortal. In the forthcoming era, their biomass would constitute a mine of food for those who could access it. Among those, there were of course the small land carnivores as well as the birds of prey, and even insects and worms. But someone taller could also enter the competition. The unbridled competition among the higher primates brought forward one that had adapted to a vertical stance, with all the perspectives that it implied: the ability to carry in their arms parts of carcasses, or that of bringing sharp stones to the vicinity of carcasses, or to shape and sharpen raw flints by hitting them against each other.

The family of bipedal carnivores so selected included many species. However, later in the Quaternary, the same faunal conditions that had led to their origin became unfavorable. Glaciations and glacial retreats substantially upset the ecosystem. Carnivores were on the rise again. The environment challenged the brains of carnivorous primates with an ever more difficult problem: how to find meat in a world overpopulated by rivals? The increase in volume and the growth in complexity of the brains of succeeding species were not the cause of their preeminence in their habitat; they were its turbulent consequence.

Finally, why were Khakhlov's crucial information not mentioned in Suchkin's works? Of course, his hands were tied by the absence of skulls, skeletons, or skins needed for an anatomist. But the main reason for his discretion was much deeper. Suchkin knew well that in that specific case, the normal order of discovery had to be inverted, first transforming the theory, later to be confirmed by the facts.

Otherwise, as S.F. Oldenburg had wisely said twenty years earlier "nobody will believe it", and it would merely have created an enormous "scandal".

Thirty years later, we have also by now understood that the first thing to do is to clear the way for the facts from a priori ideas such as "it's impossible" or "that cannot be".

Khakhlov's Kazakh informers had consistently repeated to him that the wild men lived further south, and that they were ready to travel to that area and stay there for a year. It's much

later, in 1937 to be precise, south of Lake Zaisan, that a Soviet military detachment crossed a wide reed-covered depression near Lop-Nor lake. Marshal P.S. Rybalko was part of it. He has now passed away, but his account was forwarded to the Academy of Sciences by major-general P.F. Ratov.

As they were travelling on the north side of the Altyn-Tagh range, the Chinese officer who accompanied them told them that some riders has caught a "wild man" and that they were bringing it over in the baggage train. Marshal Rybalko provided a detailed description of that human-looking animal.

It was not wearing any clothes, was extremely dirty and its pelt was yellowish. His hair was long, below the shoulders. He was a little stooped and had very long arms. He had no articulated language; the sounds that it made ranged from squeaks to yowls. Also, noted Rybalko, it looked like a man, or rather a fossil ape-man."

According to the local folk, these wild creatures lived here and there in the area, and ate fish that they caught in the little reed-lined streams.

Rybalko decided to bring the wild man as far as the town of Urumtchi (also known today as Tihwa) and to forward it from there to Moscow for examination. It was thus carried along for about eight days. However. It could not stand the trip, being tied up, and died near the city of Kou-erh-le. It didn't turn out to be possible to carry his corpse across mountains and sands.

According the Major-General Ratov, who long lived in the region, and documented on a map information about the wild men using small arrows, they were concentrated mostly in the south, in Kashgaria, beyond the Tach-Kourghan.

CHAPTER FOUR

BEYOND ACCEPTED IDEAS

A group of non-conformists tackling the Himalayan mystery

In 1959, the occidental press loudly celebrated the seventieth anniversary of the discovery of the Snowman by European Science. It commemorated the fact that in 1889, the English traveler L.A. Waddell had published the following observation. Up in a Himalayan pass, between Sikkim and Tibet, he had come across a series of barefoot tracks in the snow which crossed his own path and disappeared towards the hilltops. The Tibetan guides had explained that they had been made by wild and hairy men who lived up in the snows. Waddell has simply concluded that the intellectually underdeveloped locals could not recognize the tracks of a bear.

It's difficult to think of this incident as a real discovery; the Tibetans already knew about it, and Waddell did not understand.

In 1891, another traveler, this time an American, William W. Rockhill, also visited Tibet, this time further north, as well as Mongolia. In his travelogue, *Land of the Lamas*, he quoted some of the information gathered from the natives. A very old lama had told him that his caravan had often times in the desert encountered naked hairy wild men, without speech. They threw stones at the travelers. The Mongols had confirmed that these wild men, the *Gérésün-Bambürshé*, really existed, were covered with long hair, walked upright, and left footprints similar to those of people, but did not speak.

Rockhill also decided that the natives, in their ignorance mistook bears, standing on their hind legs, for hairy savages. His opinion was unfortunately based on Prjevalsky's authority. It does not appear that the American explorer paid much attention to the information which he received. How could a bear, even when standing on its hind legs, throw stones at a caravan?

Actually in 1890, before the publication of Rockhill's book, a service report from the English colonial military had already mentioned a strange wild creature, ape-like and hairy, shot in the area where a trans-Himalayan telegraph line was under construction. The soldiers had abandoned the corpse in the hills. There was apparently no one among them with enough education to examine it and describe it.

No, certainly not, we will not today (1968) prepare to celebrate the eightieth anniversary of that event: it's not worth it.

The story published in 1905 in an English newspaper¹⁷ by British traveler William Knight is already a little more interesting. On his return trip from Tibet to India, he had briefly lingered behind the caravan. "As I was day-dreaming, I heard a slight noise, and when I turned around I saw, 15 to 20 paces away, a creature which I now suppose was one of these hairy men mentioned by members of the Everest expedition who say that the Tibetans call them Abominable Snowmen. As far as I can remember, it was less than six feet tall (1.83 m) and was nearly naked, in spite of the cold temperature – it was November. He was of a pale yellow color all over, somewhat like a Chinese. His head was covered by a rug of messy hair, few hair on its face, extremely flat feet and tremendously large hands. The muscles of his arms, thighs, legs and torso were terrifying."

¹⁷ Although the incident undoubtedly dates from 1905, it was only reported in the *London Times* on November 3, 1921.

This observer was however no more curious than its predecessors. After relating the incident to the British officers of the frontier post, he had the impression that they found it quite normal, after which his own interest faded away.

I mentioned earlier that the first scientific observation in the Himalayas was due to Henry Elwes, in 1906. His report generated no interest among academic circles. Elwes was still arguing with them when, in 1915, he made a presentation to the Zoological Society of London in which he related the testimony of a forest warden in Sikkim about the existence of a large anthropoid ape in the high mountains.

In passing we note that there now appears the second of the pair of options between which the simplistic hypotheses of western interpreters of the enigma wandered: it was either a bear or an anthropoid ape.

We also note that this first bunch of observations by European travelers is nearly restricted to Tibet. Not a word yet about Nepal or Sherpas. The Snowman did not first show up, as it is universally believed, as a dweller in the Himalayas.

The following cycle, during which the grotesque moniker Abominable Snowman was featured started in 1921 and was only interrupted by the Second World War.

Various expeditions in the Himalayas, with sometimes topographical but usually sporting objectives (alpinism!) have accumulated with an ever growing interest in observations of footprints and testimonies by native porters.

Among European eyewitnesses, rarely anyone is mentioned except the Italian Tombazi¹⁸, which ended up as a joke. In 1925, on the northern slopes of the Kangchenjunga, this traveler had observed, below in the valley, a human silhouette, without clothes, who stopped now and then to dig up some roots. The witness had taken the trouble to examine the footprints left in the snow and to measure them. Then, refusing to believe any of the "fantastic legends" told by the porters, he had pacified his civilized conscience by stating that: "I am absolutely incapable of expressing the least definite opinion on this subject."

What marvelous luck, and what inability to take advantage of it. Successive travelers competed for lack of thinking.

Observations of footprints were already abundant before the Second World War. They had been photographed, sketched and measured. The photos taken in 1937 by Frank Smythe of tracks identified by Sherpas, who live in those mountains, as those of the wild man and not those of a bear or a snow leopard, were sent to London for zoological assessment. The armchair academic zoologists declared them to be bear tracks.

Nevertheless, judging from the published sketches, on each track the imprint of the big toe is markedly longer than that of the other toes. Anatomists and expert animal trackers all agree: in bears of all species, there is no marked difference between the size of the first toe and the others – how could there be, given the role of the bear's foot. If one keeps that fact in mind, it is impossible to confuse the footprint of a bear with that of a human. In man, as well as in its bipedal ancestors, because of their biological evolution, the first toe is significantly larger than the others, hence its common name of "big toe". It's only by ignoring this basic detail that people have long been able to laugh away the Snowman as a bear. Any child, from whichever tribe, whether living in the forest or in the mountains, would not attribute a print with a big toe to a bear.

¹⁸ It is obviously because of his name that everyone took him for an Italian. But actually, A.N Tombazi was a member of the *Royal Geographical Society* of London and was of Greek ancestry. He was working in India for the Ralli Brothers, whose founders, long established in England, were of the same origin.

In the end, it's definitely its footsteps in the snow that have betrayed our *relict* parent (the descendant of an ancient lineage). It seems that on any other kind of ground, it manages to leave no trace of its passage, either by stepping on stony areas, or in puddles, by walking backwards or by erasing its footsteps. However, on virgin snowfields, when passing from one valley to another, or fleeing from human presence, even the cleverest tricks could not prevent it from leaving revealing footprints.

Of course, snow doesn't preserve anatomical details very well. However, more and more information is obtained from tracks left in that substrate.

The apex of such discoveries was reached in 1951 when the English alpinist Eric Shipton took pictures of a series of particularly clean tracks. Some specialists at the British

Museum thoughtlessly attributed them to a langur, a *semnopithecus* ape, a scandalous "expertise" which was booed by more qualified people.

The latest cycle of Himalayan information, that of sensational news stories, took place in the 1950s. By then the Himalayas were swarming with alpinists, geologists and journalists. One after the other, the planet's highest peaks were conquered. Like it or not, the Snowman was entering, live, in the history of mountain-climbing. The learned "specialists" – especially the specialists of the conspiracy of silence – never managed to staunch that torrent of information: the embarrassing creature kept popping up everywhere. It filled the pages of books on mountain-climbing and from there the newspapers, attracting the attention of millions of readers. Since "official science" was very reserved on the subject, dilettantes without authority or references took over the problem. There is "something" in the Himalayas? We have to find it. We'll talk later. For now, let's climb and search!

One has to imagine all the hardships in any "victory" over the heights of the Himalayas, the most grandiose and inaccessible part of the world, sometimes dubbed "the third pole", the last to be reached. During its painstaking conquest observations of footprints accumulated, as well as eyewitness reports by local hill people and Buddhist monks.

In 1949, in front of the *Thyangbotchi* monastery, a crowd had gathered for a holiday when a *yeti* suddenly walked out of the bushes. The native questioned about it were well aware of bears and apes, but for them this creature was half-man, half-beast; it did not have a tail, walked erect on two legs and was of the stature of an average man. Its body was covered with reddish hair, but its face was smooth.

The natives and the monks had beaten on drums and blown in their trumpets, making loud noises to chase away the intruder.

Two years later, at the same monastery, a *yeti* appeared once more. And again the bellowing of the sacred trumpets and the beat of the drums had chased the creature away.

In 1954, things came to a head. The European public had by then been so enthralled by the regular waves of news about the *yeti* that the British newspaper *Daily Mail* thought it worthwhile to send to the Himalayas the first expedition dedicated to the pursuit of the Snowman. Characteristically, Ralph Izzard, an experienced journalist was chosen to lead it, while some excellent naturalists were only invited to participate. However, five months of work high in the mountains of Nepal yielded an exhaustive enquiry among hill-people in many villages as well as a rich new crop of footprints. Following for two consecutive days the tracks of a pair of *yetis* allowed their pursuers to literally read their history in the snow during that period. They also learned how the *yeti* manages to cross powdery snow drifts by swimming movements, how he slid down steep snowy slopes on his behind, how he made long detours to avoid human habitations. But they also learned that it was futile to try to catch a *yeti* on its own grounds and

that since it did not have any permanent dens or hiding places, it was impossible to trap it in such places.

In May 1955, during the French expedition to Makalu, Father Pierre Bordet, a geologist, professor at the Museum, took excellent photos of footprints and gathered precious data.

In 1956, the English expedition led by Norman Hardie was working in the mountains in Nepal. It is at that point that two men who were play a significant role entered the scene: Tom Slick, a Texas millionaire fascinated by natural history, and Peter Byrne, an Irish hunter with an impressive record, a great traveler and observer of nature. They returned together to Nepal in 1957.

Incidentally, Slick and Byrne separately later came to Moscow to meet with our Commission for the Study of the Snowman. They were both tall, dynamic and passionate researchers. Tom Slick, a friend of the famous Cyrus Eaton, was a strong supporter of the friendship between our countries. It was with great sadness that we later heard that his personal plane had exploded in the air above Texas.¹⁹ However, he had already made an important contribution to the great scientific revolution of the 20th century, having instinctively guessed its importance.

It was in 1958, thanks to the deep pockets of Tom Slick and banker A.C. Johnson that the most effective of all the expeditions launched to catch the Snowman was organized. It was equipped with tracking dogs, special lures, crossbows and tranquilizer darts. Twice, apparently, a *yeti* was close to the researchers, but in both cases it disappeared in the night. The team pursued their work through 1959 and 1960. They made a plaster cast of an excellent footprint; they recorded many eyewitness reports which have not yet been published.

Other names should also be mentioned here: those of some zoologists and other people with an interest in zoology. Their professional instinct had detected the beast! Each one of them attempted to illuminate the problem from the perspective of their personal experience.

Gerald Russell, who had participated in the capture of the first giant panda, a really rare animal, provided the Himalayan expeditions with the theoretical framework without which the projects and the plans lack coherence. On his part, Charles Stonor visited a multitude of Sherpa villages, seeking information on the *Yeti*, and came to the conclusion that the Sherpas are right to recognize that they were incapable of inventing such a creature. What interest would they have had to do so? Besides, it was impossible that it could all be a simple myth. All their stories were about an ordinary flesh-and-bones creatures.²⁰

"While trying to figure out the appearance of the *Yeti* from what was said about it, wrote Stonor, we rejected all second-hand or third-hand descriptions or reports to consider only the evidence of people who said that they had seen one with their own eyes. It didn't take many weeks before we became absolutely convinced that whatever the time or the place, whatever the circumstances of the sighting where a Sherpa pretended having seen one, all the reports coincided. It was a small thickset animal, about as tall as a fourteen year old boy, covered with

¹⁹ But what did the broad public learn from all this? Straightforward reports, written by journalists and alpinists: Tilman, Murray, Dyhrenfurth, Shipton, Howard-Bury. As fate would have it, it was the most embellished, the least rigorous, that of Izzard, that was the only one to appear in the Russian press. The very last of the journalistic syntheses, the overblown volume by Carlo Graffigna, editor of the *Corriere de la Sera*, appeared in 1962. It's a mediocre goulash of enthusiasm for mountain-climbing, with a sprinkle of *yeti*; the author's documentation is deficient, his biological competence even more so.

²⁰ Spirits, said the sherpas, with a common sense that is sometimes lacking in some scientists, do not leave footprints in the snow.

rough and coarse hair, from black to reddish-brown in color, with a flat face like a monkey, a rather pointed head, and no tail. It was said to walk, normally, on two legs, like a human, but occasionally, when scared or on rocky ground, to bounce off on all four. It had a characteristic call, a powerful and whiny note, somewhat like that of a seagull, heard most often late in the afternoon or at the beginning of the evening.²¹

The British zoologist offers here a synthesis where the *Yeti* comes alive in front of our eyes, but he has not discovered the animals' place in the zoological nomenclature. The book published by this honest zoologist, *The Sherpa and the Snowman*, first published in 1955, was later translated in Russian, but did not reach the audience that it deserved.

Today's world leading primatologist, the Britisher W.C. Osman-Hill, subjected to a meticulous zoological critique the corpus of Himalayan data. He rejected some of the data as doubtful, but recognized that the sum of all positive points weighs more heavily than the most severe incredulous objections. His verdict is that there exists in the Himalayas a yet unknown mammal which walks upright on its hind legs; it lives in small groups in the high-level rhododendron forests and other thick groves in the valleys just below the snow line.

Undoubtedly encouraged by the writings of Osman-Hill, Odette Tchernine, an English woman of French-Russian origin, published in 1961 volume which gathers and analyses a wealth of information on the problem: *The Snowman and Company*. It deals with a much broader area, including the whole of Kashmir, where much information on the creature of interest, called in that area *van-manass*, was gathered by an English disciple of Ghandi, Mira-Behn – or Madeleine Slade by her real name.

Ms. Tchernine tends to agree with Osman-Hill, and recognized in the snowman and its relatives a kind of higher primate hitherto unknown. She describes in an interesting way the biogeographical conditions of its existence, as well as its distribution in the sparsely inhabited areas of Asia and even America.

The extension of the problem to America had been introduced by the Scottish-American zoologist Ivan T. Sanderson. I shall return later to his ideas, as well as to his observations, but let me say right now that his big book *Abominable Snowmen: Legend Come to Life* (1961)²² must be considered as the most important contribution by western zoology to the confirmation of the biological reality of the "legend".

Another great foreign zoologist must be especially mentioned here. Although he was for a long-time focused on the Himalayan sphere, he is not Anglo-Saxon, but French of Belgian origin. It is Bernard Heuvelmans. It is not because he has become in Europe the focus of all those in the world are interested in the Snowman that I wish to praise him. It is because he was the first to put forward a most fundamental idea. A whole mountain of preconceived notions and errors can be demolished under the blows of a simple idea.

Dr. Heuvelmans has shown that zoology has reached the end of its empirical discovery period, based on simple hunting techniques of tracking yet unknown large animals. In his book *Sur la Piste des Bêtes Ignorées*, he established the foundations of a new science, Cryptozoology, which attempts a systematic prevision of delicate discoveries, particularly that of well-hidden animals. Among which, of course, he included the snowman, to which he devoted a long chapter. It's also from that perspective that he later published his excellent article: *Oui, l'Homme*

²¹ This text is not directly from Stonor's book, but from a note published about it by Ralph Izzard in *The Abominable Snowman Adventure* (p. 261-262, London, 1955).

²² A French translation of which was put out by Plon (Collection *D'un Monde à l'Autre*) with the title *Homme-des-Neiges et Hommes-des-Bois*.



Sanderson and Heuvelmans first met in October 1968 in New York after corresponding for twelve years. Here they are at Kennedy airport with Gail Schlegel, in charge of publicity for Heuvelmans' American publisher. This was the beginning of a great adventure.

des Neiges Existe, where for the first time a statistical method was used to analyze the body of partial descriptions of the Snowman by a variety of eyewitnesses.²³

I shall not enumerate these many witness reports. Some have already been mentioned and others will be referred to below, in due time. It's enough to specify here that, from a broad perspective, that for the Himalayan cycle they originate not only from Nepal, Sikkim, Kashmir, and Bhutan, but some were also gathered from the northern flanks of the Himalayan crests, in Tibet, for example, where one speaks of *mi-gheu*.²⁴

For example, on the northern flanks of the Himalaya a flood had, one day, brought the body of one of these creatures and dropping near some rocks. Many inhabitants of a nearby village had examined the corpse, which resembled that of an average man, but was covered with reddish hair and had a pointed skull.

The story of the Himalayan cycle would not be complete if I didn't mention the names of some learned European visitors.

²³ See: *Sciences et Avenir*, Paris, No. 134, pp 174-179, April 1958.

²⁴ In English, one generally writes it as *mi-gu* and in German, *mi-gö*, which is closer to the correct pronunciation. One also finds in the literature erroneous transcriptions, such as *ui-go* and *mirka*.

WEYAUWEGA CHRONICLE
90 Years of Service to the Weyauwega-Fremont Community

Publishers WEYAUWEGA, WIS., DECEMBER 26, 1968

Highlights of 1968

JANUARY

Looker, son of Mr. and Mrs. Fremont is the first baby born in Weyauwega-Fremont area.....A bill is approved by the Rural Electrification Administration for the purpose of connecting Pay Sippi and Weyauwega to single party service.... of Riverview Resort, Fremont.....State decides to improve roads to Weyauwega.....Lions announce racing program for July..... announced: Beth Ann Tew to Lynn Abraham to William R. Lynn to Richard Kitchell; Kathleen Dean Oehlke.....Married: Charles F. Beaman, Jr.; Myrtle Wienandt.....Indians win 59 Weyauwega beats Amherst, 78-67..... Spiegelberg, Helen Boelter, Abed Doede, Adeline Newlon, Lonny Wilcox, Clara Wilson to Mr. and Mrs. Darwin Dinter to Mr. and Mrs. Ronald

“Abominable Snowmen” sightings



Writer, scientist join hunt for Yeti

Two men, one from Paris, France, and one from New York, stopped in at Hod Weyauwega last Friday evening. This was not just a casual visit to our fair city. They were here for a definite purpose. They were here to investigate the reports of a Yeti (or creature, or beast, or animal) that had been seen in the Fremont area during the deer hunting season.

One of the men was Dr. Ivan T. Sanderson, director of "The Society for the Investigation of the Unexplained," New York. He is also author of the book, "The Abominable Snowmen," and science editor of Argosy magazine.

The other gentleman was Dr. Bernard Heuvelmans of Paris. He is a Doctor of Zoology, has his own radio and television show in Paris and is author of two books: "On the Track of Unknown Animals," and "In the Wake of the Serpent." Both books have been published in this country. Dr. Heuvelmans is in the United States at this time to confer with his publisher in regard to his latest book.

Before we tell you more about the Yeti investigation

Dr. Bernard Heuvelmans and Ivan T. Sanderson

By some strange coincidence, a few days after their adventure in Minnesota, Sanderson and Heuvelmans were interviewed by a Wisconsin paper about an alleged sighting of "some kind of yeti" in the swamps near Fremont.

First of all, there is our compatriot the orientalist Valero-Gratchev, who after spending most of his life in Buddhist monasteries, returned to Leningrad in the 1930's. He pretended that he had at that time presented reports and manuscripts on the "Wild Man" to scientific circles, but that he had been strongly advised to keep his mouth shut. His notes have been lost, but shortly before his death in 1960 his revelations were gathered from his very lips by L.V. Bianki.

Another of our compatriots, Yuri N. Roerich, the son of the famous painter Nikolai Roerich and the brother of the living painter, was to reveal his information in a more appropriate setting. This erudite man, who had spent half his life in the Himalayas actually presented the data acquired over many years, as well as his views on a piece of skin which he had personally examined, to our Commission of the Academy of Sciences. There is no reason, and I would even say that no one has the right to doubt the veracity of a learned man who has absorbed the enigmatic spirit of the Buddhist Orient to the point that it shows in his face. "One thing is sure, concluded Roerich: there lives on the slopes of the Himalayas a creature, an anthropoidal ape let's say, which remains unknown to Science. All considered, it seems to me that information about it has too often been repeated, with too many precise details, to pretend that there is

nothing there but folk tales."

Two more names. Between 1950 and 1953, the Austrian traveler and ethnographer René von Nebesky-Wojkovitz transcribed in Tibet and in the Himalayas testimonies which confirm Y.N Roerich's notes. Further, in 1956, the Polish journalist Marian Belitsky added a whole gathering of new observations. What they heard from witnesses convinced them.

Alas! Even this flood of additional information could not definitely lead to the universal acceptance that "something" exists. Occidental researchers are stuck on a sand bar. As long as that "something" is not incorporated within one of its categories, there is no momentum to prevent turning back to the eternal question: does it exist or not? The public is led astray from the essential question by "indisputable proofs" as much as by pompous denials. On this matter, a Chicago publisher proposed to Edmund Hillary, the famous alpinist, to finance his next expedition in the Himalayas subject to the specific condition that he return with material evidence of the Snowman or else with an equally convincing proof of its non-existence. It seemed that the second option appeared more realizable to Sir Edmund, whose prestigious name was to cover activities in Nepal that had little to do with mountain climbing. Thinking ahead, the conqueror of Everest had a "yeti scalp" fabricated with the skin of a wild goat, then supposedly asked the monks for their special permission to bring it with great fanfare to America and Europe. Bernard Heuvelmans was the first to identify the kind of ungulate, the serow (*Capricornis sumatraensis*), whose skin had been used to make the phony scalp. Other experts concurred. It almost led to the conclusion that the snowman had at last been debunked. Sir Edmund's stratagem had backfired and had caused irreparable damage.



Sugar-loaf shaped scalps have been suggested as material objects likely to prove the existence of the *yeti*. The one shown here, from the Khumjung Monastery in Nepal, was worn by the lamas charged with impersonating the creature in religious ceremonies.

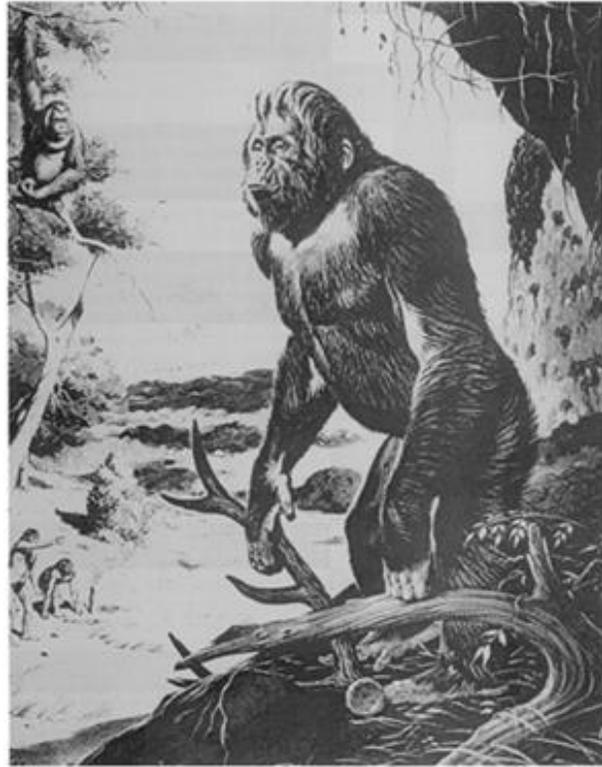
It was of the highest importance that the object of our research be kept outside the realm of science. Thus, no one among European scientists uttered the least complaint when an iron curtain fell upon the scene. In 1961, the Nepalese government enacted strict measures to protect the Snowman. Henceforth, anyone wishing to go after the *yeti* was to advance a sum of 5,000 rupees. The *yeti* itself, dead or alive, and even photographs were declared property of the state; it became illegal to export them out of Nepal. It is actually strictly forbidden to kill a Snowman, even in self-defense. Further, Nepalese are not allowed to provide information about the creature to foreigners without the government's permission.

It was at about the same time that Tibet was also closed as a source of information. You may well ask yourself what hidden hand had emerged from the shadows to put an end to the discovery process. Well, it was simply the lamaist clergy. And the worst was that the rest of mankind could not raise the least objection against such measures.



Heuvelmans managed to show that such scalps were made from the skin of the serow, a local mountain goat, to look like the shape of a *yeti*'s head.

So, what does the *yeti* look like?



Heuvelmans' portrait of the greater *yeti* (left) was based on the corpus of eyewitness descriptions, an examination of its footprints, and of the scalps and masks fabricated in its image. *Gigantopithecus* (right) was a kind of terrestrial orangutan which lived about 400,000 years ago in the Kwangsi province. This reconstruction by Neave Parker shows it in the company of its cousins the orangutan and *Sinanthropus*.

Slowly, but alas not definitively, the absurd idea that it was a bear was put aside. It was actually a real biped. Not a human, but an animal. Classical zoology had thus drawn a conclusion: if it was not a man, it had to be an ape. An anthropoid ape, of course, since it resembled a human. That being said, it differed quite appreciably from any known anthropoids. Only Odette Tchernine thought of comparing it to the orangutan. However, even an anomalous relative of the great Sumatra-Borneo red-haired ape was quite incapable of walking upright using only its hind legs. The anatomical distance between it and humans is too great.

Some have suggested a new genus, or even a new family of anthropoid apes. Others very cleverly, thought of *Gigantopithecus*, a Chinese fossil resurrected for the occasion. Perhaps its best that all that was ever found of that extinct ape was enormous jaws and gigantic teeth (Fig. xx).²⁵ We have to recognize that eyewitnesses of the Snowman sometimes spoke of a giant

²⁵ I have to admit that it was I [BH] who originated that hypothesis, put forward in May 1952, as a mere possibility. Of all primates known at that time from material remains, the real giant *Gigantopithecus*

creature with black hair found only in the high mountains, sometimes of creatures about as tall as a young teen-ager, and with red hair. It was then postulated that there were in Asia two different types of unknown primates. It was even suggested that there might be three!



As early as 1952, Heuvelmans (seen here with the 'father' of the coelacanth, Prof. J.L.B. Smith) suggested a link between the greater Himalayan *yeti* and the fossil *Gigantopithecus* from China.

The Snowman's opponents have repeatedly declared that if even a single tangible piece – be it a fingernail – of evidence was available, there would be no further opposition to taking it

seemed to me to be the only one that could explain the presence in Asia of very tall Snowmen. The idea was taken over by Dr. Vladimir Tschernozky, who developed it with great skill, from an anatomical perspective. It was also considered a possibility in that same year by one of the greatest American authorities in anthropology, Dr. Carlton Coon. It was then adopted by Dr. Toni Hagen, who studied the geology of Nepal for the United Nations (1961), and by an excellent British primatologist Dr. Vernon Reynolds, and finally by American naturalists McNeely, Cronin and Emery (1973). As for myself, I think it remains today the most likely hypothesis, given the actual state of science, capable of explaining the reports about really gigantic "hairy men" and of giant footprints such as found on the shores of Lake Tian Shan, or those attributed to the North American *Bigfoot*.

seriously. It would then satisfy the requirements of classical zoological research. They were however caught by surprise, because there is indeed a fingernail; there is even a finger attached to it, and then a whole hand!

False scalps of course did not prove that the animal did not exist!

And that is the reason why I had to study the comparative anatomy of the hand in anthropoids and humans. The object of the examination was a sacred relict of the Pangboche monastery: the hand of a *yeti*, rather desiccated, chopped off at some time in the past, with the bones partly denuded and visible. Peter Byrne had been the first in 1958 to receive permission to pull it out of the rags in which it was kept and photograph it. The following year, he had returned to the monastery and had taken more photos of the mummified hand, but unfortunately after having it somehow "clumsily" repaired.

In 1960, Teizo Ogawa, a professor of comparative anatomy at Tokyo University, came and took another series of photos. However, he expected to find the hand of an anthropoid ape, not a human hand, and he stored the photos away in a back drawer. That's where they stayed until the day when I asked him to send them to me to compare it with earlier photos. No, they were not the hand of an ape, but neither were they that of a human, strictly speaking: a knowledgeable observer could detect significant differences from the harmony of the hand of a Modern Man.

What kind of differences? Fortunately, the hands of some Neanderthals have been carefully examined. And the differences seen in the Pangboche hand are similar to those seen in fossil Neanderthal hands!

At the same time, on the other side of the world, in the United States, Prof. George A. Agogino was studying a fragment of dried up muscle tissue taken from that same hand, all that could be obtained from the superstitious Pangboche monks. Microscopic analysis and dating revealed that the hand had been cut off and mummified 300 years ago.

So, there is a material proof of the narrow-mindedness of western researchers. The mysterious beast is simply a Neanderthal man!

I only managed to publish a short note on the Pangboche hand, however in the company of eminent authorities, professors G.P. Dementiev and M.F. Nestourkh. Later, I consulted Prof. L.P. Astanin, who had written his doctoral thesis on *The Comparative Anatomy of the Hand of Man and of the Higher Apes*. Our deductions as to the nature of the Pangboche hand finally converged.

To carry out this definitive analysis, Astanin took charge of making measurements from the various photos. As for myself, I endeavored to add to the complementary anthropological parallels between the Snowman and Neanderthals. Together, we waited a whole year for a response from the *Archives of Anatomy, Histology and Embryology* to which we had submitted our article. Its editorial board was in the middle of a Homeric conflict. One of its members threatened to commit suicide rather than allow publication of such a heretical piece. It was best to withdraw, which is what we decided to do

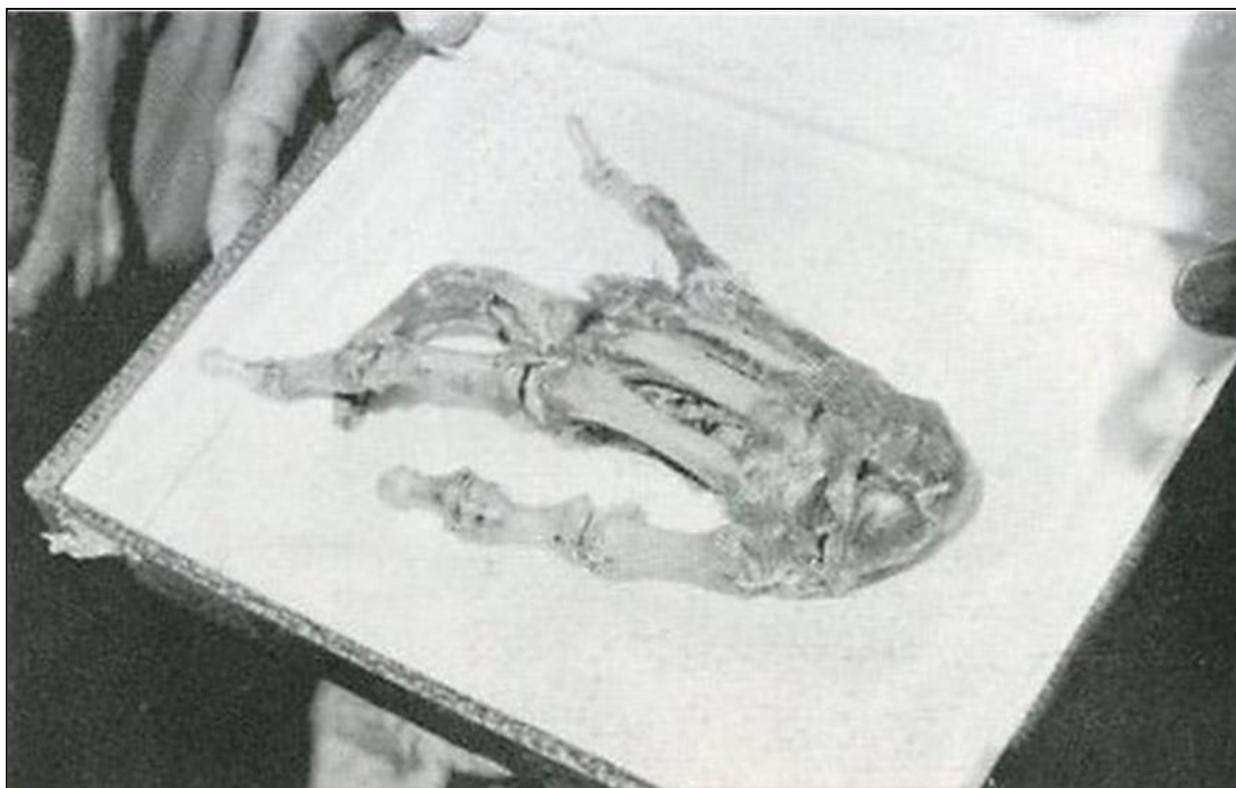
As for the footprints in the snow, a precise diagnostic was long overdue. Specifically since that day in 1952 when in the Witch's Grotto in Toirano, Italy, neanderthalian footprints were discovered in time-hardened clay in a recently opened passage. The British anatomist (of Russian origin) Vladimir Tschernezky and others were struck by their bizarre appearance and their resemblance to the *yeti* prints photographed by Shipton. However that was for them a matter of dismay rather than a revelation. The lack of reflexion really misled western researchers.

Using the clearest track found by Shipton, Tschernezky had constructed a rather strange looking plaster model, of unprecedented appearance: he had ignored the movement of the toes. It

is of course hard to imagine the movement of the paleanthrope's feet, a biped quite different from an ape, but which did not yet quite walk like a human. What was the meaning of these pads at the end of the toes?

Actually, it is only the discovery in Tian-Chan in 1963 of a footprint of the greater paleanthrope, marvelously preserved in fresh clay for at most four or five days, which led to a quantum leap in the interpretation of neanderthalian footprints.

Today, the rich lode of the Himalayan cycle has found its correct place within our body of knowledge. The Himalaya is no more than the extreme southern boundary of that immense central Asian region haunted by the neanderthalian survivors. The high peaks are not particularly their typical habitat. The high passes are only frequented by large solitary males, similar to such individuals well known to hunters among wild boars, elephants or moose. The females and their young rarely venture on the southern flanks of the range. Their habitat is further north. As to the smaller *yetis*, they represent another age group: adolescence, up to maturity, with its own specific ecology.



More convincing than scalps, was the mummified hand preserved for three centuries at the Pangboche Monastery (Nepal) and examined by Peter Byrne in 1958. In 1960 by Prof. Teizo Ogawa of Tokyo. In the meantime, it had clumsily been repaired after some researchers had taken small samples. The analysis of these photos by Porshnev and Astanin was to reveal some definite neanderthalian traits. But was this the hand of the *yeti* or that of a Tibetan wildman?

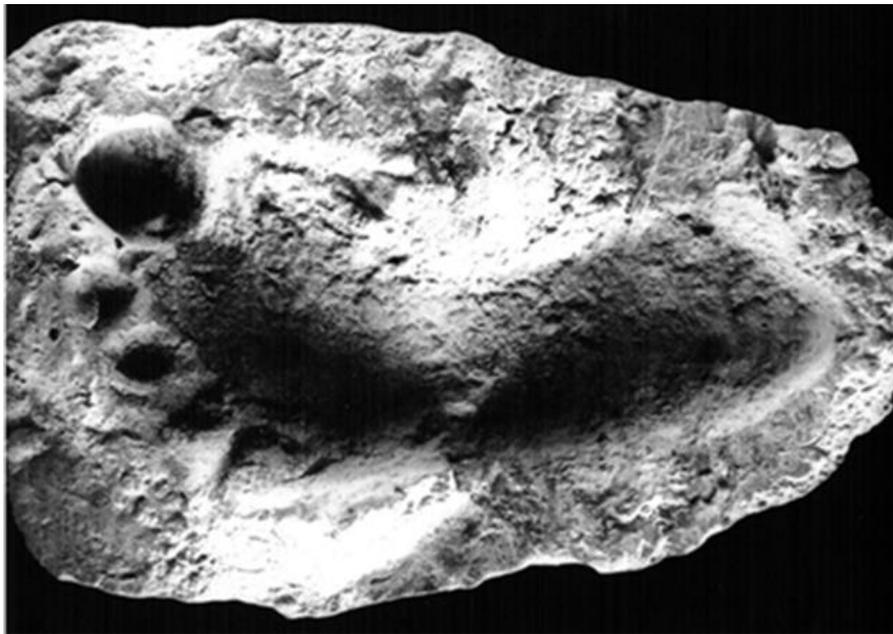


Footprints photographed in the snow by alpinist Eric Shipton.

Within the whole Himalayan range, the young and the old are scattered over a vast area because of the extreme bareness of the habitat. A western author estimated at 4,000 the number of individuals wandering over that immense area. They undergo seasonal migrations. They avoid humans. In the Baroun valley, where the expeditions launched to find them had become too frequent, they vanished completely within two years.



Heuvelmans' hypothesis regarding the possible relation between the greater *yeti* and *Gigantopithecus* was brilliantly developed in 1954 by British anatomist Vladimir Tschernetzky, who probably made too much of a deal of the plaster cast modeled on a single one of Shipton's footprint. bizarre and apparently deformed.



As for the *Yeti* footprints, a comparison was made between these outsized prints and fossil Neanderthal prints found in the Grotta di Basura, Toirano, Italy. shown here (21.2 cm long, 9.1 cm wide).



However, there is a clear resemblance between neanderthalian footprints and those found in 1973 by a disciple of Dr. Rintchen in the area of Lake Tolbo-nour (Baian-oleguei province) in Outer Mongolia. Here is a cast of one of them.

CHAPTER FIVE

TAKE-OFF AND CRASH LANDING

The sinking of the prestigious Commission of the Soviet Academy of Sciences

The author of the science-fiction short story "*The Man Who Saw It*" knew nothing about all the above, nor anything of the whole question. He simply wrote about a lone explorer in pursuit, on foot, somewhere in the Pamir, of the last of the Snowmen. The pursuer had a definite advantage: his knapsack. He carried with him a supply of food; the pursued had to find food as it went. It was a wretched creature. At the end of the story, both protagonists fall into a mountain torrent. The man survives; the snowman, exhausted, drowns.

That was of course only a literary entertainment. But it turns out that the story was written by the leader of the expedition organized by the Soviet Academy of Sciences precisely to look for the Snowman. The author, K.V. Staniukovitch had written it *before* the expedition, not really knowing what he was looking for. However, he published it as such after his return (in *Vokrug Svieta* [*Around the World*], No. 12, 1958), having learned nothing, nor forgotten anything.

Subsequently, Staniukovitch was to publish other texts on the topic, just as entertaining, but equally improbable.

The whole thing started in 1958 when I walked into the office of the President of the USSR Academy of Sciences, Academician A.N. Nesmeyanov. That was quite an extraordinary day in my life. Three days earlier, at the Anthropological Institute, we were still debating contradictory hypotheses and estimating vague probabilities. But it so happened that, driven by some great inspiration, I succeeded during that memorable conversation in convincing president Nesmeyanov of putting my report on the agenda of a session of the Praesidium two days later. I had a single night to prepare a resolution, compile the list of invitees, and that of likely candidates for membership in the committee which I wanted to create: the Commission for the Study of the Snowman, reporting to the Praesidium of the Academy of Sciences. Tactfully, and rather timidly, Nesmeyanov had suggested that I propose as chair an academician, or at least a corresponding member of the Academy. I had answered him that the only one who had published anything on the subject, namely in two articles published in the *Information of the Geographical Society* was the geologist S.V. Obrutchev, a corresponding member of the Academy.²⁶

Obrutchev was the first to overcome the inertia of editorial offices. Before him, the mathematician A.D. Alexandrov and the geographer A.V. Korolev had failed in their attempts merely to present the facts borrowed from the western press. Obrutchev was wearing the same blinders as the Anglo-Saxon school, bound solely to the exploration of the Himalayas, and did not even suspect that there was also a Russian school of thought. He was thinking about some anthropoidal biped, and not about "the primordial Asiatic man." In any case, it wasn't so much the zoology that interested him as that of the obvious presence of something unknown, discovered by mountain climbers in the Himalayas. As Academician Nesmeyanov had suggested that I compile two lists of participants, some supporters and some opponents, I had invited

²⁶ Sergei Vladimirovich Obrutchev, born in 1891, was an explorer of northeast Asia and the author of numerous works in geology and geomorphology and of a number of travelogues.

among the latter, based on his publication of a disbelieving note, K.V. Staniukovitch, a professor of geobotany. To my great surprise, instead of opposing me, perhaps feeling what was happening, he expressed himself favorably in favor of my plans. Chairman Obrutchev trusted Staniukovitch. Besides myself, two other vice-chairs were named: Staniukovitch, of course, and a really strong supporter, S.E. Kleinenberg, a professor of zoology.

Academician I.E. Tamm, who participated in the work of the Commission along with biologists and geographers, provided precious moral support. The task of scientific secretary was assigned to anthropologist Andrei A. Chmakov; his colleagues from then on looked askance at him.

It was like a tale from the *Thousand and One Nights*. Literally, first of all, for during the days, we were all busy with our own professional activities, but also figuratively, because our nocturnal meetings were carried on in an ambiance of oriental fantasy, where the fabulous wealth of discovery promised by the proposed expedition to the Pamir was to our eyes the equivalent of Ali-Baba's treasure. Two goals emerged for the Commission: on the one hand, to gather together for analysis all the information obtained worldwide on a scientific problem as virgin as a fresh layer of snow, and on the other to act as a scientific steering committee for an expedition to the Top of the World, specifically launched in the pursuit of the creature mentioned by hydrologist Panin.

The first objective was by far the most urgent, for in order to provide practical advice, there was a need to accumulate mountains of concrete knowledge. However, I have to say that everyone was obsessed with the idea of the expedition. Ha! To reach out and capture!

Among us, the most familiar with the Pamir was K.V. Staniukovich, who was thus most suited as expedition leader. As he was most concerned with completing the geobotanical map of the eastern Pamir, he insisted that the expedition take a multi-disciplinary character, including a number of specialists in different disciplines. Gradually, the Snowman was slyly pushed aside.

The expedition was organized from the very beginning in its minutest details, as when a whole town is constructed in a movie for a photo scene. There was a definite need for a motorized inflatable boat, as well as for a rapid launch to be used on the waters of Lake Sarez; gigantic telephoto lenses were also required to scrutinize the remotest corners of valleys and mountains; tracking dogs specialized in following prey in rocky terrain. Those dogs had to be trained ahead of time in zoos using chimpanzee urine as a stimulus. That being said, no consideration was made of the fact that some of the rock climbing would perhaps be beyond the abilities of the best alpinists.

However, the makeup of our team was rather surprising, to say the least. The starting date was rapidly approaching but our team still didn't include a single zoologist: the leader dismissed one after the other all those suggested. Finally, the great expedition included four of them: two ornithologists, one specialist on seals and an expert on bats. To even things out, there was also an entomologist. That wouldn't have been such a problem if I hadn't learned in one of our nocturnal meetings – alas! Too late to do anything about it – that none of those had ever read anything on the Snowman, and that our expedition leader had not mentioned it to them and had not even informed them of the detailed instructions which we had prepared. In fact, they had only been recruited to complete their own collections of birds, rodents or insects. It was following a similar process, for an expedition supposedly in search of the Snowman, that the head archaeologist joined, because he was short of funding for his digs; so was the chief ethnographer, who had bluntly responded to the invitation: "I'd even go looking for the Devil if I could get to the Vantch Valley, where they speak a fascinating dialect!" Alpinists and film-makers, each with their own

agenda, were also participating in the expedition. Finally, the leader introduced within each group a number of plant collectors for the herbariums: for him, that was the main objective of the enterprise.

One night, after a conference by the English alpinist Evans, a sportive-looking woman approached me. She became a member of our team like a ship plowing through the sea. Off the cuff, she asked me: "You are indeed the person who is concerned about the Snowman? Yes. I want to devote my life to this problem."



Dr. M.J. Koffmann.

I thought she was joking. But she immediately set to persuade me that she had to be a member of the Pamir expedition: she was a physician and a surgeon, anatomist and alpinist. I often later realized that she had in no way exaggerated in claiming that she was to be an essential member of her team. Without being discouraged, Jeanne Josephovna Koffmann managed to get herself assigned as a second medical doctor for the Pamir expedition.²⁷ Currently, systematic research on wild men of the Caucasus, called *kaptars* or *almastys*, is carried out mainly by a French woman, Dr. Marie-Jeanne Koffmann, a surgeon in Moscow hospitals, a captain in the

²⁷ Actually, Dr. Marie Jeanne Koffmann, about whom much will be said later was French, and even Parisian: she was born on the Blvd. Saint-Michel. After her baccalaureate, she joined her parents in Russia in 1935. After medical school at the University of Moscow, she became a surgeon in the city's hospitals. An expert mountain climber, she participated in many high altitude expeditions, particularly in 1947 in the initial exploration of that practically unknown area. Her exceptional skills had made her a captain of the Soviet army during the Second World War: she fought during the battle for the Caucasus as the second in command of an alpine unit and was awarded seven Soviet decorations.

Soviet army and an expert mountain climber.

The fingers of one hand would suffice to enumerate those members of the expedition who really thought of it as it should have been. The leader was a strong voice in formal meetings, but only listened to the advice of a few, more familiar with the Pamir. Professor V.V. Nemytsky, an experienced explorer, insisted that the expedition should access the southern and western areas of the Pamir, especially along the upper reaches of the Yazgulem River. His arguments were supported by other specialists, but Staniukovitch preferred to keep these itineraries in reserve and advocated as a first objective the exploration of the eastern Pamir: the valleys of the Pchart and the Baliand-Kyik and Lake Sarez. Of course, there had been some reports from those areas of rare encounters with our Asiatic wild and hairy vagabond. However it just so happened that for that area, the geobotanical map under preparation was far from complete: it mainly consisted of a series of blank spaces.

To top it all, our leader did not pick as a starting date the spring, when snow is found at the bottom of the valleys and footsteps leave eloquent traces of passage through the passes, but summer, when snow cover recedes beyond the vegetation limit and even beyond the rocky lifeless heights. But the meager Pamir fauna blooms in the summer. Those herbaria would cost a pretty penny.

As to why the Pamir had been selected as a region to explore, here's what retired general M.S. Topilsky was to tell me three years later, when I finally met that legendary character.

In 1925, Topilsky was the commissar of a military detachment on the tracks of a counter-revolutionary group retreating eastwards across the Pamir. In the high mountain *kichlaks* (villages) he and his men had heard stories of "wild-men" who lived at even higher altitudes, known from rare encounters and especially from the howls that they made. Trekking up a mountain path in pursuit of the fugitives, somewhere in the Vantch and Yazgulem ranges, the detachment found a series of barefoot tracks which crossed the path and ended at the foot of a cliff too steep to be climbed by a man. There were also stools resembling human ones, which included remains of dry berries.

The fugitives were finally caught up with because of a pause that they had made, in a cave below a glacier. The hidey-hole was silently surrounded. When the machine guns started firing and grenades to explode, the ice began to slide down. Only a few men from the cave escaped from the avalanche, firing wildly. A wounded Uzbek said that a hairy wild man had sprung out of a fissure in the cave shouting inarticulate cries; struck in the firefight, he was probably buried nearby under a pile of snow. His corpse was found; he had been hit by three bullets.

"At first sight, continued general Topilsky, I had the impression of seeing the corpse of a monkey: it was entirely covered by thick hair. But I knew that there were no monkeys in the Pamir, and its body was very close in shape to that of a man. We pulled at the hair and convinced ourselves that it was not some kind of disguise. We flipped the corpse over on its back and belly a few times and made measurements. A careful and lengthy examination by our medical assistant confirmed that it could in no way be an ordinary human being.

"It was a male, 1.65 to 1.70 m tall. Judging from his hair, greying in some areas, it was old and perhaps very old. Overall, its hair was greyish brown. More brown on the back, greyer on the belly. On the chest, the hair was longer but sparser, while on the abdomen, it was denser and shorter. Overall, its pelt was coarse, without an under layer.

"As there were less hair on the lower buttocks, our medical assistant concluded that this creature sat as a human being. It was on its thighs that the hair was densest. On the other hand, there was practically none on the knees, where there were calluses. The legs were less hairy than

the thighs, decreasing towards the bottom. The feet and especially their sole were completely bare and covered with hard brownish skin. The shoulders and the arms were covered with hair, getting less dense going down towards the hands. There were still a few hair on the back of the hand, but none in the palm, whose skin was rough and callused. Hair covered all around the neck but there were few on the face. The face was dark. There were neither beard nor a real mustache: only a few stray hair on the upper lip suggested the shadow of a mustache.

"On the forward part of the head, above the forehead, there were no hair as in a case of baldness extending towards the back; however on the back of the head, there was mass of thick hair feeling almost like felt. The corpse was lying with its eyes wide open and its teeth exposed. The eyes were dark. The teeth were very large and straight but did not differ in shape of those of men. The forehead was sloping. The prominent cheekbones gave the face a certain Mongol appearance. The nose was flat, very deep-set at the top. The ears were hairless and apparently more pointed at the top and with longer lobes than in humans. The lower jaw was massive.

"This creature had a wide and powerful chest and well developed muscles. We did not notice on the body any structural differences with humans. The genitals appeared human. As to the length of the extremities, we did not notice anything special except that the hand appeared a little wider than in humans, and the foot was both wider and shorter."

It was not possible to bring back the corpse. The detachment buried it *in situ*, somewhere among the rocks of the Yazgulem.

Within the same geographical area, the following report was presented to our commission by A.I. Maliuta, an ex-KGB agent who was in function in the Vantch area for six years.

Hunters who went into the hills to hunt *arkhars* (mouflons), *kyik* (ibex) and *bars* (snow leopard) often told him of the existence at high altitudes of man-like creatures, particularly in the upper Yazgulem, near the Fedtchenko glacier, in the direction of Bartang. "It's interesting to note, added Maliuta, that except in the *kichlak* (village) of Yazgulem, in the Vantch area, I never heard, in any corner of the Pamir, mention of the Snowman."

It is not far from that same area, at the Fedtchenko glacier observatory, that in March 1936 radio-meteorologist G.N. Tebenikhin witnessed an event which, in his words, "was never completely elucidated." A bipedal creature had broken a post near the observatory. It easily evaded the skiers who pursued it for hours at the surface of the glacier. I was dark brown. From time to time it would sit and allow its pursuers to approach it, but never at less than a kilometer. It finally disappeared by sliding on its buttocks down a snowy chimney, while also braking with its feet.

In 1933, while going over a pass to access the upper valley of the Vantch from that of the Yazgulem, academician D.I. Chtcherbakov was surprised to discover bare footprints resembling those of human beings. All these footprints however were clearly different from those of human beings, or from those of a bear, by the outward spread of the big toe.

In 1938, another geologist, A. Chalimov, was crossing the same pass in the company of tadjik sherpas when they pointed out the footsteps of a "wild man" who had just passed by and who had undoubtedly watched the group marching across the pass. "The trace of the big toe, Chalimov added, was significantly larger than that of the other toes, and also spread to the side."

It's worth noting that in the same area, Chalimov's companions had identified bear tracks with just as much confidence.

Many other reports drew our attention towards the upper course of the Yazgulem.

Yet another source of reports point to the south of the Alitchur chain and the Valkan. Notably, the lady painter M.M. Bepalko had written to Pronin: "On July 29, 1943, I saw exactly

the same creature that you saw in the Alitchur valley." This lady was sketching in the area.

Finally, important information regarding the existence of hairy bipeds were provided in 1958 by geologist S.I. Proskurko, and in 1960 by the skilled tracker A. Grez, a member of the border patrol.

However, those are not the areas where K.V. Staniukovich sent the teams of the Snowman expedition. He chose a much less promising itinerary. Furthermore, a few days ahead of our team, a small group of local researchers had come through: they had attempted

To attract the wild men by lighting fires along the way! They had also supplemented their diet by shooting the local game. Where they had camped, we found a number of spent shells.

The local people did what they could to help. However a shepherd, who had told of his encounter with a *goul-biavane*, as they call it there, ended up, according to the report, by confessing that such an encounter had never taken place. No doubt, the unwelcome zoologists had been told stories.

I was the only active member of the commission and of the scientific council of the expedition to travel to the Pamir both as a supervisor and a collaborator. The expedition headquarter was at the Tchetekty botanical station, of which Staniukovitch happened to be the director. The air is thin and every move is exhausting. It is said that the eastern Pamir is as bare as the palm of the hand. There is certainly no tree to be seen, but it is a palm studded with giant hills, resembling the humps of a camel. No scenery anywhere, except perhaps in Tibet, brings such a feeling of smallness and loneliness as the eastern Pamir, with its gigantic hillocks, silence and desolation.

Is it by merely chance that in his amusing book "*On the Tracks of a Surprising Enigma*" (Moscow 1965) Staniukovitch mentions the names of all participants in the expedition except mine? (That said however, he did refund my travel expenses) Why that omission? We never quarreled. Although he welcomed me most gracefully as an honored guest, each moment of my presence was like a reproach, and not always a quiet one. Staniukovitch was authoritarian, even dictatorial. He took no account in his decisions of the instructions which we had so carefully elaborated, nor of my growing despair. He was a fan of the Pirates' Poem.²⁸

I had been dragged along a fantastic itinerary, full of magic and romanticism, towards turquoise nearly inaccessible Lake Sarez, enshrined within the peaks as in the heart of a citadel.

It was nothing but a series of climbs and descents on horseback among moon-like fields of rock and boulders or gravel screes; cruises by canoe or motor-boat on the virgin surface of a sixty square kilometer mirror; nights spent camping on rare ledges on the flanks of steep valleys. A marvelous, unforgettable journey which alas, had nothing to do with the goals of our expedition!

Returning to Tchetekty, I resolved no longer to waste my time riding about hills and vales aimlessly. I joined the only group which offered the hope of contributing something to our knowledge: the investigating ethnographers.

Manifestly, we were not yet ready to probe Nature itself. First, we had to learn from those people who had already become familiar with her through many generations. Four of us, in a truck, spent two weeks visiting the yurts of shepherds scattered around the eastern Pamir as well

²⁸ A reference, I believe, to the banned poet Nikolai Stepanovitch Gumilov (1886-1921), executed by the Cheka for his monarchist activities. The poem, whose striking and exotic style is reminiscent of Hérédia's, celebrated the great mariners of the past, from Ulysses to Cook, and includes among others these verse, freely translated: *And you, the King's hounds, bold freebooters; hoarding your gold in some remote haven.*

as the teeming villages strung along the turbulent rivers of the western Pamir, the mountainous Badakhchan. What a load of contrasts! An orgy of the world's greenest vegetation; the wildest streams; the most turbulent torrents!

Interrogations followed each other, yielding information somewhat outdated or mythical, and only a pair of eyewitness reports, coming however from perfectly respectable people who affirmed having seen a *goul-biavane* with their own eyes in well-defined circumstances. There was nothing fantastic or extravagant in their stories.

After returning to headquarters, A. L. Grunberg and I made an additional foray in a border area of the Pamir, the Tchech-Tiubé, mentioned by a number of interviewees. Out there, we gathered in situ much more accurate signs, always pointing towards the south-west, where the Wild Man was said to be still living. This re-orientation of our scientific compass was the most positive, perhaps the only outcome of our 1958 Pamir expedition. We were returning home with a series of rather recent and biologically acceptable descriptions of *adame djapaisy* gathered among the Kirghiz from southwest Xinkiang. Our compass consistently pointed in that direction; further studies were to confirm its accuracy.

I left the Pamir in September. Soon afterwards, the expedition fell apart. Staniukovitch provided a dramatic description of the following months: alone in the company of native guides, he strove neck and crop through snow and storm in a desperate attempt to discover the *goul-biavane* in the frozen peaks. It is only afterwards that he bitterly announced: "Adieu, enigma!" Let's note that for that last stage of the expedition, there stands no other account than his, not even the daily log that must accompany all field work.

My critical report to the Praesidium of the Academy of Sciences was lost in the dust of "notes without scientific interest". On the other hand, the expedition leader's report easily stood out. In January 1959, he and I met, like Lenski and Oneigin,²⁹ at a session of the Academy's Praesidium attended by a large crowd. I presented the theoretical aspects of the problem. Sadly, people were not there to hear about that. They had come to a funeral. S.V. Obrutchev read the report and conclusions of the expedition, written for him by K.V. Staniukovitch.

What strange stories we heard that day! It turned out that the main result of our expedition had been the discovery by the archaeological team of Paleolithic remains in the Pamir. That implied, apparently, that the Wild Man could no longer inhabit that area since tens of millennia by virtue of a well-known biological law: the incompatibility of coexistence of related species on the same territory. A fortiori, logic would have dictated that such a creature could also not possibly have been met by contemporary hill people in Nepal and elsewhere.

We later learned that it was only thanks to the work of our Pamir expedition that a fundamental fact had been established, namely that the ecological conditions prevailing in that mountainous country clearly were incompatible with the presence of a large Primate. Actually, however, the ecology of the Pamir, particularly in the areas visited, had already been studied and was described well before our expedition. It was well known to the organizers and our foray had brought no significant improvement to what was already known.

What had happened? Once, I had told Obrutchev: "I would have never bothered with the Snowman if I had thought for a moment that it was only an ape." Obrutchev had replied: "As for me, I would never have bothered with the Snowman if I had thought it might be a Neanderthal: it is a still unknown bipedal ape." Legend says that when two storm clouds meet lightning, thunder and showers follow. Two different and opposing opinions had taken shape in us and had clashed

²⁹ Meaning in a duel, as did the protagonists of Pushkin's famous novel, childhood friends transformed into enemies by a romantic rivalry.

within a common cause. A destructive storm was inevitable. On stage, it appeared as a comedy; backstage, it was however a real tragedy.

So, who then was the loser in this confrontation if not he who proposed the dissolution of the commission which he headed?

CHAPTER SIX

DAY-TO-DAY ROUTINE AND SCIENTIFIC PROGRESS

The successes of Soviet researchers and their impact in the West

On that day, the great university auditorium was filled with unusually youthful faces. It was a traditional "Tuesday" of young Moscovite naturalists of all ilks.

"Today, announced the president, we will hear about one of the greatest discoveries in the history of biology." Of all those minds enlightened here from week to week, many are those who pursue today a brilliant career in zoology and obtain licenses and doctorates. Living relict of the Old Russian intelligentsia which, like Bazarov,³⁰ threw themselves into the study of natural sciences by revolt as well as wisdom, their leader, Piotr Petrovich Smolin always had nothing but



Ten years after its official dissolution, the former Commission counted among its most active members (from left to right), Prof. P.P. Smolin, Prof. B.F. Porshnev, Prof. A.A. Machkovtsev, Dmitri Bayanov and Doctor Marie-Jeanne Koffmann.

³⁰ A hero of Turgenev, who embodies the lucid nihilistic views of the mid nineteenth century.

contempt for academic distinctions and pedantic lists of publications. He preferred the patient learning of the work of others and nature's vast laboratory; he quickly shared with the youth his vast knowledge, driven by a passionate love for life in all its forms.

He was also a wise commentator on Darwinism and a living zoological encyclopedia.

"One of the greatest discoveries in the history of biology". Piotr Petrovich was fully aware of the responsibility ensuing from such a declaration. He had drawn me in his circle as soon as he had studied the first two preliminary slices of our Commission's *Information Material*. Enlightened in some way by life, he had immediately felt that we were on the track of the truth.

P.P. Smolin was for many years my "university at home". Quick and stocky, he would appear at my home, sometime with a backpack full of books, always with new biogeographical generalizations in his charming white head, sometimes clean shaven, sometimes with an elfish silver beard. The Snowman was slowing cooking in the crucible of our discussions, each time emerging as a more homogeneous and coherent entity.

After the prestigious Commission created by the Praesidium of the Academy of Science fell apart, we decided to preserve at all costs its name and remains so that it would remain, in spite of it all, part of our national scientific community. Our team became a group of volunteers gathering for its first year in the office of the Society for the Protection of Nature. Andrei Chmakov continued in his role as scientific secretary. Thanks to him, we could publish with the help of that Society two more slices (the third and the fourth) of our *Information Material*.

In a cramped and misshapen room we listened to weighty talks by Khakhlov or Dementiev, we discussed the zoogeographical and anatomical bases of the unprecedented reconstitution which was gradually taking shape. Soon however, opponents emerged from within the Society for the Protection of the Environment. The Commission found itself homeless. It had become nearly immaterial. The next three slices of its *Information Material* were to remain unpublished. However, as a symbol of obstinacy, there continued to appear on their title-page the words: "Commission for the study of the question of the Snowman."

The composition of our team also changed with time. The "official members" were not the only ones to abandon us. Swallowed up by other tasks, S.E. Kleinenberg, who had contributed so much during the early stages of this original scientific endeavor, also had to leave us. However, new collaborators appeared. At the very beginning, Prof. A. A. Machkovtsev had uttered a cry of enthusiasm. By now, he was up to his neck in our work and had become one of the most active and constructive collaborators. His deep connection with nature, based on his passion for the hunt, his broad knowledge of natural sciences, and the freedom of action associated with his position allowed his thinking to take flight towards unexpected visions. Although he published little, he supported our cause with the vigor of Hercules. Within our abundant correspondence, his sparkling ideas took him to the Tien-Chan or the Caucasus, in the area of Baikal or Tuva, Polissie (in Belorussia) or in Yakutia, to the ancient Paleolithic or to medieval legends.

Nadiejda Nicolaievna Ladiguina-Kots devoted her whole life and all her experimental work to the study of anthropoid apes, most particularly chimpanzees and their behavior. When she read our earliest, unedited early documents, her attention was not drawn by their general theme, but by small details. Here and there, she found a reference to some habit, gesture or mimicry, to some emotive behavior with which she was more familiar than anyone in the world, through her work with anthropoid apes. Where could our modest informers have heard of such details, known only to primatologists? Mme Ladiguina-Kots drew for us a list of these striking details which, for her, were a guarantee of our veracity.

Whenever we met in the corridors of some scientific institution, she took me apart and told

me: "Courage! Don't give up! It's always been like that for most of the great discoveries."

I spoke above of the soaring performance of Dementiev, of Khakhlov's "second youth" and of the anatomical revelations of L.P. Astanin. It's impossible not to mention also primatologist Nestourkh, forever oscillating between fire and ice, sometimes extremely distrustful, others full of enthusiasm.

And how not to mention as well Prof. Burtchak-Abramovitch, a renowned expert on the living and extinct fauna of the Caucasus, where he had discovered the teeth of an extinct anthropoid ape.³¹ He was, in a way, our secret confidant, well aware of the mysteries of the problem, a silent and furtive explorer of the enigma or relict anthropoids. Another frequent contributor to our reunions, intimate as well as plenaries, was geographer N.I. Sobolevski. And who was it who always asked for more tasks, who always urged us on to carry more field work, who rushed into battle in the hope of triumphal successes. The indefatigable Marie-Jeanne Koffmann!

It is impossible to enumerate every one of these "underground" participants; we hope that those whose names were forgotten may excuse us. We had a two-fold problem to face: to dig for the truth with the right arm; to defend ourselves or attack with the left. For we were indeed persecuted and harassed, subject to a war of attrition and buried prematurely. Lugubrious croaking noises! Categorical denials! The weekly magazine *Priroda (Nature)* thundered: "The modern myth of the Snowman." The author, a geographer, had not even bothered to take a look at our documents. He was completely ignorant of all that he was trying to deny in a casual brushstroke. There were many such guardians of Holy Science. But there were others. Fully confident, the younger leaders of *Komsomolskaya Pravda* – M. Khvastunov³², Y. Golovanov and Y. Zertchaninov – were among our most stalwart defenders. Once in a while, some high circulation magazine opened its pages to us. We would surely not be morphed into a "myth"!

Even within our small sect, we were not all of the same opinion. Our common denominator was the undeniable reality of our "ward", as P.P. Smolin called it, linked to our common desire to devote all our energies to its study. That being said, there remained highly divergent views.

For example, one approach to the problem was purely zoological and another one purely anthropological, and it's only after years of working together that we managed to reconcile them.

What was most convincing for the zoologists was the fact that our "ward" strictly followed the laws of biogeography. It was part of nature, not some fantasy. The geographical area where it was observed coincided with the zone of distribution of a variety of other animals, among which the *Ular* (capercaillie or wood grouse), the *Borodatch* (bearded vulture), small rodents like *Pichtchuka* (pika) and *Surok* (marmot), mouflons, ibex, snow leopards and bear. On the other hand, the core area of information related to hominoid sightings overlays physical geographical areas characterized by watershed boundaries (mountain crests) or by closed watersheds, where streams fragment the landscape rather than joining land areas, emerging as springs to sink again underground further downstream.

Further, on a map of human population density, the distribution of our surviving paleanthropes always correspond to the least populated areas: those which are completely uninhabited or those with, on the average, one person per km²; and rarely (the exception being

³¹ *Udnabopithecus garedziensis*, so called because its teeth were dug up in 1939 in a place called Udabno, in Kakhetia, near the Garedji monastery. Exhumed by E. Gabachvili in a layer dating from the end of the Miocene or the beginning of the Pliocene, these fossils were described by him in 1945, jointly with paleontologist Burtchak-Abramovitch.

³² usually under the pseudonym Mikhail Vassiliev

the Caucasus) with 1 to 10 people per km².

Overall, there emerged behind our "ward" a consistent ecological background, in spite of the great diversity of local variations. The species we were studying was associated in some way with many others. The zoologists felt perfectly at home. But they insisted on considering the object of the study *outside any relation with man*, integrated within a well-defined faunal complex, an animal among other animals.

From another perspective, wasn't the wild man a shadow of man's presence? Wasn't the main geographical feature of its existence the sparsity of human beings? Its daily habits also created a boundary between it and humans. It's when the latter sleep – at dusk or dawn and at night, at those times when visibility is least, but also at mid-day siesta time – that the wild man is most active and walks about.

Finally, the paleothrope can no more tear itself away from humans than could their shadow. It is chained to them as much as by its extreme curiosity as by the temptation of parasitism. This mixture of attraction and repulsion is at the core of its animal nature.

From this ambivalence were born two opposing conceptions of the beginning of relations between Man and the Hairy Humanoid.

My fellows thought that humans had come to know these extravagant primates as part of the local fauna while settling new territories. They fought them or domesticated them, pushing away most of them towards deserted areas.

To this point of view, I opposed my own idea: yes, there had been such episodes, but these were only renewed encounters with long-lost relatives, a family get-together.

Gradually, my fellow researchers revised their estimate of our degree of kinship with our "ward". From the far remote anthropoid ape, even if bipedal, they moved slowly to the pithecanthrope. However, still, they insisted on seeing our relation with it as the result of a recent familiarization, and not the result of an ancient rupture. As for me, I reiterated my idea: either it was our most direct ancestor, our closest kin, or its degree of kinship with us is of much interest. If it's not a Neanderthal, its relation with humans can only be of interest to a narrow circle of systematic zoologists, and not to humanity as a whole. Its discovery would then have little impact on our conception of the world since it would not relate to the fundamental problem of the differentiation of Man, the speaking animal, from the rest of the animal kingdom.

Of course, our most recent ancestor, Neanderthal man, was subject, as are all animals, to the laws of ecology and biogeography. The more it differed from Man, the more it was subject to the rules of nature. It is closely linked to the world of plants and animals, for it is an animal. However it is part of that world as no other animal is, except itself.

In an antique Babylonian epic, based on even older Sumerian legends – truly antediluvian one might say – figures a paleanthrope who was said to have arrived in Mesopotamia from the mountains of Lebanon. He was called *Ea-bani* (the wild man), but appears in the legend as *Enkidu*.³³ Here is its description, as it appears in the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, transcribed by D.G. Reider: "It had the strength of a wild beast. Its body was entirely covered by thick hair. Although lacking human reasoning, it had the instinct of wild beasts. It was a friend of wild animals: it browsed in the company of gazelles and accompanied them to the watering hole. It took pity on quadrupeds and defended them against human hunters. Chivalrous giant, it filled up the pits dug by hunters to catch wolves and broke their traps. The creatures of the steppe saw in it a powerful defender and even predators approached it without fear. One day, hunters started to express their

³³ Actually, *Eabani* and *Enkidu* are synonyms: they are different transcriptions of the same ideogram. The second eventually prevailed over the first, which had long been current

discontent: they were catching less and less game."

The most ancient as well as the most recent reports, be they secret legends of shamanistic hunters or recent observations, all speak of a close and subtle link between the wild paleanthrope and animals, including even the top predators. Animals are not afraid of it. Although it benefits as a carrion eater of the antagonism between some species, it remains at peace with all of them. It manages to attract any kind of animal by imitating its cries or by visual signals. Though it didn't yet speak, Man's ancestor already possessed wide vocal skills; one could say that its brain developed at the same time as its voice, which assimilated the cries of all other animals.

There was once a remarkable Russian naturalist, Nikolai A. Baikov.³⁴ He wrote outstanding books, animated by a keen sense of observation, about life in nature. In 1914, in the forested mountains of southern Manchuria, deep in the taiga, Bobochin, a hunter, had brought him over to the house of one of his colleagues, Fu-Tsai, to show him a curious sight. That hunter had in his service a bizarre creature who appeared quite at home in the *fanza* (Chinese household). Incredible rumors circulated about this creature's origin. They called him Lan-Jen. Fu-Tsai had taught him to beat up small game into snares and traps, which he did with extraordinary skill, especially for quails and squirrels. Although this domesticated specimen had been given a few rags to wear by his master, it's easy to recognize our "ward" from Baikov's description: hunched over, hairy and speechless. He was of short stature and appeared to be about forty years old.

"On his head, his hair, tangled and disheveled had created a sort of hairy bonnet. His reddish-brown face resembled the muzzle of a wild beast, a similarity enhanced by his wide mouth studded with robust teeth, with particularly sharp and prominent canines.

"Having seen us, he sat on the floor, with his long arms and hook-like fingers dangling, and starting lowing in a hoarse and brutish voice. His wild, crazy eyes glowed in the shadows like those of a wolf. Reprimanded by his master, he grunted and withdrew to the outside wall, where he curled up like a dog.

"I observed this half-man, half-beast creature for a long time, and it seemed to me that there was more animal than man in him.

Later, Baikov continues his story:

"At one point, Lan-Jen, lying on the floor in a corner, began to growl in his sleep, as dogs often do. He raised his hairy head and yawned, opening his mouth wide, revealing its sharp canines. At that moment, he looked so much like a tiger that Bobochin couldn't help saying: "God forgive me! How could such a monster have come into being? He has nothing of a man! If you could see him in the taiga you would be afraid: he's really a wolf! He behaves like one; he doesn't even walk like a man. With his long arms, he often leans on them and walks on all four, especially when he's tracking an animal. He climbs trees as easily as a monkey does. Short and thin as it is, it has the strength of a beast. Dogs are as frightened of it as of a wolf. It doesn't like them either; in their presence, it growls and shows its teeth. For example, at New Year, Fu-Tsai had brought it along to Ningutu. Every dog in town was alarmed. They barked and howled all night as long as the monster was about. They would harass it in the street. One had to absolutely avoid meeting a dog; if that happened Lan-Jen would strangle it immediately and bite open its throat. Nevertheless, apart from that, it was a good fellow and very obliging."

During the night, Bobochin woke Nikolai Baikov up. Carefully, they left the *fanza* to follow Lan-Jen outside. The moon shone brightly over the taiga and the snowy hillsides. Hiding quietly

³⁴ Baikov is best known in France by his books on the Manchurian fauna, *The Wild Beasts of Manchuria* and *Hunting in the Manchu taiga*, both published by Payot.

in the shadow of the porch Baikov and Bobochin watched Lan-Jen, squatting under a cedar, head thrown back, howling in a perfect imitation of the long cry of the red wolf.

While howling thus, it pushed his lower jaw forward, and as the tone grew deeper, it lowered his head nearly to the ground, as the wolves do.

From the nearby hills, animals answered with similar cries. When they stopped for a moment, the wolf-man eagerly called them with renewed howling. Soon, three wolves appeared in the clearing; very carefully, they crawled nearer. Lan-Jen also crept forward to meet them. Its moves and its whole behavior were a perfect imitation of that of the wolves. They approached within about five steps and then trotted back into the woods, occasionally stopping and turning around. Lan-Jen then stood up, started walking and then running after them, disappearing into the woods. As Bobochin said: "God knows what it does at night in the forest! Nobody knows, not even Fu-Tsai. And even if he knew, he wouldn't talk about it."

"In the morning, continued Baikov, Lan-Jen returned from the taiga, ever so bizarre looking, ever so incomprehensible. Sitting at the table, Fu-Tsai threw it the carcass of a squirrel, skinned the day before. It caught it with both hands, brought it to its mouth and started chewing it, beginning with the head. Bones were breaking like match sticks under its teeth. It sat on the floor, grunting with pleasure, as it was tearing the flesh off with its hands and canines. "

In this exceptional case, taming and training had been carried quite far. The paleanthrope drank its water in a goblet, although it had not yet learned to sit on a bench. What is most interesting is that it did not eat the game that it caught in the forest, but brought it to its master, who kept the skin and gave it the carcass to eat. Did the wolves also leave it fragments of their own catches?

Perhaps this unique example may allow us to perceive what we could only guess: the exact place of the paleanthrope within the hustle and bustle of the animal world. That creature has broken the link that tied it to a limited environment.

Zoology teaches us that there are stenobiotic species that only live in a specific environment; eurybionic species that can live in a diversity of environments; and finally ubiquitous species like the fox, the eagle, and the raven adapted to all natural environments.

The paleanthrope is ubiquitous; it can be found anywhere that there is enough life. Any terrestrial or aquatic medium will do, any altitude. To stand the cold and the lack of food in the winter, it plunges, according to indirect clues, into a state of lethargy, either by digging holes for the purpose or taking refuge in a cave. Most often, it lowers its metabolism by sleeping for many days in a row, only with brief interruptions. Its protection against the cold owes less to its fur than to a subcutaneous layer of fat.

Further, paleanthropes can "eat up space." they can run like horses, swim across rivers and even raging torrents. During their process of adaptation to bipedal locomotion the females, in contrast to monkeys, acquired longer breasts which they can throw over their shoulder to nurse, while walking, her baby holding on to her back. In The great mobility of surviving neanderthals is mirrored by the absence of any instinct leading to the creation of enduring shelters: only temporary beddings have been found. The wandering range of the male is wider and more continuous than that of females. After sexual maturation, male and females form stable couples. Children have been observed only in small and rare areas of the Earth.

Today, the paleanthrope is the most dispersed species of mammals, but it may well have had, in the past, areas of denser population and aggregation. The older the legends, the more likely it is to hear stories speaking of crowds or hordes of these beings. It is said that near the junctions of the Soviet Pamir, Afghanistan, Kachgaria, India and Pakistan, they show up near

inhabited areas in groups of six or eight, sometimes up to twelve. The leader of one of the autonomous districts in that area spoke of a horde of simian looking wild men, covered with a brown pelt. An Afghan teacher reported that: "In the forested areas of Afghanistan, where I was born, wild men are seen, sometimes by themselves, sometimes in a group, including children, sometimes as a band. They live in the forest. They feed on wild animals. The *goul-biabane* as it is called, cannot speak. It only utters incomprehensible sounds."

Typically it is sparsely distributed. Nature has nevertheless provided it with the means of contacting its kin at great distances. For example, that powerful and impressive cry which echoes by hills and vales after dusk and just before dawn.

Its immense migrations, its rare individual encounters, its occasional and unstable concentrations create in this species a continuous network of invisible links all over the area which it inhabits. There is of course a certain local loneliness. The species is one, but within that unity there resides a whole gamut of local variations in stature, physique and hair color.

The diet of those individuals met here and there is also infinitely variable. The basis of their alimentation is vegetable, supplied by the digging of roots, tearing off tender sprigs, picking berries and other fruits, and especially raids on human plantations, particularly from fields of corn and hemp, gourds (pumpkins, zucchinis, and melons) and orchards. Even more important, and more characteristic are the hunt for pikas, marmots and other small rodents; the gathering of eggs and baby birds, fishing for fish, turtles, frogs and crustaceans and even the consumption of frog eggs. They are of course attracted by the meat of larger animals but can rarely procure any.

In this fashion, thanks to a long and meticulous analysis, there gradually emerged a knowledge of the biological marvel still brooding on our planet. Actually, this was the most striking proof of its reality. Never could the study of a single specimen, whether caught dead or alive, provide Science with such a wealth of information. The key to our success lay in the patient accumulation of documents, pages of books, notes and letters, a process which some zoologists have condemned as a withdrawal into literature, in the worst sense of the word. Some told us that testimonies did not constitute proof. But we have shown that we have never relied on the testimony of a particular person. Any one report of sightings or observations may be the result of an error, or a lie. What we have scrutinized is the fact that there are a great number of testimonies. It was no longer words relating facts, but a fact echoed by a multitude of words. Subjected to critical examination, this fact reveals itself strangely consistent and as obdurate as any other.

Field notes had gradually clustered and cemented until they created a proof as solid as rock.

Translating these arguments into the language of probability, it comes to mean that a sufficiently large number of sufficiently independent observations, none of which by itself could be taken as authentic, does provide authenticity as a sum total. What zoologists held with contempt in comparison with some bones or a piece of skin has been transformed by the strength of numbers into the truth.

The relict paleanthrope, skilled at avoiding all traps, has nevertheless fallen into this one.

There remained to verify that our sources of information were really independent of each other, and whether our massive collection of testimonies might not harbor some internal contradictions and that it truly presented a coherent biological picture. And that being the case, was that picture confirmed by some theoretical concept for which it provided support in return. If all was so, and only then, this discovery could be recognized as a fact.

This kind of intellectual progress was of course unusual in the realm of biological sciences. In other words, we were drawing on a rather unexpected, non-classical method to establish a

biological truth. We had accumulated a mass of information, of unequal value, which when taken separately were all of debatable reliability: it was only their great number that brought up the issue of probability. Within the body of testimonies, there exists of course a certain percentage of lies and errors, but that percentage appeared so insignificant that it could be taken as negligible: the probability was practically equivalent to absolute certainty.

It's clear to anyone that this approach towards the truth is very costly: it consists of gathering data quite randomly. But its result is nevertheless precise and reliable: the fact which, for all kinds of reasons, had remained elusive, was now within our grasp.

As the probability of a fact increases, through the accumulation of data, so does the justification of the theory that accounts for it. If the fact is real, so is its explanation, which is necessary to the understanding of the fact itself. Inversely, if the theory – in this case the origin of mankind – is exact, the fact that illustrates it is not unlikely and one would expect that sooner or later it would stand out.

I cannot of course offer to the reader to make him an instant specialist in the matter. He should nevertheless make an effort of imagination. Experts, like us, now think in terms of series, and differ in this respect even from those prominent biologists sympathetic to our cause who, when reading our documents only see the story and attempt to evaluate its reliability. For us, each report is rich in details which line up as so many pearls on a string with similar details from other descriptions. Without exception, eye-witnesses have not been able to observe in our "ward" certain details of the neck, for example, or of the manner in which it shies away when encountering a man, or the shape of the fingernails, or the details of the behavior of horses when they encounter it. But a hundred traits of this nature have been noted, here and there, catalogued and entered on index-cards. For example, we entered on the card labeled "neck", the report number of all cases where the neck is mentioned and, conversely, punched a hole meaning "neck" in all the report cards where neck is mentioned. We have thus created series. Whenever someone informs us of a new observation, we first compare the details mentioned in it with our previous series of observations. It is unfortunately impossible to demonstrate the usefulness of this method in just a few words.

One of my collaborators had transferred all that information onto index cards. One day, with her husband, she laid them all on their bedroom floor according to a well determined plan. After staring at them for some time, her husband, who was in no way concerned with our research, couldn't help exclaiming: "But I can see it as if it were alive!"

For us, the initiated, it is enough to hear about some apparently insignificant detail to decide immediately, through concerted glances, whether that information is relevant or if it lies beyond our domain of our investigation. To be able to detect in this manner the relevant information, one must obviously read a lot. The living flesh then begins to emerge from the words.

As for myself, I had accepted the onerous task of creating order in the enormous body of accumulated information. The result, after many stressful years, was a voluminous manuscript which I entitled *The Present State of the Question of Relict Humanoids*. It gathered together more than one million, three hundred thousand indications. It was a dense collection of everything we had learned and understood until 1960, with an appendix that reached til the end of 1962: the balance sheet of the first stage of our investigation.

We now had to get this work printed, otherwise hardly anyone would know what we based our claim on. That was, as one might say, another kettle of fish. Luckily, besides being ridiculed and facing contempt or irritation we had made some friends and there were helpful hands ready to come to our aid.

I needed the advice of zoologists who were not part of our team. S.K. Klumov provided a meticulous and constructive critic of the work. Nadiejda Ladiguina-Kots also read the manuscript. So did Professor P.V. Terentiev, who teaches vertebrate zoology at the University of Leningrad. Of course his imprimatur (except for the chapter on oriental medicine) did not commit him to become an unconditional supporter. He scrupulously reviewed the scientific text. I have to admit that it was a real joy for me to pass a kind of written examination of zoological thought under his supervision. That said, the master found an error; correcting it turned into a baptismal ceremony for our "ward". Professor Terentiev had compared my text with the 12th edition of Linnaeus' *Systema Naturae*; he told me that the species we were talking about was not *Homo nocturnis*, as I had often been told – these words in fact relating to its description – but *Homo troglodytes*. Thanks for the information! This is why, according to the rules of biological nomenclature, the beings we are studying should always be called scientifically *Homo Troglodytes* LINNAEUS: the Troglodyte!

Another helpful hand was that of A.S. Monin, adjunct director of the scientific section of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, who paid close attention to our study. The book was printed. In an edition worthy of early mediaeval in-folios: 180 copies! But it was now in the world of books. It was in vain that at the last minute an eminent professor of anthropology did the rounds of all the institutions to demand stopping the printing of a work, which he claimed overturned Darwinism. It was also in vain that the director of the anthropological institute of the University of Moscow forbade his library to purchase any copy. Henceforth, the book existed.

But did it really exist? Its four hundred pages of dense text were only a "preliminary report", although much longer than the memoir submitted by Khakhlov to the Academy of Sciences. But a report to whom?

There was never a mention of it in the scientific press, not the least critique. It has now (1968) been published for over five years.

Was it possible that it would end up being a new "note without scientific relevance"?

Perhaps the only consolation was to think that the relevant passage of *Systema Naturae* had also ended up as one of those "notes".

An enquiry into the failure of the Linnean suggestion was undertaken, at my direction, by a new convert, Dmitri Yurevitch Bayanov. It was quite by accident that his work had brought him to translate interviews which I had granted to a pair of correspondents of English newspapers. His curiosity aroused by their content, he had gone to the Lenin Library and had asked to consult my work on *The Present State of the Question of Relict Humanoids*. As anyone would be if they read it from one end to the other, he was convinced. And, being young and honest, he could not resign himself to remain inactive. He undertook to devote himself body and soul to the problem in his spare time. Today I am happy to recognize that he has become a true specialist in training.

One day, among the plaster ghosts of Megatherium, Elasmotherium and Machairodus, at the foot of gigantic elephants and other monsters from today and yesterday, in one of the rooms of the Darwin Museum, Bayanov presented a five hour talk at the seminar directed by Smolin. His topic was the upsetting exhumation of Linnaeus' great discovery, published but trod upon by his disciples, forgotten and ridiculed for two centuries, and now back in the open.

Today, the only recognized service to anthropology attributed to the great Swedish naturalist is that he classified Man and Apes in the same order of Primates. It appears that nobody seriously hoped to recall everything that Linnaeus included under the name *Homo*.

To pardon him it was said that little was known in the 18th century about anthropoid apes, which gave rise to uncertainty and confusion. Linnaeus has been accused of having many other

errors in his *Systema Naturae*, errors subsequently corrected as natural science progressed. That is true. However, doesn't it feel strange that Linnaeus included in the genus *Homo* not only *Homo sapiens*, but also *Homo ferox*, the wild man, and *Homo troglodytes*, the cave man?

If we take away from the references cited by Linnaeus all of those that clearly relate to anthropoid apes and all the cases of children adopted and raised by animals, there remains a layer of creatures of a completely different nature. Linnaeus apparently had some trouble classifying them: among the apes most closely resembling humans; a kind of people without speech, or a strongly animal like kind of *Homo sapiens*.

Here are, according to him, the essential traits which distinguish these creatures from real humans: 1. the absence of an articulated language (*mutus*); 2. Body hair (*hirsutus*); 3. The ability to move on all four (*tetrapus*).

Linnaeus did not consider that these traits were sufficient to classify anatomically such creatures outside the genus *Homo*.

On this point, Bayanov had unearthed an even more obscure work entitled, *Anthropomorpha*, said to have been dictated by Linnaeus to one of his pupils.³⁵ Bayanov had found a Russian translation of this work by I. Trediakovsky, published in St. Petersburg in 1777.

After Linnaeus' death, another one of his disciples,³⁶ modified the relevant section in the 13th edition of *Systema Naturae*, dated 1789. He pretended that the master had erred by not distinguishing Man, created in the image of God, from apes and other living creatures.

As time passed, it became ever more fashionable to mock the Troglodyte and the Wild Man of good old Linnaeus.

Bayanov quoted the reports from antiquity and the middle-ages used by Linnaeus, as well as many others unknown to him. Their serried ranks marched relentlessly towards the audience. No! Linnaeus had not erred, he had not taken the wrong path. Of course, some of his information would benefit from more precision, but overall, he knew perfectly well what he spoke of. And, as we ourselves are today, he was astounded at the indifference of mankind towards those human-looking troglodytes living somewhere on the Earth. The Dutch physician and traveler Bontius³⁷ had seen some of both sexes on Java and had carefully described them (Fig. 6). They shared most of the features of humans but lacked speech. We also note in passing that these creatures had something peculiar about their eyes. Perhaps it was because of their overhanging eyebrows that their vision was said to be "weak and sideways." It was also said that they had a nictitating membrane under their upper eyelid.

Another traveler had also seen those troglodytes in Java and had been able to add some anatomical details. Yet another added that their arms were much longer than those of humans to the point that their fingers reached down to their knees. According to him, troglodytes hid in caverns during the day and had excellent night vision. In the dark, they stole whatever they could from people, who strove to exterminate them.

³⁵ In fact, this work appeared under the signature of one of Linnaeus' students, Christian Emmanuel Hoppe, aka Hoppius. It is a dissertation which he presented to the Academy of Sciences of Upsala on September 6, 1760, in a session chaired by Linnaeus. It's clear that the study had been inspired by him, and perhaps carried out under his direction, but to attribute the text itself to the great Swedish botanist is surely an exaggeration.

³⁶ The German Johann Friedrich Gmelin completed and improved Linnaeus' work but also disfigured it considerably.

³⁷ His name was Jacob De Bondt, author of *Historae naturalis et medicae Indiae et orientalis*. (Amsterdam, 1658).



Hairy woman, called *orang-outang* by the Javanese (after Bontius, 1658).

They did not have articulate speech but made all kinds of incomprehensible whistling sounds; they were incapable of learning human speech. Sometimes, captive troglodytes were used for simple domestic tasks, such as carrying water. That traveler had seen one of these beings, tamed, on Ambon Island. He was told that long after its capture, it had refused to eat, and that it could not look at the light.

Linnaeus sent to his contemporaries and their descendants an eloquent message regarding the necessity of studying troglodytes:³⁸ "Nobody can watch without surprise and rapture the manners, so strange and nearly comical, of various apes, and there is even stronger reason for anyone interested in Nature never to look without marveling at those beings, so similar to humans. So it is at least surprising that Man, so eager for knowledge, has so far relegated them to the shadows and has not expressed the least desire to find out about those troglodytes, which also happen to be his closest relatives. So many mortals spend their life enjoying the pleasures of the mouth and the belly and think of nothing but accumulating, by all means possible, food and riches. That's particularly the case for those navigating towards the Indies. While they are the

³⁸ I have of course preferred a direct translation of Hoppe's Latin text to a translation of the 1777 Russian translation.

only ones to whom it is given the opportunity to observe the troglodytes, they are so overtaken by greed that they consider it below their dignity to consider Nature and study its economy. However, what greater subject of entertainment could there be in the world, even for a king, to be able to observe in his own house these animals which we shall never admire enough. How easy it would be for a king to procure some of these creatures, since a whole nation is there to cater to his every wish. And wouldn't it be highly rewarding for a philosopher to be able to spend a few days in the company of these animals to discover the extent to which the power of the human spirit surpasses their own, and to discover the fundamental difference between a brute and a rational being. Not to speak, in addition, of the light that a perfect description of these beings would shine for those who are experts in the natural sciences."

Such a notice should have led to reflection. It took two hundred years for me to come to face the same problem. What obstacles had been raised in the mean time?

It's the A.B.C. of natural sciences to state that Linnaeus was lacking the idea of evolution of species. While this is true, the fact is that when that idea took hold, it opened in some way an eye among scientists, while closing the other one on the problem of the origin of Man. A mangled form of evolutionism diverted Science from Linnaeus' discovery. Today however, the time to study the troglodytes has ineluctably returned, and with it the science of neanderthals as they are rather than under their bizarre disguise.

To conclude this chapter, I must say a few words about the influence that the new scientific paradigm, developed in our country, has exerted on those progressive western specialists. In an earlier chapter (Ch.4 "Beyond Accepted Ideas"), I decried the cul-de-sac into which they had originally gone astray. Thus, even before the printing of my book, they had already been seriously influenced by thoughts from Moscow in the form of a few articles I had written and by the four first slices of our *Information Materials*.

In the German Democratic Republic, Zimsen, a publisher of biological works, published in one volume a translation of various original sources, gathered by Andrei Chmakov and myself, with a thoughtful preface by a zoologist, Professor Hans Petzsch. This were later published in an Italian translation, which completely filled volume 21 of the journal *Genus*.

Two western zoologists mentioned earlier, Bernard Heuvelmans and Ivan T. Sanderson, attempted through most ingenious means to reconcile my hypothesis concerning the relict neanderthalian Snowman with the Himalayan *Yeti* tradition to which they were attached. They thought they would find the solution in the idea that there existed in various parts of the world many living beings which linked, like the spans of a bridge, their putative Anthropoid with the relict paleanthrope. Sanderson's masterly volume, a synthesis of the problem, was based on that idea. He openly recognized its stimulus: "These activities by the Soviets presented the question in an entirely new light, and placed it on such a higher level that western scientists saw themselves forced to change their attitude about it."³⁹

In Italy, under Heuvelmans' prompting, a reputed sociologist, Professor Corrado Gini, had created in Rome an international body devoted to our cause: the *International Committee for the Study of Human-like Hairy Biped*s⁴⁰ This organization brought together scientists from thirty-six

³⁹ *Homme des neiges et hommes des bois*, Paris, Plon, p. 33).

⁴⁰ I am in part responsible for that name, suggestive of science fiction. In 1960, professor Gini had asked me to create with him a *Committee for the Study of Hairy Men*, a label to which he substituted in 1961, the more restrictive name *Committee for the study of Homo hirsutus*. I had objected, in both cases, that these choices prejudged the zoological nature of the creature under investigation. In my mind, the stories about "wild hairy men" that circulated around the world clearly referred to different, often unrelated

countries. Studying the results of the Soviet enquiries was designated as its first objective. Results subsequently published in *Genus* showed that the intention was genuine.

However, after careful consideration, it's clear that the readers still know very little about this extraordinary story. Let's now dig deeper.

creatures. Specifically, I had no doubt that the famous Himalayan *Yeti* was an anthropoid ape, strangely bipedal, that should be classified among Pongidae, and not among Hominidae like the wild hairy man of Central Asia. So I proposed to define the object of our research as "*Bipedal and Hairy Hominoids*", the super-family Hominoidae including both Humans and anthropoid apes. To which Gini, going a step further in precision, noted that the expression was inadequate because it did not include *Ameranthropoides loysi*, which is obviously a monkey of the Cebidae family. To include all cases, even such marginal ones, I proposed the sufficiently vague English expression *Human-like Hairy Bipeds*, translated into French as "bipèdes humanoïdes velus", the word "anthropoïde" having taken too precise a meaning in anthropological literature.

CHAPTER 7

FROM THE SHADOWS OF THE PAST

In search of the message hidden in ancient or primitive legends

As to the Stone Age, I have frequently participated in field work with prehistorians, but as to ethnography, my knowledge was long entirely drawn from books. It was thus with great enthusiasm that in 1958, I joined in the Pamir Anna Zinovievna Rosenfeld's group of investigative ethnographers.

Sometimes, knowledge can dull your receptivity to the unforeseen. Anna Rosenfeld wandered in a truck through the vales and ways of the Roof of the World with the firm intention of confirming with field data what her masters, her husband, also an ethnographer, and herself already suspected. The light of her hypotheses blinded her to the point that other members of the team, who had not lost their ingenuity and spontaneity, were astounded by the distorting power of her intellectual spectacles.

Thus, after an interview with some Kirghiz or Tadjik about the *goul-biavane* or the *adame-djapaisy*, meaning the Wild Man, four people would write a report, each on their personal note book. Three sets of notes would broadly coincide, but these were not from professional ethnographers. The fourth set that of the leader, was completely different. Anna Rosenfeld knew exactly, *a priori*, what she was supposed to hear, namely archetypal demonological stories broadly scattered throughout the Pamir. If any important detail did not fit this preconceived idea, she tried to modify the witnesses' testimony until he agreed. She went as far as giving up interviewing those who came from a certain valley where the word describing evil powers was lacking.

The younger investigators, A.L. Grunberg and V.L. Bianki, had come to the Pamir to learn about popular tales relating to the Snowman and listened carefully; they heard quite different stories and often managed to go back through a series of informers to the original eye witnesses themselves.

Valentina Bianki has described this curious psychological duel in the form of a meditative story: *About the Snow Man in Adventures in the Mountains*, (in Russian, Moscow, 1961). Only the names were changed.

What exactly was the basis for those opposing positions? According to Anna Rosenfeld, who wrote a distinguished article on the subject, among all the people of the Pamir there still subsisted beliefs, which were gradually dying out, in a variety of spirits and demons, each one endowed with a name and particular characteristics. They are called *goul-biavane*, *adame-djapaisy*, *almasty*, *djez-tyrmak*, *adjina*, *dev*, *paré* (or *péri*), *farichta*, etc. Our ethnographer completed by herself the differentiation of this pantheon, pretending that the natives' confused mind mixed up their attributes and powers.

The second position is the following: within the majority of these demonic representations there lies kernel of information relating to one and the same prototype, the paleanthrope, variously peppered with local legends and superstitions. Thus, in some stories, the *goul-biavane* suddenly starts to speak Kirghiz or Tadjik, as would any owl or bear in a fairy tale or fable.

In the Pamir, as in other areas, simple people often ask scientists for information about that creature: is it an animal, a human, a supernatural spirit? Scientists on the other hand try to extract its very nature from the various names by which it is called here and there.

The branch of ethnography and folklore which deals with these questions is called demonology. On this topic, it is significant that in Tibet, the word *de-mo* (which surely has the same root as the grec *daimon*) is precisely one of the names given to the very material creature also called *mi-gheu*. However ethnographers rarely take note of stories lacking in supernatural. A Caucasian folklorist admitted that he never took note of realistic reports about wild hairy men because they contain too little fantasy and poetry!

One day, I was participating in a reunion of very old people in Sukhumi. At my request, ethnography professor Ch. D. Inal-Ipa asked them a question about the *abnauaiu*, the Man of the Woods. There were many interesting answers from our point of view. One of the thirty oldsters declared that the *abnauaiu* had but one eye. All the others laughed at him. Well, in the report of the meeting, written by the respectable professor, I read verbatim: "The *abnauaiu* has only one eye." Actually, everything which is not fabulous is systematically eliminated by the filter applied to all stories by the ethnographer.

Such a process may be very useful when studying the intellectual infancy of mankind. It is clearly awkward when trying to gather a maximum of information about the last neanderthals.

That filter, which bothers us, allowed generations of ethnographers to dig into the deepest, most ancient and secret layers of human thought. With it, we have been able to dive into the mysteries of the development of human speech: it is impossible to build up the absurd with objects; that can only be done with symbols. The world of words and symbols was virgin landscape where the imagination was going to have free rein. It is only with the birth of speech that imagination had the opportunity to adapt itself more closely to the world and to use it to construct bold fantasies.

Let's now see what will turn up if we examine the content of the same popular beliefs through a completely different filter, which allows through only the information of an anthropological nature. Here is the theoretical model from which it was conceived and developed.

Man descends from apes, but between ape and men there must have been a "missing link" already imagined by simple extrapolation by the early Darwinism of Haeckel and Vogt. Haeckel had described that hypothetical being under the name *Pithecanthropus alalus*, "the ape-man without speech" and Vogt called it "a man in body but an ape in mind". When the bowels of the Earth started yielding to the indiscreet hands of researchers the bony remains of such creatures, ideas foreign to science, borrowed from metaphysics and theology, began to hinder Darwinism. The idea of an evolutionary link melted away and dissolved. The discussion of the status of Man's bipedal ancestors became limited to this question: were they apes or men? But they all were quite different from both apes and men. Science did not know how to recognize what it had itself predicted. Darwinism was doubly impoverished. Between the family of anthropoid apes (pongids) and that of men (hominids), represented by a single species, *Homo sapiens*, a new family must be established, the troglodytids, lacking speech and including also pithecanthropes. It distinguishes itself from quadrumanous monkeys and apes, mostly by its bipedal locomotion: its members may be defined as higher primates with vertical stance. The study of this family is a matter for zoology. In some of the species which it includes, the brain is still very similar to that of a chimpanzee, in others it is almost like a Man's, but this restrictive "almost" refers to the absence of speech. Among them, there were some whose fingers could manipulate stones with great skill; others could not, but compensated with powerful jaws capable of crushing and chewing meat, skin and sinew. All of them elude the laws of sociology and do not belong to human history. Among them there is the parent and closest ancestor of Man: neanderthals or paleanthropians.

Our own species separated from them, creating a distinct branch, but the species which gave birth to us has not disappeared. What happened was a bifurcation, not a replacement: the two species have diverged biologically. So, while human history unfolded, the animal life of paleanthropes continued in the shadows. Things were not going well for them, from bad to worse. It was the decline, the agony of the species. However thirty-five thousand years are but a moment in the scale of animal evolution.

From the perspective of humans, there has not always been only hostility and ostracism towards surviving paleanthropes. During some eras, there was some strange closeness, detectable during the ages of Polished Stone, or Neolithic, or Bronze. Among early Neolithic tools one often finds roughly carved stones (macroliths) likely due to the hands and brains of inferior creatures. It would seem that populations of paleanthropes, or perhaps a few isolated individuals, lived as parasites near human habitations and cultures, and sometimes were intimate participants in daily life. Humans domesticated some of them, either to keep others away from their own house (as domesticated dogs would chase away wolves and wild dogs), or to exploit their strength for domestic chores, and even as combat-animals in armed conflicts.

The lesser their numbers became, the rarer were the domesticated individuals, as were also those to be found in areas unsuited to Man (deep forests, swamps, rocky mountains and deserts), and the more people created fantastic interpretations of what they heard about them. Who were these people who were neither man nor beast, but rather half-man and half beast? Were they perhaps human for only one half of their life, like werewolves?

The paleanthrope was disappearing in the mist of myths and legends. Let's use our anthropological filter as a working instrument and let's avoid coming to conclusions without having first looked at the situation through it.

One point to be verified first of all. Logically, if we are on the right track, there ought to be bones of relict paleanthropes found in post-glacial geological strata, the Holocene or historical period. One should not of course expect entire graveyards, the remains of whole populations. But a few rare skeletons should also be found, in areas where human and animal remains were also buried with them.

And yes, neanderthalian-type bones, dating from the contemporary geological period have actually been discovered on many occasions within the space lying between Tibet and Western Europe, in America and particularly in Africa.

On our own national territory, such "neanderthaloid anomalies" have been exhumed on numerous occasions: notably around Irkutsk, and far from there in Karelia (on Olenyi Ostrov, Reindeer Island), in the Moscow region (Severka) and many other places. Such discoveries have been particularly abundant in the northern Caucasus (the Podkumuk skull-cap dating from the Bronze Age, and the Mozdoksk skulls) and in the Dnepr area where, in 1902, the great Polish anthropologist Kasimierz Stolyhwo discovered a neanderthaloid skeleton in a tumulus dating from the Scythian era. Stolyhwo is probably the only anthropologist who dared draw some general conclusions from such facts, contradicting classical thoughts. During his entire and lengthy scientific career, he continued, alone, to maintain that the extension of the neanderthalian branch, the post-neanderthaloid twig, has continued to grow here and there on the Earth during the historical period and up to the present day.

Most archaeologists, faced with such overly recent neanderthalian skulls reassure themselves by invoking atavism: certain insignificant neanderthaloid traits are found in a small percentage of skulls and skeletons of contemporary humans. But that is certainly not the case here: the discoveries mentioned are striking extremes. If their appearance is somewhat softened, that could well be the results of cross-breeding between paleanthropes and humans over the past millennia.

Besides, we have in hand something much more spectacular than mere fossilized bones.

From back in the Stone Age, have come to us strange representations of women, carved in stone or bone, dug up from the ground by prehistorians. Some of these "Paleolithic Venus" have strikingly neanderthaloid bodies: for example, one from Kostienski, or that found more recently near Gagarino. The body is bent over, the neck short; the head is low and bent forward. The legs are rather short and slightly bent, the feet are turned in. On a number of other images there also appear traits which remind us of the neanderthalian type. Should we not perhaps conclude that our remote ancestors crafted portraits of these surprising semi-human beings for specific reasons?

Later, millennia go by: art dies out in all domains. But then, one discovers on a Phoenician or Cartaginian dish dating from the 7th century BCE, among various human characters, the image of a hairy bipedal creature holding a stone in its raised hand.⁴¹



Statue of a Paleolithic Venus found in Gagarino, USSR.

⁴¹ The object is a gold-plated silver cup discovered in 1876 among the treasures of the Villa Bernardini in Palestrina (the ancient Praeneste). It is currently preserved in the museum of the Villa Giulia, in Rome. The same image is found nearly exactly on another cup, discovered in Kurion, Cyprus, which is part of the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.



Hairy wild man as shown on a cup from Praeneste dating from the 7th century BCE.

Images of wild hairy men are known from antiquity. A large cup, of Phoenician or Carthaginian origin, dating from the seventh century BCE was found among the treasures of a Roman villa in Palestrina. On its periphery, one can read, as one would a contemporary comic strip, the story of the interaction between a lord and one of those creatures. After leaving his castle, or fortified town, in a chariot drawn by a pair of horses, the lord – a king perhaps? – goes deer hunting and kills one. He dresses the carcass himself while his servant waters the horses. While the meat cooks on the grill, the lord devotedly raises his bread towards the sky, where the solar god hovers.

The head of a hairy man sticks out of a cave on the flank of a mountain. It appears attracted by the smell of the cooking.

Suddenly, the creature leaps out of its den, wielding a large stone which it throws on the lord, while ripping out bushes, perhaps to be used as weapons or projectiles..

The hunter parries the blows, leaps on his chariot and pursues the wild man which he overtakes, fallen and exhausted. He finishes it off with an axe before going back to town, completing the circular 2000 year old strip.

Two thousand years passed, and a wild hairy man, now tamed, hides near a most realistically represented peasant on a high-relief of a Provence cathedral.⁴²

We find the same creature in a Tibetan medical atlas, in the company of many well-known and easily recognizable animals used in pharmacy.⁴³ Finally, that same being stands on the back of an elephant as a traditional symbol of friendship in Mongolia. No one has yet thought of collecting these antique images of troglodytes.

Among other threads crisscrossing the history of cultures, one must mention the epic descriptions of pseudo-humans, wild and hairy, found from one millennium to the next in the greatest monuments of world literature.

Thus, the human-like creature Ea-bani, mentioned above, already appears in the Epic of Gilgamesh, dating from the third millennium before our era, with sources harking back to the fourth millennium BCE. He lives in the steppes and the mountains. His body is covered with hair, but those on his head look like a woman's hair. He is strong and fast, but has neither speech nor reason. Men captured and tamed him, first using him as a warden to protect their animals, then as a hunting guide during Gilgamesh's expedition towards the cedar forests of Lebanon, an operation organized specifically to exterminate such human-like beasts. Legend spreads a glow of fantasy on a simple and prosaic base.

Another book, one of mankind's oldest, also dating back to Babylonian culture, is the Bible. If we eliminate from its pages the varnish of fantasy, many stories are revealed dealing with savage and hairy creatures.

Deciphering these texts through an anthropological interpretation, as provided by the expert Hebraists Rabin Youah Ibn Aharon, reveals the following traits: a body covered with reddish hair, short legs and long arms, neck and feet unusually wide for a man. Without speech, they could only shout to each other. Their habitat was originally limited to the Sinai Peninsula and the south of Egypt; the Hebrews found their vicinity bothersome. In the legendary times of Moses, the Hebrews treated these creatures harshly. A careful scrutiny of the texts suggests that the pair of goats, one of which was to be sacrificed to God, the other —the scape-goat – to be freed into the desert, were actually not "hairy goats" (*seirei izim*) but hairy men (*seirim*). How could a domesticated goat survive in the desert?

Under Moses, the priests strictly forbade the Jews to continue "offering sacrifices to the *seirim* with whom they had sinned" and instructed to replace the sacrificing of cattle to them by a simple symbolic spraying of the altars with blood, or by the combustion of the sacrifice to the One God.

In the epic poetry of Antiquity and the Middle Ages, in the Orient as well as the Occident, the wildman's images surfaces now and then. Legends and myths of Chinese antiquity mention it repeatedly. Its existence also echoes loudly in the *Ramayana* of ancient India. And here's what the hero of the 9th century Kirghiz popular epic *Manass* says:

⁴² Actually, it's a church in Burgundy, the cathedral of Semur-en Auxois. Porshnev only repeated the mistake made by his source, a work by Richard Bernheimer, to which we shall return below.

⁴³ That medical treatise, whose Tibetan title translates as *Anatomical dictionary for the diagnostic of various diseases* was attributed by academician Rintchen to a famous Mongol scholar, Don-Grub-Rgyal-Mchan (1792-1855). There are many editions known; in the library of the Gandan lamaist university in Ulan-Bator there is a version published in Beijing at the beginning of the 19th century and another published in Ourga (old name of Ulan Bator) in 1911-12.

*Do you know that there are innumerable marvels
Along the path that we shall take?
Who has heard of a real wild camel?
Who has heard that there are wild men?*

Let's now return to ethnography.

The more our knowledge of relict hominoids advances, the more one is struck by the similarity of their looks and habits with what we heard about Satan in our childhood, found also in ethnographic textbooks relative to the various Powers of Evil. Of course, within such devilries, the image of the Paleanthrope is completely destroyed and hidden. Popular tales are often efforts to supplement through the imagination the meaning of certain words inherited from our forefathers, particularly regarding the various names of such creatures. Artists and poets, who saw in popular stories no more than a rich source of inspiration, have introduced considerable distortions. For example, the image of *Russalka*, the Russian siren, represented today with a fish tail and golden hair, only appeared in our country in the 19th century through the influence of art and poetry.

Whatever, three sciences, mythology, ethnography and the history of religions, have accumulated for us an incredibly rich mountain of information, still to be sorted and analyzed.

There is another book to write: *The echo of the image of the paleanthrope in the beliefs, myths and legends of ancient folklore*. I cannot even think of providing a condensed version in these pages. It will be enough for me to enumerate various chapters with a summary of their contents.

ORIENTAL ANTIQUITY.

Besides the very ancient Babylonian and Hebrew legends, the core consists of the Indo-Iranian belief in *devas*, their cult and the fights against them. The *Vedas* and the *Zend-Avesta* speak of events of considerable antiquity: in the abyss of the past, the people of India carried on a ruthless struggle against *devas*. When the Indian king Yama (or Yima, Djima or even Djemchid) led his people from their original homeland to Turkmenistan and northern Iran, they had, there also, to struggle against *devas*, tall powerful and hirsute creatures, with tousled hair, without clothing or weapons, who fought with their bare hands or with stones and bushes torn from the ground. They were pushed back into the Mazanderan, in the Elburz range, where the Demavend massif became their main refuge.

The more recent *Avesta*, written in Pahlavi, comments on the long-drawn campaigns by kings and heroes against the *devas*. This epic was transcribed into the *Shah-Name* (the Book of the Kings) by the Persian poet Firdusi. In the oldest *Avesta*, there is nothing supernatural about the *devas*: they are simply wild animals, like all the others. In the Pahlavi version of the *Avesta*, they already take a more fantastic aspect than in the Indian version. In Muslim folklore, they have clearly been transformed in evil spirits, though still mortal.

Thus, in the whole *Avesta* epic, as well as in its Iranian, Caucasian and Central Asian follow-ups, we repeatedly encounter *devas* and *peri* (or *pare*). Warlords of various people used them in their troops in the same way as other fighting animals: with appropriate training, they were taught to act with blind and destructive rage on the battle field.

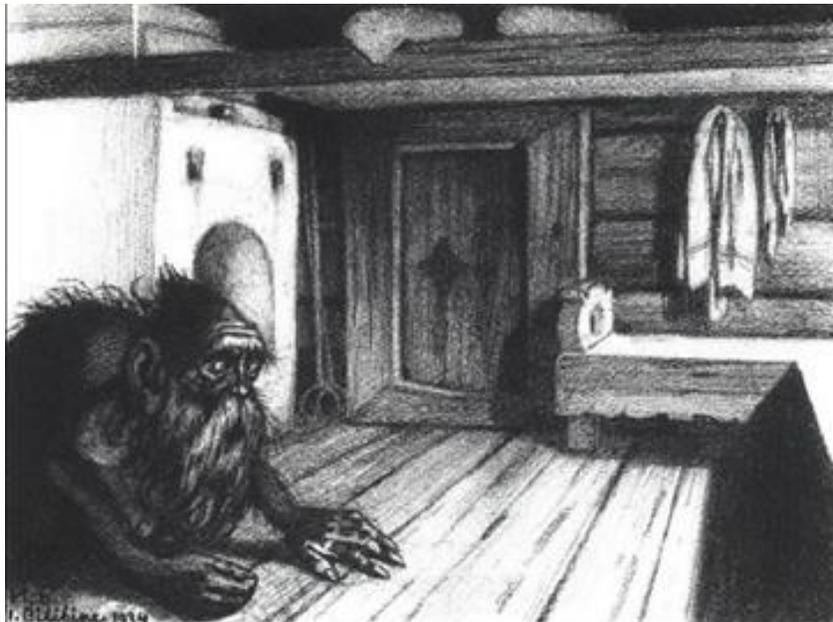
One notes in passing that in ancient texts, the term *peri* sometimes designates masculine creatures while *dev* is applied to their feminine counterparts. It's interesting to note in this respect that, in Russian, the related words *dva* (two) and *para* (pair) proceed from the above, and that

words stemming from the same roots are found in all Indo-European languages.⁴⁴

Devas received abundant food, in the form of sacrifices, in "sacred groves" dedicated to them. However, in the fifth century BCE, following social and religious reforms endorsed by Persian kings Darius and Xerxes, the Zoroastrian cult was imposed upon all conquered people. These kings forbade bloody mass sacrifices, but also directed that the dead should not be buried, so as to leave their corpses to the *devas*. The texts reveal that before the application of Xerxes' laws, *devas* were still worshipped in Kakhistan (the mountainous regions of Iran, Afghanistan and norther India) and in Scythia, meaning central Asia and the northern Caucasus. After the reform, prayers began to be offered in the *devas'* sanctuaries to Ahura-Mazda. As to the *devas*, they were demoted to the ranks of evil spirits and demons, who were not to be fed. Only Islam was to permit it again, although only unofficially. However, in Islamic literature, the *Dev* – as also the *Djinn*, the *Chiqq* and the *Ghoul* – became cloaked with fanciful attributes. Nevertheless, the word *Dev* continues to maintain its simple original meaning within popular beliefs: it describes the mute hairy wild man among the Svanes of the Caucasus and the Tadjiks of the Darwaz Mountains.

MEDITERRANEAN ANTIQUITY

The Pantheon of old gods arose from the personification of the names of various types of spirits. There were then a plethora of Mars, Hermes, Apollo, Juno and other Olympian divinities. But were indeed the predecessors of these gods only spirits? The study of the lesser Etruscan gods, and the deepest layers of Greek and Roman beliefs reveals many names behind which hides a consistent image. All kinds of silenes, satyres, pans, silvans, fauns and nymphs, to quote only well-known names, were originally seen as fully realistic, without any supernatural traits. They were visible but elusive, and mortal, although very long-lived.



In Russia, these ancient parasites of mankind have transformed into Domovoi, a sort of household deity of old Slav legends.

⁴⁴ It appears that relict Neanderthals joined in permanent couples. One might wonder whether that might not have so impressed polygamist people that they would have used their names for everything that came in pairs.



In all regions from which they disappeared within prehistoric times, hairy wild men have gradually been endowed with imaginary traits or functions and have become mythified. In ancient Greece, the Biblical *seirim* have become *satyrs*, amateurs of music, wine and pretty nymphs.

These creatures avoided humans, although they found them attractive, either from sexual desire, or from the temptation of parasitism. If they turned out to be associated with certain habitats or landscapes, it was not because they symbolized certain aspects of Nature; it's simply because that's where they lived. These "demi-gods" lived in groves or forests, among prairies or clearings, near springs, streams and rivers, in mountains or on high plateaus, in rocky hill tops and boulder fields (they were associated with high mountains long before religious thought associated cloud-capped peaks with the Heavens, the home of the gods), in caves, grottoes and even warrens dug into the ground (from which arose the idea of the subterranean world of chthonian divinities.). At a later stage beings appear who are also non-humans, but have been semi-domesticated, or at least tamed by Man. On every farm, even in the peasant's house, there might cohabit with him a single individual charged with the task of keeping its congeners, as well as all ill-intentioned wanderers away from houses. Nearly every community, village, or private property had its guardian; tradition places them in the fields, orchards and vineyards, in cattle enclosures, barns or houses. These beings could be heard, seen and even touched, as could their brethren hiding in nature, but they could not speak. Their language was incomprehensible and could only serve as an adjunct to divination.

It's only at the next stage, after they disappeared and became mere memories, that these creatures acquired magical, benevolent or malefic, powers and that they became protective spirits of people, families, professions or virtues. They are sometimes represented as supermen,

sometime as beings that can metamorphose alternately into beasts or men, sometimes as creatures made up of half a human body and half an animal (horse, goat, bull, lion, serpent, fish, bird.) These ancient divinities thus finally acquire unique individual characteristics and begin to personify the mighty forces of Nature, human passions or the many talents of Man.

EUROPEAN MIDDLE AGES

Since we were just talking about Greece and Rome, it's clear that late neanderthals were not to be found only in Asia, but were also widespread in Europe. Our Middle Ages knew about them and have preserved a number of traces of their presence.

They were concentrated in the lands bordering the Danube, called Pannonia in antiquity because *pans* lived there. For a long time, relict paleanthropes subsisted in the Alps and surrounding forests. The study of the folklore and legends of northern Europe – from the Baltic and Scandinavian countries to Ireland and Iceland – shows that there too, over a long time, people knew of them as part of nature, and later transformed the memory of their existence into fairy tales.

European mediaeval folklore provides numerous examples of the various stages of the transformation of the original information. In Ireland, for example, it would appear that the last living neanderthals were captured and exterminated in the 17th and 18th centuries. They were introduced into fiction by Swift as the Yahoos in *Gulliver's Travels*, with a frightening degree of realism, most likely based on eye-witness reports. They also appear in a fairy tale world as the basis for popular Irish legends about Leprechauns and Giants.

From our anthropological perspective, the Scandinavian, Germanic, and French folklore represents a gold mine of potential new studies. How many books, manuscripts and memoirs shall we have to read, or reread! I will now mention two scholars who have approached the anthropological substrate of popular beliefs.

One of them is Wilhelm Mannhardt, a leading German folklorist and ethnographer, who accumulated mountains of information on traditional beliefs, legends and customs relating to spirits and demi-gods among Germanic and Baltic people. The other one is Richard Bernheimer, a little known American specialist on mediaeval culture. The book that he published in Cambridge (Mass.) in 1952 is most promising: *Wild Men in the Middle Ages*.

Bernheimer attempts to persuade the reader, and also to persuade himself, that the numerous documents, written or figurative, that he accumulated, are only a reflection of the bizarre need of mediaeval thinking to create an antithesis of Man, the picture of an Anti-human, wild and hairy. However, the facts speak loudly of what he hesitates to suspect. While scholastic thinking was embarrassed by this pretense of a man, the descriptions are close to the truth: its hair is that of an animal, so is its behavior, it cannot speak, it clearly belongs to the world of plants and animals. In the 14th century, Heinrich von Hessler wrote a treatise which deals with wild men. As other mediaeval writers, he provides abundant details on their diet (berries, acorns, raw meat) and their habitat (forests, mountains, waters, thickets, caves and abandoned quarries). We find there again an already familiar anatomical trait: the wild woman of the Alps has "breasts so long that she can swing them over her shoulder."

From the Renaissance on, according to Bernheimer, Western Europe starts talking about the wild man as a creature of the past, extinct. But that happened very gradually, and in certain mountainous areas, it continued to be spoken of in the present tense.

THE SUPERSTITIONS OF THE EASTERN SLAVS

As king Xerxes tried earlier, prince Vladimir also thought he could eliminate in our country the ancient oriental cycle cult.⁴⁵ At that time, if one is to believe the chronicles, the Slavs did not bring food offerings to idols, but to *bereguins* (shore people) who lived along the Dnepr River, whom the Turks called *oupirs* (meaning vampires). In *Igor's tale*, as well as in *bylins* (chansons de geste), they are described as perched on high branches; they were also called *divs* or *solovyis* (and not *solovei*, which means nightingale) and, rather than speaking like people, they whistled in a terrifying manner.

As for us, Russians, who are so familiar since early childhood with stories of *lechyis* (wood nymphs) and *russalkas* (water nymphs)⁴⁶ we would never think of researching these notions. But whoever takes the trouble to dig into the dusty tomes of ethnographers will find a treasure trove under the surface.

Details, such as the bushy overhanging eyebrows attributed to the *lechy*, described as a hairy naked old man, are very revealing to the attentive anthropologist. One also finds out that sometimes the *lechy* has a spouse (*liechatchikha*, *liessovikha*, or *liechikha*) and children. According to Afanassiev, a great collector of folklore, "popular legend has it that *liechatchikhas* have such enormous and elongated breasts that they have to throw them over their shoulder to be able to walk, and especially to run." The *lechy* is rarely seen; if one is to believe the stories, most of the time it is only heard. The sounds that it makes are reminiscent of whistles, laughter, calls for help, hands clapping and hummed songs. "Mute, but noisy!" writes Dahl, quite appropriately.⁴⁷ In a close analogy to *Pan*, of antique legends, the *lechy* hang around cattle, sucks milk from the goats and assists the shepherd. It gets along with wolves and wild beasts.

In different regions, the *lechy* has different nicknames: for example, *dikokkui mujik* (the slightly wild mujik). It's not necessarily associated with the forest: it can be the *Polievik* (the rustic), naked, black and monstrous. Like the *poludnitsa* (the noon spirit), the *polievik* is seen mostly at noon, not because it's warmer at that time, but because biological activity of these clandestine neighbors of man coincides with the times when the latter are sleeping, i.e. at siesta time and at night.⁴⁸ Their natural habitat is also well defined. In Eastern Europe, paleanthropes lived not only in the deepest forests, but also in immense swamps and on their shifting edges (where they gathered their favorite foods).

Among Ukrainians, Bielorussians and Great Russians, that same *lechy*, aka *polievik* or *poludnitsa*, is also called *vodianoi* (water being) or *russalka* (water nymph). The *vodianoi* is a naked old man with messy hair, black or strikingly red. He is invariably identified by the same vocal expressions: bursts of laughter, whistles, and murmurs. The feminine counterpart is *vodianikha* (the water woman) or *russalka*. According to the natives of the Piniej region, the *vodianikha* has pendulous breasts and long hair. In the north of Russia, everyone thinks that the *vodianikhas* and *russalkas* look like hideous hairy women with drooping breasts. In a number of stories, *russalkas* don't even live in the water. Among the southern Great-Russians, as in Bielorussia, they are creatures of the forests and the fields who know how to climb trees.

⁴⁵ Valdimir I, the Great, also known as Saint Vladimir, was the Russian prince who established the foundations of the Russian state. Around the year 1000, he converted, along with all his people, to Byzantine Christianity.

⁴⁶ These members of the Slavic folklore correspond to the fairies of the Britons and the sirens of navigators.

⁴⁷ Vladimir Dahl (1801-1871) was a Russian story teller and philologist of the previous century, author of one of the best Russian dictionaries and of an important collection of Slavic proverbs.

⁴⁸ Which gave rise in the Near East to the famous biblical story of the Demon of Noon.

Finally, among Western Slavs, *russalkas* no longer have anything to do with water: they live in fields of cereals (wheat, barley.); in Tula and Orel, people believe that they prefer fields of rye and hemp. As to the name *roussalki* itself, also applied to the male of the species, it is probably related to the color of their hair. The words *russyi* (reddish-blond, Venetian blonde) and *ryjiy* (carrotty red) diverged in meaning late. They have a common root in all Indo-European languages (*rossa*, *roz*, *rouge*). All over Eastern Europe many ancient geographical names⁴⁹ are related to that root and indicated, perhaps, the homes of these creatures.

Eastern Europe is of course poor in high mountains, but in the Carpathians the same kernel of truth gave rise to legends about mountain spirits or stories about a "wild *baba*" (woman).

There is another group of creatures to consider: that of domestic spirits, both good and bad, whose main charge, like the Roman house gods (the *lares*), was to protect homes against the malefic intents of their congeners. The symbiosis with Man is as complete as possible. The guest hiding in the basement, the attic or in the out-buildings is as discreet as a ghost. It carefully avoids encounters but, in winter, it cannot erase from the snow the revealing traces of its hairy naked feet. From time to time, there is a glimpse of it. It's always good old *lechyi*, with its messy hair and hairy body. There are up to hundred different names for the *domovoi* (*lare*), who has a female companion, *domovikha*, also called *volossatka* (the hairy one) or *maroukha* (the kid).

At night, the *Domovoi* visits the barns, the hangars and the wheat silos, as well as the stables; it sucks on the cows' udders. When there are two staying in the same house, they quarrel and seek to chase the other away. However, once in place, this specialized and perfectly adapted parasite no longer leaves the house or the property. It's respected as a protector of the family and of its belongings. All of which takes us, not into a fairy tale, but deep into the shadowy heart of our own past, in the days when the Scythians also cohabited with *devas*.

Overall, none of these "fanciful beings" (*niejit*) were thought to have horns or a tail. Further, to quote Dahl, "the *niejits* do not speak." Of all the malefic spirits, the most bookish, the most sophisticated, and the further from the original prototype, is clearly *Tchort*, the Devil.

ORIENTAL MIDDLE AGES

In the oriental world, a swarming crowd of malefic spirits live in the shadow of the great religions: Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam and the mediaeval Chinese philosophic-religious systems, as they do in the West under the shadow of Christianity. Orientalists, Arabic and Chinese experts could have brought us – and they will someday – a wealth of precious information in discovering material relevant to our paleoanthropological archives. Up to now however, the works of Anna Rosenfeld, of swami Pranavananda and Pei Wen-Chung have been devoted to proving the opposite: that the Snow Man is but a myth. The time will come when younger orientalist will reject with disgust such naive theories.

BELIEFS OF UNDER-DEVELOPED PEOPLE

This chapter is but a preliminary sketch. Ethnographic documents about American Indians, the people of Africa, and various tribes of Siberia, Indonesia and Oceania, are replete with information about beliefs in human-like spirits living in nature and sometimes having relations with people. Thus, "master-spirits" or "master of animals" play an important role in the mythology of hunters: northern Asians, Inuits, Pacific Northwest and northern Canadian natives, people of the Himalaya and the Caucasus. The "master" is always like a man. It's an anti-man, but

⁴⁹ Including the name of Russia, as the home of the red-headed.

there's a deal between it and Man: the hunter gives it part of his catch and, in turn, the "master" drives the game that it doesn't kill itself towards the hunter.

Even among people who live from herding and agriculture, there are stories of "master spirits" which are difficult to differentiate from those of hunter-gatherers. Each individual tracker strives to develop a personal rapport with one of these "masters", of which there is a multitude. In other cases however, the relationship with the "master" is no longer a private matter for an individual, but becomes that of the family, the clan or the tribe. The contact is achieved through the sorcerers, shamans or chiefs.

Primitive mythologies and shamanism offer an extraordinary rich documentation to anyone who wishes to understand how imagination has everywhere transformed, turned around or ornamented in some original fashion, the same starting point, namely the presence of neanderthalian beasts, sometimes remote, sometimes nearby, sometimes in close contact with daily life, sometimes present only in the descriptions and memories of strangers.

So, such are the main points for the six chapters of a book that remains to be written. Perhaps there is actually enough there for six books! Or even sixty dissertations. In any case, the material would suffice to transform many aspects of the history of culture and religions.

Would it really contribute to anthropology? Yes, no doubt. When we learn to decipher as biologists the hieroglyphs of tales and popular legends, when in the light of biology, everything that belongs to imagination, inconsistencies, presumption and human errors is eliminated, there shall remain a concentrated residue of knowledge on the life and the complex talents of that disappearing species which, thirty-five thousand years ago, gave birth to Mankind. And, within that carefully filtered residue, the most universal conclusion will be that these human-like creatures which are at the origin of so many beliefs differ from Man by the lack of speech. Also of course by their hairiness and wild life-style, but basically, by the lack of articulated language. That feature is mentioned in all six chapters outlined above.

That is precisely the trait through which Ernst Heckel, about one hundred years ago, in 1866, tried to define the species of human forebears that he had invented: *Pithecanthropus alalus*, the mute ape-man. Eugene Dubois saw it as standing upright. It is only today that we learn that it was also quite hairy. So: *Pithecanthropus alalus, erectus, pilosus*.

The most important of these traits, for future science being *alalus*.

All through our study, people have continuously reminded us: "Can't you see that your Snowman is only a *lechiy*!" Perhaps indeed, or a faun. Why not? However, it would be more accurate to say that it's the opposite that is true.

Most beliefs in evil forces are pure fantasy. No paleanthrope is to be found in fairies, or in a house god no bigger than my finger, nor in one that looks like a rooster. Folklore is folklore: fiction born of imagination. But those who have studied omens and superstitions discovered long ago that imagination does not create from nothing: it is based on reality. Solar myths can go so far in that sense that little is left of the sun itself: for example in the bald head of an old man, so hot that one can cook *blinis* (pancakes) on it. Just as other manifestations of human life, the forces of Nature are transformed and disfigured by folklore.

This is why our research on relict paleanthropes has necessarily brought us to plunge in the depths reflecting these ghostly reminders. Formerly, up to the 18th century say, anyone encountering a wild man, hairy and speechless, in the woods, the swamps, or even a shed behind his house, would be told that it had seen a faun or some household deity. He would also come up with that explanation and be satisfied with it. But in the more cultured 19th century, many collectors and commentators paid attention to these obscure popular superstitions, contradictory to both Science and the Christian faith. So, whenever it still happened that someone reported such encounters, be they in the forest or in mountains, near streams or swamps, in the barn or the attic,

he was now increasingly told that he had been victim of a hallucination or had been misled by old wives tales. The witness would often also readily recognize that he had been mistaken. When the facts were indisputable, there was a reasonable explanation: escaped criminals often hid in forests or abandoned buildings, and in the mountains, there lived the descendants of persecuted or exiled groups, gone feral, living isolated like lepers, no longer wearing clothes and having lost the power of speech. Many also, like their grand-fathers, would blame various evil spirits. One cannot blame ethnographers for having tried to educate the public and banish that nonsense from popular consciousness. But the scholars didn't know, and couldn't know yet, that among the natural features in the background of popular imagination there were relict paleanthropes, just as real as the wind or the sun, the hunter's luck, sickness, some cataclysm, or the absence of breath in a corpse.. everything that feed the wheels of folklore. The scientific value of earlier works of ethnography and linguistics is by no means nullified by the simple affirmation that, in the second half of the 20th century, surviving paleanthropes are still around, both near and far from Man, even in the back of the house.

This is also the time to dismiss once and for all, a naive explanation too often invoked. Here, as an example, an article published in the *Komsomolskaya Pravda*. A reporter from that publication arrives in the Pamir and asks whether there is any news about the Snowman. He is answered: "The Snowman does not exist. But around here, we have *vouids* and *vaids*, *domovoi* (the Slavic *lare* gods), heros of ancient legends. The *vaid* is the female, the *vouid* the male. They are completely white. They look a lot like Man, walk like him, on two legs. They enter villages without fear and even come into houses. However, they do not shake your hand when you meet them and do not allow anyone to touch them. They vanish in a blink behind rocks. Only their footsteps remain; they are identical to those of people. There are all kind of curious fables about *vaids* and *vouids*. Sometimes they are said to have eaten a meal just served on the table; sometimes they harass lovers on a tryst. The old folk, especially centenarians, remember many legends about the *vaid* and the *vouid*."

If one deletes from this text the words "legends" and "*domovoi*" (or *lare* gods) and replaces them by the words "testimonies" and "unknown creatures", the simple truth emerges. It's the basic facts that matter in the report. As to the fresh footsteps, they should have been examined. The first person who talked to the reporter about the *vouid* was a policeman who had just seen one. However, "well informed" people explained to him that it was only a *domovoi*. The slender thread of the enquiry was thus broken.

Here's another example. The Siberian poet N.U. Glazkov has related in a didactic poem information received from the Yakuts about the Wild Man, which they call *Tchutchuna*. The poem could not be printed until its author accepted to add as a sub-title; "Old Yakut Legend". Everything was fine. Once again science was sent off track..

You know now why this chapter had to be so long.

CHAPTER 8

DRAWING ON A WORLD MAP

The geographical distribution of relict paleanthropes

I used a giant, nearly clownish pencil that someone had given me, to draw arrows on the map of the world to represent what we know about late hominoids. My sinuous arrows connected and bifurcated, clearly showing the unity of the species as well as the dynamics of its distribution. I took as a starting point the area east of the Mediterranean, the area wherefrom stem the most ancient reports: Sumero-Babylonian and Babylo-Egypto-Hebraic. Some anthropologists suppose that neanthrope, *Homo sapiens*, might also have appeared in that same area. That choice as a center of distribution is of course arbitrary. (Ctesias, quoted by Pliny, as well as Pliny himself, reported a concentration of these creatures in the north of India). However, most of the resulting network remains the same in all cases. It is in a way a summary of the fate of *Homo troglodytes* over a span of about ten thousand years.

In the old days, humanity proper spread out at first along the shores of the great rivers, while its ancestors withdrew towards the uplands.

Much earlier, in the geological past, pithecanthropes resided near the meanders and mouths of rivers as well as on the shores of lakes. As to their own ancestors, the australopithecines, even more primitive beings whose bones have been found in Africa, that kind of habitat was not required. They were happy, to satisfy their carnivorous instincts, to extract the marrow from the bones and the brain from the skull of animals already ripped apart by predators. As to the pithecanthropes, it was the flow of rivers that delivered their meat. When the large ungulates were not devoured or killed by the great carnivores, they often perished in water when coming to drink or trying to cross streams. The old, the weak, the sick and the young sank in the mud. Their corpses were carried downstream. Even in the 19th century, Darwin observed such a process in Argentina. Large carnivores were rare in the pampas, but in times of drought, herds of wild herbivores as well as domestic cattle gathered at swamps and streams. "One witness told me, wrote Darwin, that the cattle were rushing into the Parana river in herds of thousands, but that exhausted from hunger many no longer had the strength to climb back up the muddy banks and drowned. One arm of the river flowing past San Pedro carried so many corpses that it became impossible to navigate because of the stench. Probably hundreds of thousands animals perished in the river. Their rotting carcasses floated downstream and many probably ended up in the estuary of La Plata." That observation, added Darwin, threw some light on a question that bothered geologists: why were enormous piles of bones of different animals sometimes found, all buried together? Today, geology has created a specialty, taphonomy, which deals with the burying of carcasses.

Pithecanthropes had the opportunity to gather on the shoals and sand banks of quaternary rivers abundant amounts of raw meat, well preserved in cold water. They could eat it if they could find nearby stones that could roughly be shaped to help in skinning, dismember and cutting the carcasses. In East Africa, paleontologist Louis S.B. Leakey has recently made, by himself, stone tools of the "modified pebble" type with which he promptly cut up the carcass of an antelope in front of amazed onlookers from a nearby village.

Rivers must have frequently brought such gifts to neanderthals and humans during the

early Paleolithic, but the great majority of neanderthals could no longer find enough food near water and had to migrate uphill.

The late neanderthals, those who subsisted into historic times, originally lived, as far as one can tell, in the realm of migrating herds of herbivores. Thus, in the mountains of Asia, they were found where the wild yaks roamed, and in Europe, in the vast area, all the way to the Caucasus, wherein lived the aurochs. As these ungulates became rarer and as their distribution became patchier, neanderthals had to be satisfied with the miserable diet that is theirs today. Their distribution became more and more dependent on a single decisive factor: the spreading of the human presence on Earth. Neanderthals acceded to new territories ahead of the human wave or in its company.

From the moment when the written word appears, there is mention of our hairy mute neighbors in the south-east Mediterranean area and in North Africa. Egypt itself owes its name to one of their ancient names: *Aegyptans*. The area to the south, including the Ethiopian plateau was, for the same reason, called Troglodytic (although its earlier name was Mikhoe).

Pliny the Elder grouped together *satyrs*, *aegyptans* and *troglydites*, living in Ethiopia, all of them lacking human speech. "There was nothing human about them, except their appearance," he wrote. According to Herodotus, the Ethiopians hunted the extraordinary swift troglodytes on chariots pulled by teams of four horses. Later however, the name *troglydites*, just like *Egyptians*, came to mean the humans who inhabited the land named after the paleanthropes. The Carthaginian navigator Hanno replaced the name *troglydite* by its equivalent *pan* according to him, beyond the mountains of Abyssinia, there lived *satyrs* and *pans*. However, following an event which would have happened in western Africa, when Hanno hunted such beings and captured three females, he called them by their local name *gorillas*. It's only in 1847 that American naturalists found this term in the ancient writings of the Carthaginian admiral, and quite incorrectly applied it to a species of anthropoid apes.⁵⁰

So, starting from north-east Africa, relict neanderthals could have spread to the west and also to the south of the continent. The fossil "Broken Hill" man, also called Rhodesian man, was probably one of them.

Surviving neanderthals may have penetrated Europe from the eastern Mediterranean area, in two different ways.

First, as the Strait of Bosphorus did not exist six or seven thousand years ago, they could have come from Asia Minor by land into the Balkans and hence into northern Europe. A skull remarkably similar to that of Rhodesia was found in a cave near Salonika.⁵¹

Plutarch reports that in the year 84 of our era, a live satyr captured near the town of Durazzo, in Albania, was presented to Sulla, who was then returning to Italy. "It was incapable of pronouncing anything intelligible and uttered cries like a beast." Horrified, Sulla ordered it

⁵⁰ In an attempt to show that Hannon's *gorillas* were the apes which we now call by that name, we note that today an ape is called *gorhl* in Wolof, and that the gorilla itself is called *n'gile* in Bakueli and *n'giya* in Eveia or *ngila* in Kiswahili and Kingwana. However, it has also been pointed out that the word for "man" in Foulbe (or Peuhl) is *gorel*, and that in some western African dialects, *gori'i* translates literally as "they are men". It's most likely that the various names for the anthropoid ape, as those for the wild hairy man, all derive from the same root meaning "man".

⁵¹ This discovery was made in 1960 in Petralona. It consists apparently of a neanderthalian skull, but the occipital torus and the pentagonal contour, seen from the back, are reminiscent of the Java Ngandong Man, as does that of Rhodesia. Carlton Coon has suggested that they should both be classified among the archanthropians, akin to the pithecanthropes.

taken away.

Secondly, neanderthals could have spread through the Caucasus into Eastern Europe and the Carpathians, and thence into central Europe and the Alps as well as in northern Europe.

By the 12th and 13th century, they were already rare in France. I mentioned earlier a sculpture from the portal of a 12th century gothic church in France, representing a person dressed like a simple peasant, with a wild man snuggling against him. (Fig. 10). The peasant is holding a purse and some coins in his hands. The sculpture undoubtedly represents the guild of exhibitors who earned their living showing such curiosities. This sculpture is a faithful illustration of a passage in Nizami's *Iskander-Name* (the Book of Alexander), which also dates from the 12th century. It is said therein that the Rouss (the Russians) managed to capture a living *dev* on the slopes of the Caucasus, brought it back to Russia where they showed it, at the end of a chain, from village to village. Everywhere, from windows, people threw money and food to the exhibitors, who earned their living in this manner. It's most likely that as such creatures became rarer, they were replaced by bears, which thus inherited their western Slav nickname *Michka*. That word has nothing in common etymologically with *medved* (bear) and is not, as is widely thought a diminutive.⁵²



An exhibitor of wild men. Sculpture from the portal of the church of Semur-en-Auxois (Côte d'Or department), dating from the 12th century.

⁵² In Russia, the bear is familiarly called *Michka* – as it's called "Martin" in France. *Michka* is also a diminutive of *Mikhail* (Michael) and it was thought that this was the origin of the nickname to the point that the bear is often called *Mikhail Toptygin*.

In a 17th century Russian manuscript one can read that: "Not long ago there lived in Poland, at the court of Ian III, a *michka*-man who was captured in the forest. It did not talk and only roared. It was completely hairy and climbed trees. However, as he showed some traces of reason and humanity, he was baptized." Here, the term *michka* is clearly used to mean "bear". This wild man specimen had been captured during a bear hunt and had been protected by an enormous she-bear, which led at the time to the suspicion that she was its adoptive mother. Later, it was thought that this was just another episode in the history of children abducted and raised by wild animals. However, if one consults further historical sources from the 17th century, one finds out that this bear-man actually appears in a wider historical context. Besides the foregoing Russian source, there are reports on this matter from Polish, French, English, Dutch and German sources. It thus turns out that in 1661, in the forests of Lithuania-Grodno, a military unit drove towards the hunters a few bear among whom there was wild man. The latter was captured, brought to Warsaw and offered to King Ian II Kasimierz. The king's wife tried a number of experiments in an effort to humanize the creature, but all in vain. It was a boy, aged 13 to 15, and entirely covered by thick hair, completely lacking speech and any other means of human communication. It was only possible to tame it and teach it some household tasks. The witnesses reported numerous events and traits of the bear-man's behavior. One Ian Redvitch even published in 1674 a book entirely devoted to this monster. Many other authors mention it later, in the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries. But it's only today that we differentiate his case from that of children raised by animals: his entire body covered with thick hair, and his complete inability to learn to speak are symptoms which contradict the former diagnostic and support an explanation in terms of a relict paleanthrope.

The same applies to another case of children supposedly raised by animals, also from the 17th century. A young man was captured in Ireland in the proximity of a herd of wild sheep. He was taken to Holland, where the world famous anatomist Nicholas Tulp, aka Tulpius⁵³, studied him and carefully described the peculiarities of his throat and his skull, which diverged from the human norm. Here again, everything suggests that it was a relict paleanthrope.⁵⁴

I must also mention here, in the minutest details, another case which occurred in Europe. In 1798, there was published in Germany a book by Michael Wagner *Beiträge zur philosophischen Anthropologie* (Essays on philosophical anthropology). It incorporated a contemporary document, originating from Brasov (at the time Kronstadt). The author of that document, most likely a local physician, describes in great detail a young wild man captured in the forest that separates Transylvania from Wallachia. Here are the most relevant passages from his description:

"This unfortunate young man was of medium height and had an extraordinary wild look. His eyes were deeply sunk in and he had a sloping forehead, He had bushy and prominent eyebrows and a short and flattened nose. His neck appeared swollen and affected by a goiter. His mouth was somehow preeminent. The skin of his face was dirty yellow. His thick grayish hair had been

⁵³ Tulp was a remarkable man; he was even mayor of Amsterdam and one of the most dedicated defenders of the independence of the Netherlands against the imperialistic ambitions of Louis XIV. However, his claim to international fame is mostly based on being the central figure in Rembrandt's famous *Anatomy Lesson*.

⁵⁴ That might be the wrong conclusion, for speaking of its outer appearance, Tulp simply says that it has *carne dura, cute exusta*, meaning "firm flesh and burnt skin", meaning sunburnt. There is no mention of hirsuteness.

cut (at the time of the description - B.P.). The rest of his body was covered with hair, which was particularly thick on his chest and back. The muscles in his arms and legs were more developed and more conspicuous than in humans in general. He had calluses on his knees and elbows, as well as on the palm of his hands, which were of the same dirty yellow as his face. His finger nails were very long. His toes were also longer than normal. He walked upright, but with a heavy step, swaying, with his head and chest leaning forward.

"At first sight, I was struck by his kind of wildness and animal look. He completely lacked speech, even the ability to pronounce articulated sounds. He only uttered a slight murmur when his master made him walk in front of him. This murmur grew and rose into a howl as soon as he saw the forest, be it even a single lone tree. Once, when he was in my room, from which one could see the forest and the mountains, he howled in a truly pitiable fashion. He did not understand a single human word, sound, or gesture. When we laughed, or feigned anger, he did not seem to understand what was happening. He looked at everything we showed him with complete indifference and never expressed the least feeling.

"When I saw him again three years later, his apathy had disappeared. When he saw a woman, he uttered wild cries and tried to express his desire by his body language. When I had seen him for the first time, little attracted him or repelled him; now he expressed some hostility towards the objects which had caused him discomfort. He would for example run away merely at the sight of needle, with which he had once been pricked, but would not flinch when a naked sword was pointed at his chest. He became ill-tempered and impatient when he was hungry or thirsty, and ready to attack, when normally he would not hurt people or animals. Given his human appearance and bipedal stance, he did not present any external signs distinguishing Man from Animal. It was rather painful to watch this inoffensive creature walk, pushed by his guardian, groaning and casting wild glances around. To restrain his wilder bursts of savagery, he was tied up when approaching towns as well as in gardens and woods. However, even when so fettered, many men had to escort him to keep him from freeing himself and running away.

"At the beginning, his food consisted in the leaves of trees, herbs, roots and raw meat. It's only gradually that he got used to cooked foods; according to the man who looked after him, it took at least a year before he would accept any. At the same time, his wildness also abated.

"I could not say how old he was. From his appearance, he looked like 23 or 25 years old. It's likely that he'll never learn to speak. When I met him for the second time, he still did not pronounce a single word, but he had changed in many ways. His face still had something bestial about it, but much softened. His pace had become more decided, more self-assured. As to his hunger – he now enjoyed a varied diet, based mostly on vegetables – he knew how to express it clearly, using specific sounds. He had become accustomed to wearing shoes and clothing but did not care that they might be in tatters. Gradually, he had learned to leave the house alone, without his guardian and to return by himself. The only tasks that he was up to was to go to the well with a jug, filling it up and returning with it. That was the only service that he was able to provide to the person who fed him. He also knew how to get food by visiting those houses where he had once been fed.

"In certain circumstances, he showed a certain instinct for imitation, but never in any lasting fashion. Even after having imitated something a number of times, he quickly forgot what he had learned, except when it concerned his personal needs, such as eating, drinking, sleeping..He stared with amazement at everything he was shown, but quickly looked away to look at other objects with similar disinterest. When shown a mirror, he peeked behind it, but didn't seem to care that he did not discover its image there. The sound of musical instruments seemed to interest

him a little, but when, one day in my room, I brought him near the piano, and he did not dare touch the keyboard and was frightened when I forced him to do so.

"Starting in 1784, at the time he was brought taken away from Kronstadt, I did not hear about him again.

For brevity, I had to omit a number of the author's observations and comments, but what was quoted here is of the greatest value from a scientific perspective. What is certain is that this is certainly not a psychiatric case. The anatomical details of the wild young man are precisely those of our "ward", the relict neanderthalian. So, five years before the French Revolution, a European physician had the opportunity to examine a living neanderthalian!

Actually, all the above is old tales compared to much fresher evidence of the subsistence of paleanthropes in the forests of eastern Europe.

On a Sunday, in Paris, in the house of Gustave Flaubert, Maupassant and Turgenev were discussing the curious fact that while an incomprehensible phenomenon may cause the most intense terror, the latter disappears as by magic once an explanation is found. As an example, Turgenev related an event from his youth. Turgenev never wrote about it, but Guy de Maupassant used it from memory in his short story *La Peur*⁵⁵(the Fear), keeping the story-telling style of his friend Turgenev.

"He was a young man, hunting in a Russian forest. He had walked all day and arrived at the end of the afternoon on the shores of a calm river.

"It was flowing under and through the trees, covered with floating leaves, deep, cold and limpid.

"An irresistible urge to dive into the transparent stream took the hunter. He undressed and leaped into the water. He was a tall and strong young man, a bold and experienced swimmer.

"He was floating quietly, at peace, brushing against roots and plants, enjoying their touch against his skin.

"Suddenly, a hand grabbed his shoulder.

"He spun around and faced a horrible creature looking at him rapaciously.

"It looked both like a woman and a she-ape. It had an enormous face, wrinkled, grimacing and laughing. Two strange things, breasts probably, floated in front of her; wild tousled sun-bleached hair, crowned her face and floated on her back.

"Turgenev was gripped by a hideous fear, the glacial dread of the supernatural.

"Without thinking or reflecting, without understanding, he swam in a panic towards the shore. But the monster swam even faster and was touching his neck, his back, and his legs with little joyful giggles. Reaching the shore, the young man, crazy with terror, ran as fast as he could through the woods without even thinking about his clothes and his gun.

"The horrible creature followed him, running as fast as he did, grumbling as she went.

"Exhausted and overcome in terror he was about to fall when a child who was herding goats ran over with a whip and struck the awful creature who ran away howling in pain. Turgenev saw her disappear into the foliage, just like a female gorilla.

The point of Turgenev's story was that as soon as the shepherd had told him that the creature was just a mad woman which, by charity, they had been feeding for thirty years, his terror immediately vanished. However, his memory had preserved observations incompatible with such an explanation. The creature looked like a she-ape, a female gorilla, or some kind of human beast, without speech. A mad woman? Come on! You have already understood that the famous

⁵⁵ The story was written on July 25, 1884.

writer had met a *russalka*. The fear that overwhelmed him was indeed a "panic", resulting from a face-to-face encounter with a *pan*!

Let us now leave Europe. The main stem of our pointing arrows opens up in Asia. Starting from the eastern Mediterranean it works itself into Arabia, the Caucasus and the high Iranian plateaus. Further, it opens up as a fan in Central Asia. The immense area which it encompasses is bounded on the south by the Himalayas, in the north by the Altai and the Sayan range (and perhaps it also used to be bounded on the northwest by the Ural Mountains.)

It is not possible to review here all the elements which allowed us to define an area of distribution as vast as an ocean and to identify the knots and links of such a gigantic net. Fortunately, the most promising focus for future explorations immediately stands out.

It is to be found where the path which crosses the Hindu Kush once led the protohuman troglodytes to a crossroad from which they could continue forward, or either turn left, or right. Today, this is the area where the boundaries of five states meet: the southwest corner of the Xinkiang. It is that zone of wild and mountainous Kashgaria, south of Tach-Kurgan and upstream along the Raskem-Darya that the people of the Xinkiang describe as the preferred habitat of the Wild Man. They recently confirmed this to general Ratov, as the people of the Pamir had also done to us.

In this area, since times immemorial, and until recent days, the hairy wild man has been thought of as game: an animal like all the others. Maqdisi, an Arab writer of the 10th century who lived in western Afghanistan, on the caravan road to India, already gathered valuable information about *nesnass* (a word still used today by the mountain Tadjiks): "One of their varieties is on the Pamir side, in the deserted regions between Kashmir, Tibet, Vakhan and China. They are men that look like animals; their body is entirely covered with hair, except on their face. They leap like gazelles. Many people of the Vakhan have told me that they hunt and eat these creatures."

Today, the Kirghiz who have left this area to move to the Soviet Pamir all claim that this is precisely in the region, where wild yaks are found, that one encounters wild men. They describe them as mute bipeds, feeding on herbs, roots and fruits. Their flesh is appreciated for its exotic flavor. They are hunted with dogs and also by luring them to traps baited with apples. However, nearby, in Kulanaryk, there exists apparently a law that forbids shooting at them.

According to General P.F. Ratov, his soldiers have repeatedly met these wild men lacking articulated language in the Tach-Kurgan area. They are said to be very numerous and local people leave them food on the ground.

While he was in Xinkiang in 1959, Professor B.A. Fedorovitch interviewed local people about the inhabitants of the Tach-Kurgan and its environs. They reported that the *Yavoi-adame* (or also *Yavo-khalg* or also *Yabalyk-adame*) were found in all areas where wild yaks and wild horses still live: in the mountains that rise on the border of Xinkiang and Kashmir, and nearby, in those of Pakistan and Afghanistan, as well as in the Raskem-Darya valley, where hunters saw some in 1941-42.

More recently, we have the following story by Mattuk Abderaim. In 1944, while he was still a teen-ager, he visited his uncle Nuruz Muhamed on the Raskem-Darya, a three day journey on horse-back south of the Tach-Kurgan. During his visit, his uncle brought home from the hunt the body of a *yavo-khalg* which had just been killed. Mattuk had seen monkeys in books, but this one looked much more like a human. It was as tall as that of an average person. The hair of its pelt was yellowish both front and back, but shorter than and not as fine as a bear's. The *yavo-khalg*'s feet were wider and shorter than a man's and so were its footprints.

According to his uncle and other witnesses, those prints were quite distinct from bear tracks. The thumb was closer to the other fingers than in a human hand. If one is to believe that uncle and his neighbors, the *yavo-khalg* runs as fast as a wild sheep but often turns around to utter sharp and coarse cries at its pursuers. Alas! Thrice alas! The expedition leader prevented professor Fedorovitch from pursuing his enquiry, laughing at the whole matter: "It looks like your *yavo-khalg* is well aware of political geography! According to hunters, it always takes refuge in border areas, where hunting is forbidden."⁵⁶

On the basis of observations from that same area of the Tach-Kurgan there is also information dating from merely a decade ago provided by official Chinese sources. There is also, on the Chinese side, the report by movie director Pai-Hsin who saw in 1954 two creatures climbing the slopes of Mt. Mouztagh Ata. Another time, the film-maker followed, with two friends, the tracks of a biped along which, by the way, they found drops of blood.

Among the details provided about these creatures by the local Chinese administration, one should mention their capacity for grabbing large stones with their hands and throwing them a considerable distance, as well as the fact that they molt in April. We finally mention the curious story told about the Pamir by Duvon Dostobaiev, a Kirghiz born in China in the Tach-Kurgan area. Around 1912, according to him, hunters had captured in the hills a wild man who had carelessly approached the carcass of an *arhhar* (wild sheep) put aside under a large rock. The creature had been tied up and carried on the back of a yak to a nearby village, feeding it with raw meat along the way. The Chinese authorities in Tach-Kurgan heard about the incident. Many people arrived, on horses and vehicles. The hunter was complimented, awarded a prize and showered with presents. And the *goulbiavane* was spirited away..

If, at the cross-roads mentioned above, one turns to the right, one now arrives in the south of the Kuen-Lun range, in that zone encompassing information arising from Tibet and the Himalayas. From there, one reaches the Chinese province of Yunnan, where the local population mentions that wild men live far in the mountains. In 1954, K.V. Tchekanov, a delegate of the Soviet Society for Foreign Cultural Relations, visited Yunnan. Scholars and government employees told him that in mountainous areas, some kind of man-like creatures had been discovered. They had neither clothes nor language and led a strictly animal life. One had even been captured and taken to Kunming.

Let's now go back to the cross-roads; turning left, one arrives in the Xinkiang and Mongolia areas. From there, one reaches Kazakhstan and the Tian-Chan range, then the Sayan Mountains and the Transbaikal region, and finally the Kinghan ranges, where our scientific piggy-bank has often been enriched by popular tales and well documented cases.

I will give a single example of the information originating from that enormous region. It is a report sent from southern Kazakhstan by Temirali Boribaiev, the senior warden of a natural conservation area located on the north-western slope of the Alatau of Talass. According to the Kazakhs' tales, he told us, there were formerly in the mountains of today's Aksu-Djabalgin reserve *kyik-adames*, complete savages covered with short and thick fur. They did not wear clothes, could not speak and ate raw meat, fruits and roots. They were not aggressive and lived a secret existence.

Boribaiev owed his earliest information to his father, Sakal Merghen, who died at an

⁵⁶ Anyone slightly familiar with nature has noticed that as soon as a wide area is closed to hunting, species which were thought locally rare or extinct gradually reappear. Animals flee from gun fire and hide where they can't hear it. They are not stupid. They seem certainly less so than ignorant and unthinking people, be they leaders of scientific expeditions.

advanced age in the 20's, and who had personally encountered a *kyik-adame* around 1870-80. (At the time of Przewalsky's expeditions.) While hunting in the high mountains, in the headwaters of the Ulken-Aksu, he had seen on the hillside a man-like creature alternately leaning and standing up. As he was crawling towards it, the hunter noticed that the "man's" body was covered with short hair, pale beige in color, like that of a young camel or dromedary. The *kyik-adame* was rather tall and well-muscled. He was picking small plants, with one hand and then the other, examining them, shaking the dirt away and eating them. The hunter decided to shoot it in the leg. "Hit in the leg, the *kyik-adame* howled, much as a man would. He sat on the ground, looked at his wounded leg and licked it. For a long time, he remained sitting and moaning softly. He then stood up, limping towards the rocks and disappeared over the hill." The hunter tried to follow its bloody footsteps, but eventually lost track of them among the rocks.

Numerous and more recent information about hairy humanoid bipeds originate in the Djambul region of Kazakhstan. Isolated observations have taken place in the south of Kazakhstan and also in the western area of that republic, along the steppes near the Volga, in the Akmolinks and Karaganda provinces and even in the northern Urals. The Duganes living in Kazakhstan call the wild man *moerjin* (the furry one). Kazakhs living beyond the boundaries of the USSR do not call it *kyik-adame*, but *albasty* in the Popular Republic of Mongolia, and *ksy-kyik* in Sinkiang.

Let us return once again to the starting point of our Asiatic survey: the crossroads from which our arrows bifurcate. If one, instead of turning left or right, continues directly towards the east, with the Kun-Loon Mountains on the right, one finally reaches the Chinese provinces of Kansu and Tsing-hai, near the Altyn-Tagh and Nan-Chan.

It's precisely in this area that Przewalsky gathered his first information on the beast. Zoology professor T.Y. Chow informed us that just a few years ago an officer had seen a wild man in the forest at the boundary of those two provinces; it had fled at an astonishing speed to avoid capture. The soldier had requested, without success, that a scientific enquiry of these creatures be conducted.

A soviet journalist, reserve colonel S. G. Kurzenov, resided in 1957 on the foothills of the Nan Chan range. He was told of the extremely rare *mi-gheus* who live in the area: hairy bipeds who do not wear any clothes. Professor Tsin-Pen was told personally by a senior local bureaucrat that in 1947, in his native village of Cho-Ni-Sian, a *mi-gheu* had been caught and that many people had come to see it. It was just like a human being, except that its body was entirely covered with brown hair. Its head hair was very long. It had died a few days later and its body had been given to a Buddhist temple.

Even further east, in Chen-Si, in the Tsinling-Chan Mountains, we have gathered information, some of which came from educated people and government officials. They had all seen a *jen-hsung* (a "bear-man"), alive or as a corpse. They claim in those parts that although those man-like bipeds are completely mute, they can nevertheless laugh. History professor How Vai-Lu himself saw such a *jen-hsung* in a mountain village in 1954. It had been captured using a traditional trick: red pieces of cloth, which provoke among them an insatiable curiosity, had been laid out on a hillside. Formerly, they were hunted much more actively. Some of them were even tamed and used at home for simple chores, or as beast of burdens, or slaves. At home, in the hills, they feed on raw meat and berries. Professor How Vai-Lu does not think of them as "snow men", belonging to a different species. He thinks that they are descendants of an ancient tribe, driven away into the mountains three thousand years ago and fallen back into savagery.

At this point, from Yunnan, our arrows surge into all of Southeast Asia, where they spread

widely. Only a few words will suffice: it is not possible to present all the goods on the shelves.

Travelers and French administrators of Indochina accumulated a large body of information regarding inexplicable beings (spirits or animals) similar to humans, living in the jungles of Laos and Cambodia. Some years ago, the *Journal d'Extreme Orient* published an article by a well-known hunter who had met in the Cambodian forest the exact replicas of the Himalayan Snowman: a male, a female and a child, who left behind tracks similar to those of the *Yeti*. These creatures had reminded him of Stone Age people.

We have contacted the director of the Institute of History of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, professor Tchan-Hui-Lieou, who forwarded us the results of enquiries made by his colleagues in neighboring regions, Laos and Cambodia. Yes indeed, such creatures were well known to the local people. Quite recently, in his book *La Guerre dans les jungles du Vietnam Sud* (Moscow, 1965)⁵⁷, the progressive English journalist Wilfred Burchett also brought up a number of reports about those representatives of the local fauna ignored by Science.

Further reports also come directly from Laos and Burma, following which the arrow curves to the south: occasional sightings reported from Malaysia. And suddenly, a plethora of reports issue from the tropical forests of southern Sumatra. Ancient reports suggest that the paleanthropes lasted in that area as long as the rhinoceros were still present. No predator could kill these large armored pachyderms, but when they ended their life, stuck in a swamp, they were eaten by bipedal creatures locally called *orang-pendek*, *sedapa* or *sendai*.⁵⁸ Over the last decades, they have become rarer and are disappearing. Dutch hunters have described some rare striking encounters; museums hold copies of sketches and casts of footprints.

Finally, another stream of varying strength aims towards eastern Siberia. We can see it flowing along the Yablonoviy, Stanovoi and Djugdjur Mountains. Other arrows start from Lake Baikal towards the hills bordering the Yenissei River. And heaven knows where, in the infinite spaces of Siberia, especially in the North, there still are stories about those vagabonds, falsely human-like, who are particularly drawn to the reindeer herds. The area around the Verkhoyansk Range is especially fertile in reports on relict paleanthropes, locally called *Tchutchuna*, *Kutchuna*, *Mulena*, *Kheiedieki* or *Abass*. Presumably, they frequent that area only in the summer and live somewhere in the Chukotka peninsula. Here's how prehistorian A.P. Okladnikov summarizes the information which he gathered in the lower Lena area: "The *Tchutchunas* are a tribe of half-men, half-animals that used to live here in the North and are still sometimes seen, although now quite rarely. They had quite an extraordinary appearance. Their appeared welded to their body: they had no neck. They would show up at night at the top of the cliffs and throw stones on sleeping shepherds and steal a few reindeers from their herd. Makarov, a Yakut hunter, claims to have seen caves inhabited by *tchutchunas* on the right bank of the Lena, downstream from Tchubukulakh, as far as Stolb Island, even sometimes on the left bank. In those dens, he found horns and skins of the reindeer that they had eaten."

Without quoting all reports from Yakutia, I shall acknowledge in passing another compatriot, who had the courage of proclaiming his discovery quite independently from other researchers. Another minor tragedy, another "note without scientific importance."

I happened upon it almost by chance. In 1912, a young mineralogist, P.L. Dravert, published some information, gathered since 1908, on the presence in the lower Lena area of herculean

⁵⁷ W. Burchett, *Inside Story of a Guerilla War*, International Press (1965). In France, *La Seconde Resistance*, Gallimard, 1965.

⁵⁸ Everything we know about these creatures has been brought together for the first time in my book: *Sur la Piste des betes ignorees* (Paris, Plon, 1955).

savages, hairy and without articulated language. Later, having become a renowned specialist on meteorites, Professor Dravert reworked his earlier work and, in 1933, published a major article entitled: *Wild men: moulens and tchutchunas*. Unfortunately, in contrast to his first article, this one was muddied by comments from an incompetent collaborator, ethnographer G. Xenophontov. His denial of the facts is significantly based on his opinion that *moulens and tchutchunas* are too much like the pans and fauns of old Hellenic legends to be real. Of course! Again the lid of the coffin slammed down on the embarrassing truth that dared show its nose.

Our arrows continue towards the Chukotka Peninsula and the Aleutian Islands. A Yakut told P.L. Dravert that in the lower Lena area those hairy creatures sometimes migrate towards the "warm islands", i.e. the Aleutians. "Once, in the land of the Chuktchi, the waves threw onto the beach the body of completely hairy man from the Warm Islands. We couldn't tell whether he was dead or still alive. Nobody dared to touch him. Even the dogs feared approaching him. He lay on the beach like that for a whole day. Only a respected shaman saw him, the following night, stand up, walk around the Chuktchi village three times and leave. "We note in passing that in the summer, the ocean currents flow northwards towards from the Aleutians, towards the Chukotka Peninsula.

Along with humans, who continued to spread on the surface of the Earth by crossing the Strait of Bering (which at that time was more likely a land or ice bridge) and leaping from one Aleutian island to the next, Neanderthal man also reached the American continent. The famous American anthropologist Ales Hrdlicka was astounded to find clearly neanderthalian skulls within the loess of Nebraska⁵⁹, within geological strata dating from a period when such creatures were supposed to have long vanished.

In 1958, the indefatigable and intrepid zoologist Ivan Sanderson started gathering North American observations of creatures corresponding to the Himalayan Snow Man. That was the same year that, in the USSR, we began our systematic approach to the problem. Sanderson also received in his own country⁶⁰ a history of ridicule and neglect.

Sanderson found that even a hundred years ago, the diaries of travelers were full of surprising reports of wild hairy men, especially in Canada's far-west and in the forests of northern California. They are called *Sasquatch*, or *Omah*, according to the local dialects, or more familiarly today *Bigfoot*. The Eskimos and the Indians are well aware of it, although their folklores are completely different. Many reports have also been contributed by European settlers. Starting in 1960, Tom Slick and Peter Byrne investigated Californian reports, gathering footprints and eye-witness reports.

In his book on the Snowman, Sanderson devotes six chapters to North American data. There is no doubt that a relict humanoid hides in the forests of the New World. There is certainly a breeding population, but observations focus on large males.⁶¹

⁵⁹ More precisely in Omaha, where many of these bones were found in 1894 and 1906. They showed no trace of fossilization. Hrdlicka argued that they came from recent Indians whose particular features were combined with neanderthaloid traits.

⁶⁰ Actually, his country of adoption: Sanderson was a Scot by birth and moved to the United States after the Second World War.

⁶¹ To learn more about wild and hairy men in North America, one should also consult, besides Sanderson, three booklets by Canadian journalist John Green: *On the Track of the Sasquatch* (1968), *Year of the Sasquatch* (1970), *The Sasquatch File* (1973). In 1969 and 1970, the *Bigfoot Bulletin*, a monthly edited by George F. Haas, of Oakland (CA), provided information on the progress of local investigations. From August 1972, the *Manimals Newsletter*, edited by Jim McClarin, of Sacramento (CA), continued along

Our arrows are fading in other states in the northwest and northeast of the continent, but they are still there and continue southwards to emerge strongly in Guatemala, Ecuador, Colombia and the Guyanas⁶². We can't even talk about them here, even briefly.

In spite of the excellent reputation of its author as a primatologist, Sanderson's book was not a success. It was ignored and treated with skepticism. It was a real blockbuster, but its powder was wet. It also lacked a solid theoretical basis. Besides, in the eyes of Americans, the work was guilty of lacking respect for the Church. With insolence, Sanderson declared that the discovery of the Snowman would prove once for all who was right, the Scriptures or Darwin.

That being said, the American enterprising spirit has clearly overtaken us. Within the deep forests of the Cascades and the northern California ranges, no less than nine teams of researchers are on the tracks of Bigfoot. On October 20, 1967, one of them consisting of two men, Roger Patterson and Bob Gimlin on horseback, encountered, within thirty meters, a two-meter tall female covered with black hair. Patterson leapt off his horse and, camera in hand, had just enough time to film her while she was walking away. It is curious that she didn't turn on the man who was pursuing her. She did however turn back and look over her shoulder when hearing the sound of the camera. Subsequently, the men made plaster casts of her footsteps. The film has already been seen by many experts, none of whom could find any detail that could reveal the film as a fake.⁶³ Of course, given the perfection of "special effects" in cinema, no one can vouch really for the authenticity of the film. In the eyes of the overwhelming majority of experts, what it shows is still too unlikely to be convincing. As far as he is concerned, Ivan Sanderson has no doubts about the honesty of the witnesses and the authenticity of the creature appearing on film, but he recognizes that a film cannot replace a skin, or bones.

So, there was no sensational revelation. The study continues slowly, although the film has tipped the balance towards higher credibility. As usual, the deniers refuse to accept the evidence. It was not without some difficulty that a magazine was found in the USA to publish, in February 1968, eight frames of this significant zoological observation. They are most impressive. What they show does not contradict in any way what we have learned. However, they don't really add anything. The importance of these images regarding our knowledge is minor compared to its value as a proof, that proof that the public has been demanding. Well, there it is, that material proof! However, rest assured, it will not overpower obstinate incredulity: it's always possible to shrug away witness reports and even photographs and footprints. Even when the day comes when a specimen is captured or killed, some will say that a sole specimen does not constitute a proof of the existence of an unknown species: there are monsters and Nature often plays tricks on us.⁶⁴

this line. Finally, one should note that scientific articles on the subject are beginning to appear in American anthropology journals. For example, three remarkable papers by professor Grover Krantz of Washington State University, on hand prints, the anatomy of the foot and the weight of the Sasquatch.

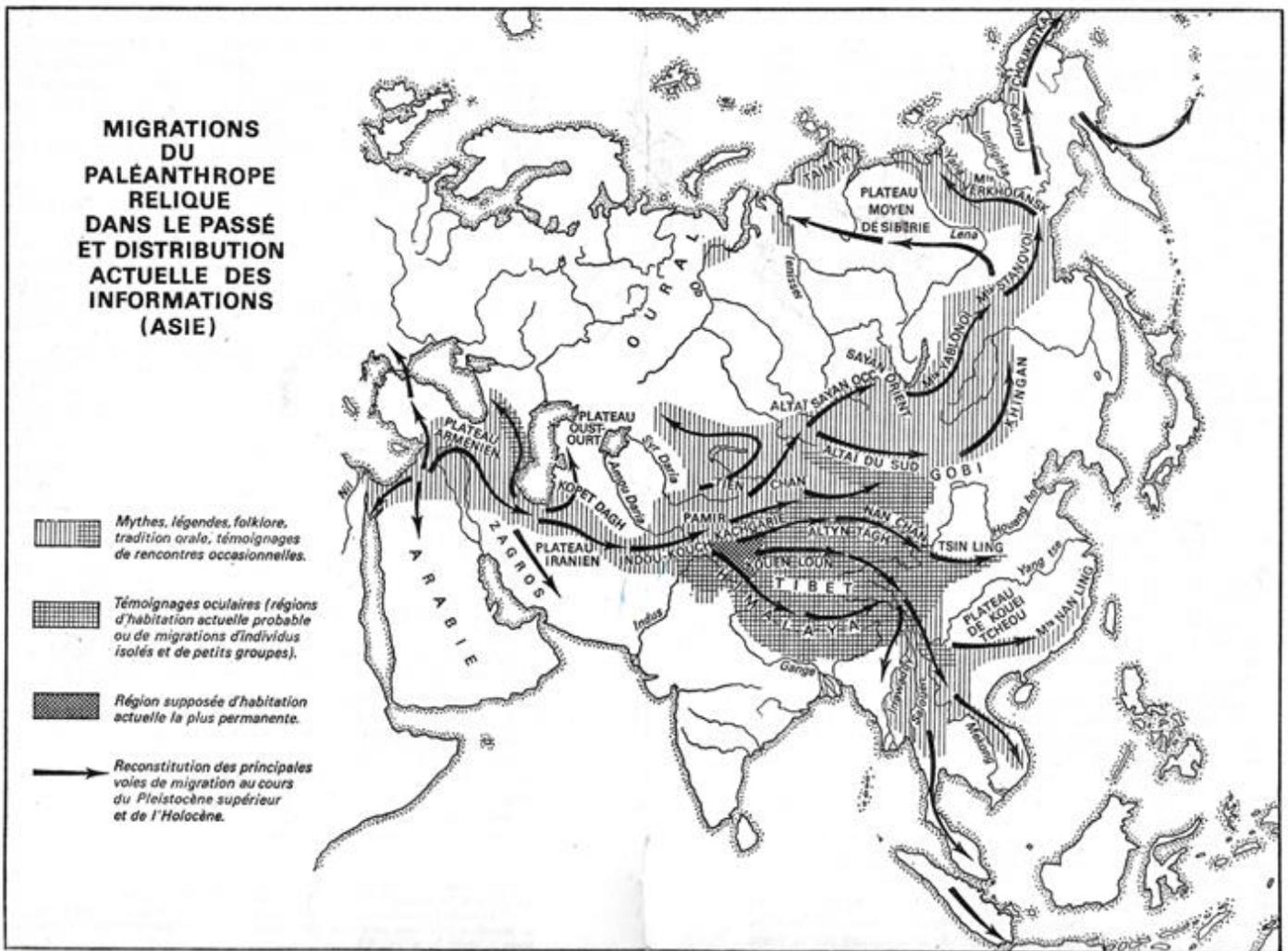
⁶² To all these countries one should add Argentina, where a young French woman, Christine Arnodin-Chibrac has lately been conducting systematic research.

⁶³ As soon as the first images from the film were published, I was very guarded about it. However, as I cannot formally prove that it was a hoax, and as the careful studies of professor Grover Krantz in the USA and engineer Igor Burtsev in the USSR, support its authenticity, I will abstain from commenting.

⁶⁴ The prophetic views of professor Porshnev were soon to be realized. Only a few months after publication of this work, I had the opportunity to examine, photograph and study at my leisure the frozen corpse of a hairy humanoid, brought back to the United States from the Orient by an Air Force pilot. The story of the first scientific study of one of these creatures is the subject of the second part of this work.

That said, it's quite true that a single film, or a unique individual captured, or its skin and bones, would tell us less than what we have patiently reconstructed from scattered reports as to the life and dispersion of these creatures across Eurasia, Africa, and America. That's what we ended drawing with such a big pencil.

Our zoogeographical study has led us even further. We have attempted to compare our map with that of the various religions, and here's what happens.



MIGRATIONS
OF THE
RELIC
PALEANTHROPE
IN THE PAST,
AND CURRENT
DISTRIBUTION
OF OUR INFORMATIONS.

Myths, legends, folklore,
oral tradition, witness
reports and occasional encounters.

Eyewitness reports. (likely regions currently
occupied by paleanthropes, or migrations of
individuals or of small bands).

Region presumed to be currently the most
permanent habitat of paleanthropes.

Reconstruction of the main migration paths
through the upper Pleistocene and the Holocene.

Translated Map Legend.

CHAPTER 9

"OUR WARD" AMONG TRUE BELIEVERS

In the Tien-Chan, on the foothills of the Tchatkal range, there is a dark green lake, the Sary-Tchelek. Here's why I went there in the fall of 1959.

Engineer and geologist A.P. Agafonov had been working there in July 1948. Like many others, he once send our Commission two pages relative to an incident he had been wondering about for ten years. One night, on the green sward surrounding the lake, he was in the yurt of Madyar, a Kyrgyz shepherd over eighty years old and completely blind. Keeper of family and tribal traditions, this old man had told him the following tale. While his great-grandfather, a man renowned for his courage, was returning with his young wife from a feast, they had laid down to rest for a few moments somewhere south-east of the Sary-Tchelek. Suddenly, the husband leapt to his feet, awakened by his wife's screaming: some kind of enormous man-like ape was carrying her away in its arms. Without hesitation, he ran after it and killed it with his hunting knife, saving his wife.

After listening to this story, Agafonov felt he had to explain to the son and grandson of Madyar, gathered in the yurt, that there were no anthropoid apes in the Tien-Chan. This statement brought smiles to the audience and an explosive reaction from the old man. Standing up quickly, he groped into one of the great *sunduks* (chests) stacked along the walls of the yurt, and drew out a sculpted case.

In a contemptful tone, he said: "Look for yourself!" and handed the object to the geologist.

"Inside the case, wrote Agafonov, a delicately mummified hand lay on a felt cushion; it was covered with scattered hair, about 1 cm in length. There were none in the palm. Given its size, the hand could only have belonged to a human-like large animal. I was so astonished that I remained speechless and did not think of making a sketch or writing a description. I clearly remember its very human shape. Only the brown hair on the back of the hand were rather surprising."

Thus, concluded Agafonov, the veracity of the story was established by a concrete proof. He added to his letter a pencil sketch of Madyar, executed at the time.

We had already heard of similar cases. Here and there, hunters occasionally cut the hand off a wild man as a trophy of their feat: a souvenir, relict and talisman. But, this was more than a rumor. It was an opportunity to find a counterpart to the famous hand from the Nepalese Pangboche monastery. The prospect of a serious anatomical study justified a potentially difficult enquiry. I decided to go and "scope the joint." G.G. Petrov, who had accompanied me to the Pamir the year before, accepted to join me. And again we had to go through the usual routine: sleeping bags, tents, kitchen, and provisions.

When researching relict hominoids, the Tien-Chan is much more promising than the Pamir. There are ten times the number of reports. Prof. A.A. Machkovtsev permanently "tarnished his reputation", as evil tongues said, when he published his remarkable treatise on reports about the presence of wild men in the northern Tien Chan ranges (the Kirghiz, Djumgoltau, Sussamyrtau mountains). His work was completed by later reports which helped mightily to describe the elusive creature. The geographer E.V. Maximov learned a lot from methodically questioning the

shepherds of Kirghiz Mountains. A series of observations also came from the western slopes of the Fergana range. Another focus is found in the eastern part of the Soviet Tien Chan; it includes the Terskei-Alatau range, the Sary-Djaz Mountains and the Khan-Tegri. Here is a report among many which originate from that area.

As it often happens in this kind of work, one day I went to visit the geologist M.A. Stronin, whom I only knew from hearsay. In the company of the person who had mentioned him, another geologist, we left town and crossed fields on planks thrown across the mud. We arrived at a multi-story building. Stronin was at home and here's what he told us:

"In August 1948, I was prospecting in Tien Chan in the eastern part of the Terskei-Alatau range. One day, in the company of two Kirghiz guides and a groom, I stopped for the night in an alpine meadow overlooking the Inyltchek valley, near one of the branches of the glacier of the same name. As far as you can see around, there are no people nor flocks. We had left the horses in the valley below our night camp. At dawn, the Kirghiz woke me up, saying that someone was trying to steal our horses. And actually, I could see in the dim light something near the horses, standing in a circle with their heads towards the inside. I took my gun and ran down the hill. I clearly saw someone walking upright, but with arms longer than normal. Imagining that this was a Kirghiz wearing a kaftan, I hailed him in his language: "Hey you! Why are you trying to rob us?" Hearing my voice, the creature stopped and turned around and I heard a hoarse sound that reminded me of the cry of wild goats. The creature moved away from the horses, at first slowly, and then at full speed. I saw it for seven to ten minutes. It didn't run to the opposite side of the valley, but ran diagonally up the daylight side, the same side that I was climbing down. And as it passed less than 100 meters from me, I could see it clearly in full light.

"I remember this creature as if I was seeing it right now. Its image has remained etched in my memory as on a film. When it started running, I thought it was a bear and I came close to shooting it, but soon after I could see that it was not a bear, which is why I remember what it looks like with such precision. It was much too svelte for a bear. He was climbing nimbly on a steep slope, helping itself with its forelimbs like a galloping horse. It ran slightly sideways, with a skew.⁶⁵ Besides, a bear has a snout, or muzzle, and this creature did not have the forward jutting jaw of an animal, but a rounded lower face. The hair that covered it were also too short to be those of a bear and, although dark brown, were more yellowish than a bear's. I have been hunting for a long time and I have seen all kinds of animals, but I have never seen one like that. It was a completely different creature: not too human, but not really animal either. Unable to tell whether it was a man or a bear, I could not decide to shoot, and that lasted until the creature stood on the ridge and walked towards the glacier.

"My horses were in a sweat, especially in the groin. I found my Kirghiz guides hiding in a crevasse, repeating in terror that it was a *kyik-kchi*, a wild man. They refused to continue along with me.

"A little later, in the same year, we were now in the Kavaktau Mountains, when one of the guides who was walking in the morning mist looking for the horses coming back running, uttering the same cry: "The *kyik-kchi*!" Nothing was seen near the horses, but they were in the same excited state as in the previous incident. Everyone on that area knows about the *kyik-kchi* (or *kchi-kyik*) but only those Kirghiz who have absorbed Russian culture are willing to talk about it. The real Muslims absolutely refuse to talk about it or do it only very reluctantly. "

M.A. Stronin's story is worth closing with the conclusion reached by the geologist himself. When he had brought the question up with members of the Kirghiz Academy of Sciences in

⁶⁵ Technically known as the "pithecoid gallop", characteristic of apes.

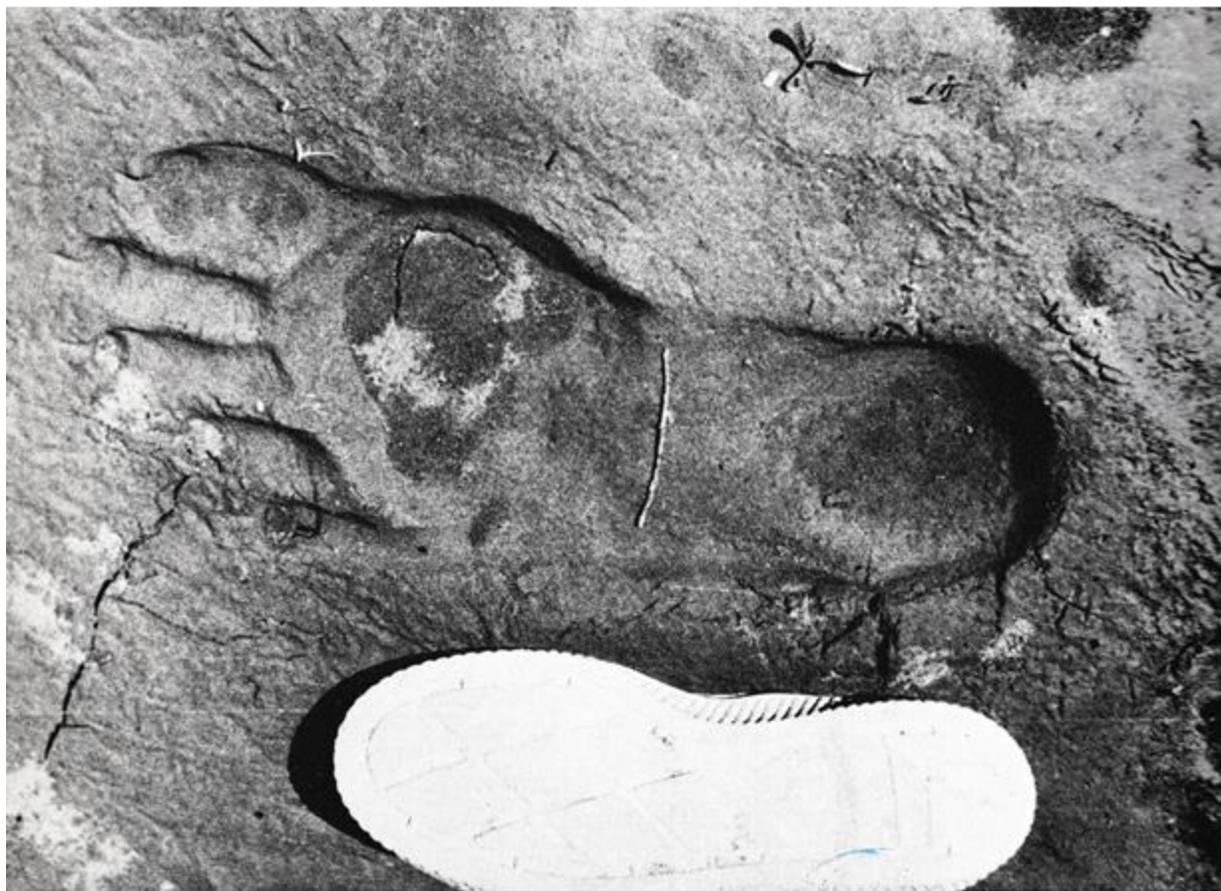
Frunze (now Bishkek), the botanist I.V. Vykhodtsev answered quite simply: "Oh! This is a well-known story. Something actually exists: you can ask any Kirghiz."

Yes, "something" continues to exist, to grow and multiply within the immense Tien-Chan. But had it been seen of the slopes of the Tchatkal, where the requirements of scientific research were driving me. Yes! V.S Bojenov, a hunter from the town of Rybatchye told me that a few years before, while he was traveling with a group of friends to Alabuku, he had seen, far away, a wild man in the bushes. He had observed it for five hours in a row with his binoculars. It was over two meters tall. Because a storm came up, he couldn't reach the cave where it had taken refuge.

In 1963, something much more important happened in that region. Two young men, from the town of Tchirtchik, A. Khaidarov and R. Khalmukhamedov, had found and photographed tracks of outsized human feet. Many of the tracks lacked definition, but luckily, the right foot had been set in a drying puddle. There has been a strong rain five days before. The track was thus relatively fresh. The clay has preserved details of the some of the foot just as clearly as on a plaster cast. The tracks went down to the water, but there were no returning tracks. The gigantic man (his foot was 38 cm long) probably stepped out of the water on the rocky shore opposite.

A beekeeper who lived a few kilometers from the lake was interviewed. He gave an ambiguous answer: "If one is to believe the stories of the hunters, there are tall wild hairy men who live around here in the hills." The foot print was sent to Moscow for analysis. The anatomical study revealed that it was not just an out-sized human foot. A number of features revealed the same differences with the foot of *Homo sapiens* that anthropologists had found on fossil Neanderthalian feet. Actually, we now have in our hands the best print of a Neanderthalian foot in the world. Of a living Neanderthalian who, not long ago, took a dip in the fresh waters of a lake. It was probably still around, wandering, enormous, hairy and mute. Yes indeed, he was still around.

It goes without saying that G.G. Petrov and I did not hesitate for an instant to seek in the vicinity the mummified hand of one of its congeners. The trip was long and difficult; first we took a large commercial airplane to Frunze (now Bishkek), then a much smaller one to Djalalabad. Soon we found ourselves in the heart of the Kurghan. There was still a way to go to get to lake Sary-Tchelek, but we had already met people who had known and respected Madyar, the old shepherd. What had seemed to us the hardest task – discovering his current address – turned out to be child's play. Alas! We arrived too late: only three months earlier, Madyar had died at the age of ninety-nine years, much regretted by his numerous offspring and by practically the whole region. Too bad. What we now had to do was to look for the heir of the family relic. The region's executive committee put one of its delegates at our disposal, as well as an interpreter, to accompany us. Again, we went a long way, in a truck, as far as a forestry operation, where they provided us with horses specially selected for the mountains. I have heard it said recently that the shores of Lake Sry-Tchelek have now become a relaxation station. At that time however, a promenade on horse-back in the region was certainly not a very restful enterprise. But what magnificent scenery. The color of the water, the shape of the shorelines, the famous balsam firs growing on the hillsides, tree trunks floating in the bays, the tongues of glaciers on the hillsides, and up above, the peaks of the Tian-Chan, like fixed clouds – everything was unforgettable and nearly indescribable. The pasture lands were filled with herds and yurts. Already, along the way, we learned that Madyar's heir was his adopted son, the 63 year old mullah Aitmurza-Sakeiev. However, one of our informers, an old shepherd



August 11, 1963, enormous and extremely clear footprints were discovered in wet clay on the shore of a little lake in the Tien Chan. Each print was 38 cm long by 13 cm wide; one of the prints is compared to an average man's shoe.

also told us that in spite of our insistence, Aitmurza could very well refuse to show us the relic.

Finally, we reached the remote ravine where the heir was camping with his whole family, including Madyar's widow. We conformed to all the traditional approach protocols and made every promise imaginable to reach our goal. The head of the family obviously relied on our naivety. Spreading a carpet, he solemnly deposited on it a carved chest. It indeed contained a hunting trophy. But it was only the dried up feet of a fox. Our host claimed that he was not aware of anything else. Later however, we were to meet with A.P. Agafonov in Tashkent. He assured us that the chest that he had seen did not correspond to what we described, and even less so did its contents.

A man well aware of Muslim customs gave us some advice. He told us that only the highest dignitaries of the Islamic hierarchy were in a position to put pressure on the mullah, whose behavior was probably hampered by moral and religious considerations. We left empty-handed, but with some hope in our heart. At the Council of Ministers of the Uzbek Republic I was assured that they would request the intervention of the mufti of the central Asian Islamic church, Babakhanov. The mufti did promise to send a courier to Aitmurza-Sakeiev to try to persuade him.

A few months later, I was back in Tashkent. The news were good. The mufti had shown the Council of Ministers' representative a letter from the Tian -Chan confirming that the mullah was indeed in possession of a sacred mummified hand. Together with journalist Y. Golavanov, I was received by Babakhanov in his office in Tashkent's main mosque. In the most friendly fashion, he explained to us that the courier sent had not been able to find Aitmurza-Sakeiev, having taken the wrong route. But, of course, that error could be fixed.

My next reconnaissance trip to Central Asia took place in 1961. Much information had by then accumulated from the ranges of Tadjikistan and I decided to familiarize myself with one of them: the Gissar Mountains.

During that expedition, I became ever more convinced, not just from new reports, but especially from meeting people concerned, quite independently, about the same problem that I was, even if on a purely regional basis. Among them was an elderly engineer G.K. Siniavsky, specialized in the construction of hydraulic works, and his son. Both generations had lived all their life in Central Asia, knew local languages well and had gained the confidence of people. Father and son both collected evidence regarding "wild men" and the places where they lived. They have been particularly interested in the existence of a curative drug, prepared from the fat of wild men.

The information gathered over two lives by educated people was clearly a key to open a door to a new perspective. Today, the drug in question is only brought back by returning Mecca pilgrims. But before the revolution, there was cited among the riches of the emirate of Bukhara, the sale of an extremely expensive medicine (the inflation of its sale price was also tracked by the Siniavsky.) The product was provided as a tax by the population of some valleys, where the healers of Khakimi prepared the drug by melting the disgusting raw material. A special envoy of the *bek* (prince) of Karatagh came to take delivery on behalf of the court of the emir. One of the main sources was the *kichlak* (village) of Khakimi, in the Karatagh valley, long a nursery of wild men.

The name of the medicine, *mumieu* comes from the Iranian *moum*, meaning grease or wax, and from the Tibetan *mi-eu*, or rather *mi-gheu* which, as we already know means "wild man". In the Middle Ages, the Arabs sold in Europe a similar balm, and in ancient Egypt, the word mummy ended up designating the embalming itself. The particular color and the properties of the original substance have passed in the popular tongue to describe a tincture, or a hue, called *mumiya* in Russian.

Just for all these reasons, it was worth casting a glance at the Karatagh-Darya valley, flowing from the Gissar range, through the ruins of the little village of Khatimi. There was another reason to choose this itinerary besides following on the path of the Siniavsky.

Some time ago, the area had been pointed out to me by B.M. Zdorik, a geologist. One day, in a branch of the Douzakh-Dara pass, a hairy humanoid had popped up near his guide's camp fire. Given its description the creature, according to Zdorik "did not differ from what we know about the Himalayan *Yeti*."

Shortly after this encounter, Zdorik himself had a similar experience, in the same region, although not exactly on the Gissar, but between the Darvaz and Peter the First ranges. That was in 1934. The geologist and his Tadjik guide were crossing a patch of alpine buckwheat when, following a marmot track, the two men had found traces of blood and tufts of marmot hair. Further on, the ground was stamped and turned over. "And there, practically at my feet said Zdornik, there lay on a pile of freshly dug up dirt a bizarre creature stretched out – about 1.5 m long – on its belly. I could not see its head or its forelimbs, hidden by a clump of buckwheat. But

I could take a close look at its feet, naked and black, too long and narrow to be those of a bear; its back was also too flat to be that of a bear. Its entire body was covered with tousled hair that resembled more those of yak than of a bear, which have more of fine inner layer. The color of the pelt was reddish brown, more red than is ever seen on a bear. The animal's sides were heaving slowly and rhythmically in its sleep. This unexpected spectacle stopped me right in my tracks. I turned to my Tadjik guide, who was following closely. He was frozen on the spot, his face white with fear, pulling my sleeve and signaling for us to run away immediately. I have never seen in my life such an expression of terror on a human face. This terror was quickly communicated to me. Both of us, without really knowing what we were doing, ran back along the marmot trail, stumbling and falling over in the high weeds. "

The Tadjiks explained to B.M. Zdorik that they had fallen upon a sleeping *dev*. Locally, these beings are not considered as "evil powers", but rather just as animals, like bears, wolves, procupines, jackals and hyenas. In the neighboring mountains, there lived a number of families of *dev*: males, females and children. They walk on their hind legs. Their head and the rest of their body is covered with brown hair. Recently, one was captured alive: it had slipped into a mill to satisfy its hunger. It was kept captive for two months and was fed raw meat and barley cakes. Then one day it broke its chain and fled. Generally speaking, they don't hurt anybody. But it's is considered a bad omen to meet one.

In the town of Dushambe, the capital of Tadjikistan, young volunteer V.A. Khodunov worked most effectively for our commission. He really sank his teeth into the work. It was thanks to his work that there emerged from the disarray of questionnaires circulated among the population a topography of encounters of relict humanoids in the mountains of Tadjikistan.

Thus, in 1960, a whole horde of *ghoules* had wandered around a *kichlak* (village) during a period of heavy snow falls and deep cold: three of them had been so bold as to come and devour garbage right under the villagers' eyes. These creatures descend from the hills only in cases of extreme penury.

The Koulyab region was found to be particularly rich in observations. But the most important was that recent reports indicated that the valley of the Kratagh-Darya and the surroundings of Lake Iskander Kul remained, to a certain extent, the area where the wild men reproduced and where their young spent their tender years. One of these youngsters had been examined by the Russian hunter Nasadky. He had found it, thanks to his dogs, in a nest hidden under bushes. Taken in charge by the hunter's family, the foundling had been fed milk and raw meat but, one day, disappeared (it is presumed that it was sold).

At the beginning of July 1961, our improvised expedition left from the *kichlak* of Chkrinau. Leading the caravan was a heavily loaded donkey "encouraged" by our guide, Tura-Boboiev, followed on foot by my comrades A.I. Kazakov and the zoologist S.A. Said-Aliev, while I brought up the rear on horseback. Steep and irregular slopes surrounded our path. We moved slowly. Sometimes we set up our tents for a while.

Along the way, we asked the natives questions about *moumieu* and how it was provided to the Emir of Bukhara. In a *kichlak*, a majestic silver-bearded mullah gave us three small pieces of the precious drug (we were to hand them on to Muscovite chemists for analysis). My basic goal was to familiarize myself with the natural environment of the Karatagh valley. For example, we visited the Duzakh-Dara gorge (Hell's Gate) mentioned to us by G.K. Siniavsky, B.M. Zdorik and local shepherds as a refuge of *odami-yavoi* (wild men). It's a nearly closed gorge, heavily wooded. There are prune trees in abundance, as well as apple trees, wild roses, walnuts, hazelnuts, hawthorns, mulberry trees and plenty of rhubarb. In the river, at the bottom of the

gorge, there are plenty of green frogs and fish. In the hills, there are bears, boars, lynx, wolves, martens, foxes, badgers and porcupines. The lateral ravines were filled with such dense and wild vegetation as to be completely impenetrable. We also visited other gorges of this kind: those of Timour and Yangoklik, and neighboring mountain lakes. The left bank of the Parien-Kul Lake, long held to be the home of wild men, seemed incredibly rich in vegetation and in marmot dens. Besides, the area is completely inaccessible, cut off on one side by a torrential stream and on the other by a mountain chain without passable gaps. As our time and our supplies began to run out, we could not reach the other side of the Gissar range. However we already had information about encounters with entire families of wild men around Lake Iskander-Kul.

Our exploration of the natural environment ended up on a positive note: local life conditions were quite favorable to the survival of paleanthropes.

Already, two years earlier, and again upon my return, I had attempted to consult scientific organizations first in Dushambe, then in Tashkent about the secret of the *moumieu*.

However, whenever a solution seemed near, it suddenly disappeared as in a trap.

I had learned from Old Iranian manuscripts that the medicine in question was of two kinds, or more precisely, that the same name was applied to two completely different drugs. One was made from the grease of wild men, the other, a cheap substitute, was simply gathered on rocks or in caverns

However, my enquiries and letters were to produce a strange reversal of the situation. At the beginning, specialists of popular Tibetan medicine had told me, in spite of evidence to the contrary, that they had never heard of *moumieu*. But two years later, a sensational discovery made front-page news: in the mountains of Uzbekistan and Tadjikistan, a curative mineral substance called *moumieu* had been found and its beneficial effects verified experimentally. I was soon to learn that this petroleum by-product, algarite, similar to mineral wax, or ozokerite, was already familiar to geologists and chemists. Actually, that kind of *moumieu* was of no interest to me, except perhaps for the sudden way it was brought up, by order of people with whom I had no contact, who had thus muddied the tracks of my search for the sacred kind.

The ancient manuscripts of oriental medicine will someday relate the story of the authentic substance, much better than I have been able learn for myself. But right now, one can distinguish three stages, characterized by different schools: ancient Tibetan medicine, mediaeval Persian medicine, and Arabic medicine.

Of all that, one thing must be remembered: if there was a traffic of this drug, there has to be knowledge of where to find its source, meaning *mi-gheus*, dead or alive.

I must insert here an incident worthy of a detective novel, a chess move played by some invisible hand. In January 1962, I received a call telling me that in the Pamir, near the Afghan border, a creature had been shot that could be either an ape-man or an ape. The corpse had been sent to Dushambe. That same day, I flew with Y.K. Golovanov to the capital of Tadjikistan. The body had been placed within a center for disease control, to which we were admitted only after the normal procedures. It actually turned out the victim was a common rhesus monkey, a rather tall male. Traces of a collar and the smoothness of its palms showed that it had lived in captivity. But who had surreptitiously released the monkey in the Pamir - and why? It did not carry any infectious disease. It occurred to me that perhaps some unkind people had imagined discrediting by this trick any interest one might have in the snowman. "Look, you can see it a common monkey," they would claim. I would certainly have become the butt of many jokes if I hadn't happened to be the first expert on the spot and had not categorically announced to the journalists that "This monkey has absolutely nothing to do with the problem of the existence of the

Snowman."

That told, my various personal trips to Central Asia made only a very minor contribution to the picture that we constructed based on witness reports and our own thinking. "They captured a female with her young; they killed the latter, but the mullah ordered the mother release." "The mullah forbade us to kill them." The mullah ordered us not to talk about it." How many times did we record such statements! All the survey work that we had done with our questionnaires in these various regions had only reinforced our impression that somebody was throwing a monkey wrench in the works. The relict hominoid is surrounded by an aura of ancient beliefs and superstitions. There is fear about talking about it, or simply to mention its name. This attitude is caused by the taboos put out by the Muslim clergy. Twice in Dushambe I heard of the existence of books about the wild man, but the mullahs who held them would not make them available. One of them went as far as saying: "This is not a matter for infidels!"

If one overlays on the distribution of ethnic groups the body of information which we have gathered about relict humanoids, we find that their dispersion area coincides with area where one of three religions is represented within the population: Islam, Lamaism or Shamanism. There are also a few local "pagan" cults. We conclude that over the past millennia, especially the last few centuries, relict Neanderthals have been preserved mainly in those areas where they were protected by religion or superstition. We know that the Lamaists have forbidden by special edict the harassment of the last *mi-gheu*. Islam, which formerly spread by struggling against Zoroastrism became the defender of the *devs*: instructions and fatwas were issued to the true believers about seemingly human beings, "spirits" strangely bizarre and mortal.

That said, even though beliefs completely foreign to science may, for its great benefice, have preserved on Earth this inestimable treasure that are the relict humanoids, these same beliefs today are presenting an insurmountable obstacle to their study. This is why I end this chapter with an appeal to reason aimed at the practicing Muslims of our country.⁶⁶

The mystery of the hairy and mute human-like *shaitans* (devils) does not belong to the basis of Islamic teaching. The mystery is already partly solved. It is time to reveal to Science the information it needs. The moment has come to reveal the Orient's deep secret.

⁶⁶ One should know that this text originally appeared in a high circulation magazine published in Alma-Ata, the capital of Kazakhstan.

CHAPTER 10

AT OUR FINGERTIPS

The first reports from the Caucasus left us rather puzzled. We were still influenced by images associated with the hunt for the *Yeti* in the heights of the Himalaya: wide spreads of rocks and ice. And suddenly, here's a brand new decor: the Caucasus, tame and friendly, crisscrossed by tourists, full of summer vacationers. Accepting this new situation opened unexpected perspectives for our research.

Already during the 1958 Pamir expedition, *Komsomolskaya Pravda* had forwarded to me some letters from readers. It was almost as if they were casting doubt on my article about the *almas* of Mongolia. "We have them here too! There are some among us!" wrote from Kabardia the ethnographer P.P. Bolytchev and other unearthers of such information, such as R.D. Vaarkvasov, Y.N. Erejikov and E.G. Tkhangapsoiev. Surprisingly, the creature was sometimes called by the same name in the Caucasus as in far-away Mongolia and Tadjikistan. Our commission asked Professor A.A. Machkovtsev to look into this Caucasian paradox. He consulted books likely to shed some light on the subject and read all the letters which we had received. He later was to travel to the area for on-the-ground reconnaissance. His research is the basis of our Caucasian adventure.

Over a century ago, the prominent zoologist Constantin Alexeievitch Satunin inventoried the fauna of the Caucasus. He discovered and described six genera, sixty species and over forty sub-species of hitherto unknown animals, mostly vertebrates. There is only a single species that he did not describe in an official publication, but in a travel story, because he had not been able to procure a specimen for physical examination. The story is entitled *Biabane-gouli*. Again, the similarity between the names is striking: this is clearly the same word as the *Goul-biabane* of the Pamir.

The famous zoologist's story was published in 1899. Late in the evening, C.A. Satunin was walking with his guides through the deserted forests of the foothills of the Talych range, in southern Azerbaijan. It could not have been a hallucination, pointed out the keen observer that was Satunin: even the horses reared in fright. His guides and he clearly saw the same thing: the silhouette of a wild-looking human, apparently a female, which crossed the path ahead of them and walked through a clearing. It's only at the end of the day, once they stopped, that the zoologist could ask the locals about wild, mute and hairy men living on the slopes of the Talych Mountains.

Today, following in the footsteps of Satunin, Professor N.I. Burtchak-Abramovitch has worked to gather recent reports gathered through exploratory missions. Hundreds of notes have already accumulated on all kinds of observations made by the local population. Towards the fall, these hairy, wild hominoid creatures – called *goulebaines* when male, *vilmojines* when female – appear near villages, in melon patches and vegetable gardens. In the summer, they concentrate along rivers, where fish, frogs and crayfish abound. Lots of hunters can recognize the tracks they leave in the snow. But the investigator occasionally hits an invisible wall. According to an ancient custom, hunters do not kill the wild men. It occasionally happens, reports have it, that the Tate people kill some to offer in sacrifice to their gods. They are thus particularly secretive.



Already in 1899, Constantin A. Satunin had mentioned the *biabane-gouli*, the hairy wild man of the Caucasus which he had personally glimpsed.

about the whereabouts of living ones

Here however is a local incident which is neither veiled under the code of silence or by respect for the sacred. It was communicated to us by a captain of the Azeri police, captain Bielalov. Within a regional section of that agency, there was a warrant officer Ramazane, an honest and disciplined man. In the summer of 1947, he was returning home from his beat. It was rather late in the evening; the moon was full. Just before reaching his village, he was about to cross a little bridge when an enormous creature leapt out of the woods, seized him with both hands, lifted him off the ground, and carried him to the foot of a tree. "A second similar creature was there, related captain Bielalov. They were both uttering inarticulate cries and began to feel the officer up and down with great curiosity. Their attention appeared to focus mainly on his face and on the shining buttons of his police jacket. The brave officer was so terrified that he forgot that he was armed. But he did not lose consciousness. As he reported, he had in front of him two enormous human-like creatures, male and female, completely naked and covered with thick dark hair. The woman was a little shorter than the man. Her breasts were hanging quite low on her

belly and her hair was very long. Neither of these creatures had hair on their face, which was quite frightful because of its darkness and because of its simian appearance. The officer spent a long time lying down examining this bizarre couple by moonlight. Every time he tried to move, the male made some threatening growls. Towards the end of the night, the situation became even more horrible. Whenever the female tried to touch the policeman, the male growled and pushed her aside. If the male in turn moved towards the prostrate policeman, the female growled and pushed it aside. At some point, they even came to blows. When dawn finally came, both humanoid creatures disappeared in the forest. The officer, in shock, had never even thought of pulling his gun; he stayed on the ground for a while before standing up and rushing home. After recovering from his ordeal, about ten days later, he wrote a detailed report of the incident. It was obvious that he had really lived through it. "

Another extremely rich source of information turned out to be that part of the main Caucasus range where North Azerbaijan, Georgia and the Daghestan meet. That's the area from which the most startling reports reached us. And that is also of course the area, the heart of the new Caucasian mystery, which attracted the first, most inexperienced researchers. Let's also note that many people are Muslims in that area.

One day, lieutenant-colonel Vasguen S. Karapetian, a military neuro-pathologist, phoned the office of the USSR Academy of Science Commission for the study of the Snowman. "For seventeen years now, he said, I have not been able to understand something I saw a long time ago. It may have to do with the subject of your research, and might also serve Soviet Science in some manner. "We invited Karapetian and formally took note of his report.

The story happened during the harsh part of the Second World War, during the winter of 1941. The battalion of sharpshooters which Karapetian served as field physician was camping near a Daghestani high mountain *aoul* (village). One day, they came for him: the local authorities had captured, in the snows, a hairy type who refused to talk. What was asked of the physician was to confirm that the hair was real, and not some kind of camouflage.

The hairy man could not stand staying in a heated space: he sweated heavily and was suffocating. He was kept in a hangar, in the cool. "I can still see this man, Karapetian told us, as if he was before me now; male, naked from head to toe. Its shape was completely human, but its chest, its back and its shoulders were covered with dark brown bushy hair. Below the chest, the hair were finer and softer. The rather rough hands had a few hair on top, but the palms and the soles of the feet were completely hairless. On its head, the hair was very long and rough to the touch, descending over the shoulders and covering part of the forehead. It had neither beard nor mustache: its whole face was nearly hair-free. The creature was standing up, puffing his muscular and powerful chest, like Hercules. Its fingers were thick and solid, unusually long. Its face was extraordinarily dark and its eyebrows very thick. Its eyes were deeply sunk, and showed no spark— purely bestial. The creature didn't have the least human reactions. It only uttered nasal bellows. On its chest, neck and particularly on its face, it had an infestation of fleas which undoubtedly did not belong to the three species parasitic to man." ⁶⁷

Having completed his examination, Karapetian never heard again about this wild man. One suspects that it had in spite of all that been taken for a malingerer or criminal in hiding. ⁶⁸

For a number of years, we tried in vain to find out more about this incident. And then one day, completely by chance, we received a report from an Ossetian native, who had of course

⁶⁷ This small detail is of clear zoological importance. Each animal species is characterized by its own specific parasite population.

⁶⁸ Or that, taken for a spy, he had simply been shot.

never heard of Karapetian's story. One of his late friends, Tsakoiev, had often related in front of the Ossetians a bizarre souvenir from war time: in 1941, in Daghestan he commanded a patrol charged with rounding up deserters. Following foot tracks, he and his men had caught up near a wood with a hairy man, without clothes, carrying a cabbage under his arm. Unexpectedly, he had offered no resistance. He also seems completely mute. He was taken to the *aoul* and the physician from a nearby unit had been called over to examine him. There was of course no hope of ever finding his skeleton.

In 1957, V.K. Leontiev, at that time government hunting inspector for the Autonomous SSR of Daghestan, was touring the Goutan natural reserve when, late in the evening of August 9, as he was sitting near a bonfire, saw a gigantic wild man – if must have been over 2 m – climbing up a snowy slope, only 50 to 60 meters away. Leontiev could observe it for 5 to 7 minutes, as it was climbing across the firn; he then tried to shoot it in the leg to pin it down, but missed. The creature then scooted up the snowy slope at an incredible speed, briefly pursued in vain by the inspector.

The whole body of the beast was covered with brown hair, not quite as long and thick as those of a bear. For a brief moment, when the animal turned at the sound of the gunshot, it was possible to notice that it didn't have the elongated muzzle of a beast, but a flatter face, like a human being. It was extremely round-shouldered, strongly leaning forward; its legs seemed bowed and massive.

Leontiev had the rare privilege of tracing and even drawing an absolutely fresh neanderthalian track, dating from at most a few minutes. The end of the toes were deeply set into the snow. The animal was walking with its toes bent, as if it was trying to stick them into the snow. The toes were widely spread, the big toe sticking out most. While climbing the animal was not standing on the whole of its foot's surface, but only on its points. The tracks suggested that the sole of the foot was covered by hard and thick skin, with prominent calluses and deep fissures. There was no trace of claws.

Leontiev's careful description of the cry uttered by the paleanthrope shortly before the encounter was also of great interest.

In the report which he sent us, Leontiev compared his personal close encounter with the information which he had gathered from interviewing local people. But one should note that, here again, the path was blocked by the concern piously emphasized by the Muslim clergy to maintain silence about such things.

Here however, is a report by an emancipated Daghestani, Ramazane Omarov, a veterinarian in charge of the zootechnical department of a kholkhoze. On 29 August 1959, he was walking down a mountain path, around 6:00 pm; visibility was still excellent. Suddenly, further down on the path, he saw a large animal moving. Thinking it was a bear, he hid behind some bushes. "The animal, originally sitting, stood up and walked, on two legs, in my direction. It looked both like a Man and like an Ape. As a child, I had heard all kinds of stories about *kaptars*, but I didn't believe them. And here, now, I had one in front of me! It had long black hair, like a goat. It gave the impression of having no neck: its head appeared to be attached directly to its shoulders. Long hair dangled from its head. The *kaptar* came closer and walked by me. It was a male. Its head was long, pointed towards the top. While walking, it swung its long arms, which almost reached its knees, which oscillated as if they had been screwed to its body. Walking about 200 m away from me, the creature crossed the path and sat down again. It remained squatting down like that for two or three minutes, with its hands on the ground. After getting up again, the *kaptar* moved swiftly towards the woods, making such long strides that no man would have been to do so,

especially up a steep hill. He was standing erect, with its shoulders slightly bent. It did not have a tail."

The first explorers of the highly unexpected "Caucasian Snowman" problem wandered through, especially in 1959-60, certain areas located beyond the principal range of the Caucasus, namely in the Zakataly and Bielokny areas of the Azerbaijan SSR, and the Lagodekhi range of the Soviet Republic of Georgia. One of the first inroads into the Zakataly and Lagodekhi natural reserves were undertaken by an active member of the Geographical Society, S.M. Lukomsky. Among many others, shepherds related stories of recent encounters with male and female *kaptars*, bringing forward many precise details. For example, Malo-Magom, a shepherd, had seen a female walk quite close to him, and noticed that the fingers of her hand were tighter together than those of humans; that the brow-ridges are very prominent and the eyes quite sunken; that the mouth is very wide and the lips very thin. But what surprised Lukomsky most was that one of his interviewees asked in return: "Why are you asking all these questions? Everything has been written about the *kaptar* and its picture appears in a book in Arabic found in our village? "The man even proposed to introduce him to the owner of the book, probably a mullah, but Lukomsky would have had problems understanding the Arabic text, let alone the title. Anyway, it's most probable that he would not even have been allowed to see the book.

Yuri Ivanovich Merejinsky, a collaborator in the ethnography and anthropology section of the University of Kiev, was a devoted and assiduous hunter of information on relict humanoids of the Caucasus from the very beginning of our investigation to the day when death prematurely snuffed the flame of his enthusiasm. Accompanied by a group of students, he burst into the daily life of high mountain villages, looking for the greatest number of eye-witnesses, questioning randomly all people that he met, in bazaars and on the street. His dogged efforts left their mark on our Caucasian adventure. He was also the only one of our team who once had the exceptional luck to observe a live *kaptar*.

Merejinsky had become acquainted with the most expert boar night-hunter of Belokany, a man who had encountered a white *kaptar* on numerous occasions. There were probably a whole group of albinos living in that region, about whom circulated a number of stories. We note in passing that entirely white specimens are seen in various areas of the distribution of hairy wild men; they seem to constitute a common mutation. The old man agreed to take Merejinsky to a night-hunt hideout under the explicit condition that when a *kaptar* showed up, he would not shoot it, but only photograph it. Hadji Magoma – that was his name – wanted to shame all those who refused to believe what he told them. "When there is only one person who has seen, the others do not believe, as he was to explain to me personally afterwards. But if there is a photo, a thousand men can see it and the entire world will see it."

Merejinsky arrived at the agreed time in the company of two people, one of whom was Marie-Jeanne Koffmann. Alas! The irrepressible desire to sweep away in a single blow all the ridicule to which he had been subjected led him to a most regrettable move: he hid a small loaded pistol in his pocket. On September 18, 1959, under a full moon, Hadji Magoma led the group to the bushy shores of a river. He split the team in two and sat with Merejinsky in a spot where one could see a clearing opening on the river. The guide seemed to be assured of success. Indeed, rather rapidly, if one is to believe Merejinsky, one started to hear in the otherwise silent night, the splashing of water by the *kaptar*, bathing. After washing itself, it climbed back on the shore, on all four. Standing up, he looked very thin, with spindly limbs, covered from head to toe with white hair. At this point, the bather had uttered a series of sounds reminiscent of laughter: Hay! Hay! Hay! Hadji Magoma whispered: "Photography".

Insanely, there was a gunshot. Merejinsky's hands were trembling, he was out of control. He barely heard the noise made by the animal while running away in the water. "Why did you shoot? Why did you shoot?" whined the old man. Marie-Jeanne Koffmann ran over and found Merejinsky in an emotional frenzy, dripping with sweat. Never again since did Hadji Magoma accept to bring people to his hunting look-outs.

Subsequently, the initiative for gathering information in these regions became the responsibility of Doctor Marie-Jeanne Koffmann. Literally possessed by the idea of the partly unveiled marvel, and spurred with the passion of the great conquistadors, she was over the next three seasons to visit on foot all the villages of the Alazan valley, and climb the steepest slopes of the principal range of the Caucasus, in northern Azerbaidjan. She learned how to draw confidences from the most taciturn of mountain men.

Here, as an example, is the story told by Lativov, a thirty-two year old Azerbaidjani working in a hydroelectric station. His testimony was presented and recorded at the regional Committee of the Party in the town of Nukha, during a conversation in which participated two members of that Committee: second secretary doctor Kulieva and a zootechnician named Akhabov. In March 1959, Lativov had gone to the forest to gather firewood. Leaving his cart on the road, he had undertaken to climb the mountain. At the same time, a human-like creature, but without clothes and covered with hair –it was of average height, with muscular arms and torso – was walking down in his direction. They had almost run into each other and had spent a long time staring at each other. Lativov had plenty of time to observe its long fingers, with wide long nails, the extreme hairiness of the legs, the rough hair covering its chest and shoulders, and the dark skin, especially in the face. When the creature walked away, he noticed that its buttocks were a lot less hairy and he could see its dark skin. Its messy hair fell back over its shoulders and hid part of its face.

The creature then walked back swiftly toward Lativov, who took refuge in a tall tree with a smooth trunk (a number of observations have revealed that relict paleanthropes, who normally readily climb trees, can't climb up a smooth trunk, apparently because of the shape of their hands). "The hairy man approached the tree, related Lativov, and stood still on the spot for two hours or so. My arms were going numb from holding on to the tree trunk. Sometimes, all of a sudden, the beast brought his hands together, crossing his fingers, and put them on top of his each, messing up its hair even more. At the same time, it showed its teeth, but not once did it utter any sound. Finally, it turned on its heels and left, downhill, toward the river. I had never heard of such a creature and, frankly, I don't know what it is or what it's called. If it hadn't been so hairy and with such long nails, it would have been taken for a Man."

So, little by little, reports of different encounters with *kaptars* or *meche-adames* link together as series. The complex biology of the species revealed itself through them. Each new detail was a matter of surprise or astonishment, but sometimes also a real puzzle. This is also the region where professor Burtchak-Abramovitch did his early work, in the company of his assistant F. Akhundov. Besides collecting eye-witness reports, they sketched footprints and sometimes also made casts.

In October 1960, I also toured that important area. I wanted to see for myself the countryside as well as meeting our informers. In the company of Marie Jeanne Koffmann, I visited numerous villages. Majestic old Hadji Magoma struck me as a complicated man, full of the spirit and traditions of the Muslim East. Then, we spent a night with Mamed Omarovitch Alibekov, a thirty year old carpenter, simple and direct, reputed to be the best hunter in the region, with incorruptible honesty. He had already informed Marie Jeanne Koffmann and N.I.

Burtchak-Abramovitch of his encounter with a *kaptar* in 1956 on the shore of the river that flows by his village of Kullar. During our private interview together, I had not mentioned that I was already well informed of his reports, carefully archived. In this third version of the story, the smallest details were still perfectly consistent, a convincing consistency. After which, we plunged into the woods in his company. At the spot where the encounter had taken place, Alibekov pointed with his fingers at the rocks and trees involved and, by gestures, tried to reproduce the peculiarities of the *kaptar*'s behavior. He then sketched its silhouette on a piece of paper; it wasn't much a drawing from a technical point of view, although done very carefully. He explained that local people were reluctant to provide information about the *kaptar* because of religious prejudices. He was one of the few men of the district without scruples. He told Marie Jeanne of his amazement in particularly meaningful terms: "I have always believed that the State knew about the *kaptar*. Everybody here speaks about it openly: one hears about who saw one, what it looked like. Formerly, there was lot of talk about it. I was absolutely sure that everything was known about the *kaptar*, as about the Bear, the Boar, the Bison or any other animal. I even thought that there had long been specimens in museums and zoos."

In contrast, here's an example of a negative response to our enquiries, and this time not for religious reasons. In Lagodekhi, we were received by Gabro Eliachvili, a famous hunter. Many different people had told us that Eliachvili had related to them – with great consistency in the details – his various observations of wild men from his night-time look-outs. That was not all. On the basis of his own declarations, he had, we were told, personally shot and buried two *tskhisskatsy*, and his son had similarly disposed of a third. However, in spite of his warm hospitality, our host, once questioned, replied with a surprised look that he had never even heard of the *Tskhisskatsy* or any other wild hairy men. What could have possibly suddenly sealed his lips?

I must mention the conversation which we had with a meeting of hunters from the region. It turns out that the tracks of snow leopards, as well as those animals themselves, have been seen by less people than the tracks of the *Tskhisskatsy* or that flesh and bone creature itself. All these hunters carried out their lifework in the forests of Azerbaijan and Daghestan. Later, we also gathered information from eastern Georgia, there being some creatures wandering around that area. But the most abundant reports hailed from Svanetia.

In Abkhazia, those humanoids are called *Otchokotchi* (in Mingrelian) and *Abnauaiu* (in Abkhaz). According to countless ancient legends, when the Abkhazis began to settle this region, they had to expel or exterminate these creatures. But there are also more recent stories about individuals shot by hunters, captured and sometimes tamed, as well as random encounters. It's while he was gathering that kind of information that Professor A.A. Machkotsev first heard the fantastic story of Zana, which he studied in depth. Later, I picked up his work where he had left it, which rewarded me with an intimate link with the living past.

Zana was a female *Abnauaiu* captured and domesticated, who lived, died and was buried in the hamlet of Tkhina, in the Otchamtchir district. Some people currently alive still remember her. She was buried in the years 80-90 of the last century (19th), but among the inhabitants of the hamlet and its environs alive today, more than ten attended her funeral. Those over eighty, and even more so centenarians⁶⁹, knew Zana for some time and we have been able to draw interesting souvenirs from their memory. The most detailed descriptions of the creature were

⁶⁹ One should not be too surprised about the ages mentioned here. This is the area of the famous long-lived Caucasians, who did so much to contribute to the popularity of yogurt, cleverly invoked as the source of their longevity.

provided by Lamchatsv Sabekia (around one hundred and five) and her sister Digva Sabekia (over eighty), Nestor Sabekia (around one hundred and twenty), Kuona Kukunaa (also one hundred and twenty) and Chamba (around one hundred). One may easily say that in the whole area there is not a single household where there aren't some family memories of Zana. Here's the synthesis of all these notes.

The date and time of Zana's capture remain vague. According to one version, she was caught in the forests of Mt Zaadan; another suggests the seaside coast of the Otchamtchir district, or further south, in today's Adjara. Her name speaks in favor of Adjara: it is similar to the Georgian *zangi*, which means "dark-skinned", negroid. It was not by luck that she was captured, but by the skill of the hunters, who had used a time-honored technique. When first tied up, she struggled furiously; she was beat-up with sticks, gagged with a felt cloth, and fitted around her ankles with a wooden fetter to keep her from running away. It is quite possible that she was sold a number of times before becoming the property of D.M. Atchba, a local sovereign kinglet of the Zaadan forest. She then lived with Kh. Tchelokua, a vassal of that prince. Later, she was given to the noble Edghi Ghenaba when he visited. She was carried, tied up like a salami, to his property in the hamlet of Tkhina, on the Mokva River, 78 km from Sukhumi. The exact date of that transfer is also unknown. However, from that time on, the details provided by local informers become more concrete.

At the beginning, Ghenaba had installed Zana in a sturdy padlock made of large vertical posts. Her food was lowered to her, without ever entering her space, for she behaved like a wild animal. She had dug a hole in the ground to sleep in. She remained for three years in this state of utter savagery. However, she was tamed gradually, to the point that she was transferred to a shelter of woven branches underneath a screen near the house. Originally, she was held on a leach, but soon she was allowed to move freely. She did not wander far away from the area where she was fed. She could not stand living in a heated space, and stayed outside all year, under the screen, in the yard, where she had dug a new sleeping hole. Curious villagers came to see her and teased her with sticks which she ripped away from their hand in rage. She chased away children and domestic animals with sticks or branches.

Zana's skin was black, or dark grey. She was covered from head to toe with reddish black hair, especially thick over her lower body. In some areas, the hair was as long as the width of the palm of a hand, but not very dense. Down at the feet, the hair disappeared completely; the soles of her feet were completely hairless. The hair on her face was sparse and short. In contrast however, her head was a mass of matted black, rough and shiny hair that created a kind of *papakha* (heavy fur hat) and fell back like a mane of her shoulders and back.

As all *Abnauaius* Zana had no articulate speech. Over the decades that she lived in Tkhina, she never managed to pronounce a single word of Abkhazian. She could only mutter, utter inarticulate sounds, and when irritated howl like a beast. She was sharp of hearing: she approached when hearing her name, obeyed her master's orders, and was fearful when he raised his voice.

Zana was tall, but massive and heavy-set. Her breasts were disproportionately large. Her behind was large and highly placed. Her limbs were solidly muscled, but her leg had a strange shape, without a well-defined calf.⁷⁰ The fingers of her hand were longer and thicker than those

⁷⁰ That, we note, is a typically negroid trait, as is the color of the skin and the highly placed posterior, and thick lips, which were not mentioned here but were found in all of Zana's progeny. (In all the wild hairy men described so far, however, the lips were always described as very thin or even lacking.) That combination of characters leads me to believe that Zana herself was a hybrid of an

of humans. Her toes could spread out in a fan (particularly when she was angry). The big toe spread out more than the others.

Zana's face was extraordinary: it was scary. It was wide, with prominent cheekbones and coarse features. The nose was flat, with wide upturned nostrils. The lower part of the face jutted out much as a muzzle. The mouth was very wide, big teeth. The nape was abnormally prominent. On its sloping forehead, hair started right at the thick and bushy eyebrows. The eyes were reddish. But what was most terrible was its expression, which was purely that of an animal. Sometimes, although rarely, Zana would break into an uncontrollable laugh, when she showed her white teeth. Nobody ever saw her laugh or cry.

Although she lived for many years, first at Atchba's and then at Ghenaba, Zana – rather extraordinarily – practically did not change physically as she got older, and that all the way to her death: she never had white hair, she did not lose her teeth and she kept all her vigor. Her strength and stamina were amazing. She could run as fast as a horse. Even at flood times, she swam across the turbulent Mokva, and she bathed, winter as well as summer in an icy stream still called after her. At the mill, she would easily lift with a single arm a bag of flour weighing 5 lbs (80 kilos), put it on her head and carry it uphill. With the clumsiness of a bear, but with great ease, she climbed trees to gather fruits. With her powerful jaws, she managed to crack the hardest of nuts.

Zana was a trove of strange instincts and behaviors. To feast on grapes, she would pull the whole vine that climbed up a giant tree. To cool off, she would lay in a mud hole with water buffaloes. She would wander off in the neighborhood at night. To fend off dogs, she would use a large stick. Strangely, she loved to play with stones, banging them against each other until they broke. Would she have been responsible for the Mousterian type artifact discovered by professor Machkovtsev in 1962 on the hill where Zana often wandered? For now, let's assume that it was only a coincidence.

Zana never managed to learn much from people. She was only half tame. Even in the winter she preferred to go about naked, as she had been found in the forest. She would rip apart any clothes that would be put on her. She was trained however to wear a loin cloth that covered her thighs. One of her owners had branded her on the cheek with a hot iron, and had also pierced the lobe of one of her ears. She would sometimes come into the house and approach the table when she was called, but in general, she obeyed only her master, Edghi Ghenaba. Women were afraid of her and would only approach her when she was clearly in a good mood. When irritated or angry, Zana was indeed terrifying.. she would sometimes bite. Her master knew how to calm her down. She did not attack children, who were generally afraid of her. In the region, ill-behaving children were menaced with Zana's presence. Even horses were afraid of her.

Zana ate anything she was given, including *mamalyga* (corn meal) and meat. She would grab everything with her hands and her gluttony was truly frightful. Wine put her in a good mood, but she then fell into a sleep that was nearly a coma. Zana always slept in her hole without covering herself with anything, but she also liked to snuggle under the warm ashes of a spent wood fire. The most complicated thing she managed to learn was how to light a fire with flint and punk, an act which closely fit with her tendency to strike stones against each other. But her training didn't go much further. She had been trained to obey simple orders, given by voice or

abnauaiu and a Negro. There were indeed families of African ancestry in the Otchamtchir region, probably descendants of black slaves formerly imported in large numbers by Muslim potentates in the Middle East, in Turkey as well as in Iran and to the north.

sign: hand-turning the grindstone, carry firewood, fetch water at the spring in a jug, carry bags to or from the mill on the river, pull her masters' boots. That's all. There had been efforts to teach her how to plant vegetables, but she absurdly imitated what had been shown her, but confused and messed everything up. She also could learn to sit in the saddle. Obviously, Zana never became a human.

In spite of that, she became the mother of human babies, and that's one of the most surprising aspects of her story. From the point of view of genetics, this is a capital fact.

More than once, the neanderthalian found herself pregnant from various men, and actually gave birth. She delivered her babies without any assistance. She would then dip the baby, to wash it, in the icy waters of the stream. The little hybrids could not stand such freezing immersions and quickly died. Later, people took away her newborns in time and could raise them.

The miracle was repeated four times: two sons and two daughters of Zana grew up into human adults, real humans with speech and reason. Of course, they were a little peculiar in body and mind, but they were able to work and enjoy a social life. The older boy was called Djanda, the older daughter Kodjanar, the younger daughter Gamassa (she died about forty years ago); the younger boy Khvit (died in 1954). In turn, they have all had descendants now living in various parts of Abkhazia. In 1964, I paid a visit to two of Zana's grand-children in the town of Tkvartcheli, where they were working in a mine.

Public rumor has it that the father of Gamassa and Khvit was Edghi Ghenaba himself. They were registered under a different name during a census, but it's a fact that Zana was buried in the Ghenaba family plot, and that her two younger children were raised by Edghi's wife.

Many people in the area remember Gamassa and Khvit and can describe them in detail. They were strongly built individuals, dark skinned, and with rather negroid features.⁷¹ They seemed to have inherited none of Zana's neanderthalian traits. The human features dominated and hid the other lineage. These beings did not look like hybrids. The village people describe Khvit, who died between sixty-five and seventy, as a man who did not depart much from the norm. Although his skin was dark and his lips thick, he differed from the negroid race by his straight and smooth hair. His head was small in relation to his body. He was gifted with extraordinary physical strength and with an abominable character: violent and quarrelsome. Following battles with some of the village folk, Khvit had ended up without his left arm. However, his left arm was all he needed to mow, participate in farm work and even climb trees. He had a strong voice and sang well. He married twice and left three children. In his old age, he left his home village and moved to Tkvartcheli, where he died. His body was brought back to Tkhina, where he was buried next to his mother's tomb. According to the stories, Gamassa was like her brother, twice as strong as ordinary women. Her skin was very dark and her body hairy. Her face was hairless except for a few stray hair around her lips. She lived to be in her sixties.

At my first glance at the grand-son and grand-daughter of Zana, Chalikua and Taia, I had the impression that their skin was a little dark and they showed some rather weak negroid traits. Chalikua has extraordinary powerful jaw muscles: while dancing, he can hold between his teeth a chair on which a man is sitting. Another gift is his ability to mimic perfectly the cries of all wild and domestic animals.

In Sukhumi, the capital of Abkhazia, I was introduced to the only person who might help me compare Zana's remains with the folk tales. All others shied away at the idea, for fear of

⁷¹ Such features could not be explained if Ghenaba was their father unless they had been inherited from Zana herself, who also showed numerous such traits.

offending the family, given the Islamic traditions of the area. Vianor Pandjevitch Patchulia had no such scruples. That man is seething with vital energy, like an oak barrel filled with bubbly wine. He is the director of the Institute for Scientific Studies of Tourism in Abkhazia. It is under his enlightened guidance that in September 1964, in the company of the archaeologist-painter V.S. Orelkin, we made our first attempt to find Zana's tomb.

Vegetation had invaded everything in the old graveyard; only Khvit's tomb, only ten years old, is still visible among the ferns on the hill where, since then, nobody else has been buried. Zana must be somewhere nearby. We ask the old folks. The last descendant of the Ghenaba family, Kento, seventy-nine years old, insists with a commanding gesture that we are to dig over there, at the foot of a pomegranate tree. The workers gather their tools. The tension rises. Kholkhozians and children gather around. A torrential downpour crowns it all. It's only in Moscow, after analysis, that the bones drawn from the mud yield their answer: no, this was not Zana's tomb. After the famous Guerassimov⁷² reconstituted from the exhumed skull the profile of a young woman, I was impressed by her resemblance to the appearance of the two of Zana's grandchildren whom I knew personally. It was nearly certain that we had found the grave of one of Zana's first grand-daughters, who died long ago.

We tried again in March 1965. We find ourselves again in Tkhina, probing with renewed insistence the memory of the old people who had attended Zana's funeral. One of them, at home, was absolutely sure he could point out the spot for us. He was brought by car to the graveyard. However, the trees had grown and it all looked new to him. Confused, the old man stomped around the cemetery, leaning on his cane, without finding anything. Our trip was basically wasted.

In October 1965, we returned for a third time to Tkhina, but this time our team also included professors A.A.Machkotsev and M.G. Abduchelichvili. Taking Khvit's tomb as a reference point, old Kento Ghenaba insisted, with as much assurance as he had the year before that we dig at the foot of an old quince tree. New suspense, new torrential rain, new failure. The face of the skull was unfortunately broken by the diggers. A study of the other bones showed that they could not have belonged to Zana. But we were still within her family: as far as we could tell we had now disturbed Gamassa's bones. Seen closely, they had a small but significant tendency towards the neanderthalian type. After cutting across the quince tree to date it, we found that it was exactly forty years old, which tallied with the date of Gamassa's burial.

Let's just remember that to find Zana's remains, one should dig up to a depth of 1.5 m an area of 5 by 7 meters. This story is not over! Will I have the chance to bring it to its conclusion, some day? Or will someone else be the lucky one?

⁷² To learn about the life and achievements of Mikhail M. Guerassimov (1907-1970) one should read his autobiography recently published in English as *The Face Finder* (London, Hutchinson & CO. 1971).

CHAPTER 11

EXPERIMENTS IN KABARDIA

How to provoke, at wish, encounters with neanderthals?

Statistics began to intrude into our research. All the information about encounters with relict hominoids, be it in northern Azerbaidjan and in other areas of the Caucasus were being arranged in graphical form by doctor Marie Jeanne Koffmann: rates of encounters as a function of month of the year, time of the day, age and gender of subjects observed. We thus found that very few young ones are seen in the main Caucasus range, and many fewer females than males. One may conclude that this is just a matter of circulation and that areas of reproduction are elsewhere. Preliminary data from Kabardino-Balkaria suggest that the proportion of males to females and young would be quite different there.

A magnificent reconnaissance of Kabardino-Balkaria was completed by professor Makhkovtsev in the summer of 1960. His report, particularly rich in data obtained from questionnaires, with some degree of biological organization, was the first stone of a building block. Kabardia was to become the theatre of a new and unprecedented step forward in our research. This small patch of the world is currently where the most advanced field exploration of the problem of relict humanoids is taking place (creatures likely related to the Podkumuk Man, dug up in that area from rather recent strata). Soviet Science, and even World Science owe this progress to Marie Jeanne Koffmann who, since 1962, has moved her focus of research to Kabardia.

Dr. Koffmann is a heroic personality. This woman-physician has found her true vocation. She has become today, in our field of study, an authoritative leader attracting and guiding numerous young researchers. Her enthusiasm, her boldness and the scope of her efforts provoke admiration. She manages to surmount an endless series of difficulties and obstacles without ever losing faith in the ultimate success and triumph of her work. Each year, she spends months driving her Zaporozhets or her motorcycle through the villages of Kabardia, sometimes also on foot or on horseback, but always without any official support, always only as an active member of the Geographical Society. She embodies the stubborn progress of our research, moving confidently from its first groping efforts to a mastery of our project.

As to the global mystery of relict paleanthropes on a global scale, Kabardia is an exception rather than the rule. Here, this animal species lives in close contact with Man, its houses and its plantations. Hence, the nature of its relationship with and links to human beings is peculiar, analogous perhaps to what it used to be in antiquity, a glimpse of which is still to be found in myths and folklore. A screen of beliefs and religious taboos shield from outsiders those protected *shaitans* (demons), sometimes fed in the greatest secret. Anyone who betrays even a single one of these creatures, would be the subject, with all his descendants, of daunting maledictions. However, at the same time, the old ways are so weakened these days that with tact and patience one still manages to gather a wealth of information from the local population.

Kabardia has thus become our vast anthropological laboratory, a fact which has forced us to come to a conclusion about the degree of confidence one can attribute to local informers. This is

precisely because, no itinerant scientist or geologist, on whose testimony we were too happy to rely elsewhere before listening to local voices, ever came through this area. Members of our team who worked in Kabardia easily cast aside the most common objection: that the locals are always lying, for unknown and unspecified reasons.

Nevertheless, we shall begin our parade of witnesses by yielding to tradition, hearing first from a Russian zootechnician, N.J. Serikova, a member of the Soviet Communist Party. It was in 1956. She had just arrived in Kabardia, in the Zolsk area, and had never heard local tales about the *almasty*. She had rented a cottage from a member of the kolkhoz. One night, there was a wedding next door, and Miss Serikova couldn't sleep for all the noise; she stepped out into the garden for some fresh air. Going back to bed, she left the light on and the door ajar. It was around 11:00 at night. "From my bed, she wrote, I heard a series of small yapping sounds. I looked at the ground. Horror! On the floor, there was a slit-eyed creature, entirely hairy. It was sitting on its haunches, with its arms crossed - right arm over left shoulder, left arm over right. It was staring at me with such force that I thought it was going to jump on me. I must admit that I was petrified. I was looking at it and it was looking at me. Then a few words escaped me: "Good God, where do you come from?" (Actually, I never believed in God). The creature starting yapping again. It then leapt out into the antechamber with such speed that I thought it was flying. It slammed the door with such force that the whole house shook. After it left, there lingered in the house a smell which I cannot compare to any other: bitter and stifling. Until dawn, I didn't dare get up or even move. I kept repeating to myself that perhaps devils did actually exist. "

"It's only in the morning that a neighbor explained to me that it was not a devil that had paid me a visit, but only an *almasty*. One of them had lived in the house next door, with an elderly person; when she died, it had been taken over by a man called Lukman Amchukov and now lived with him. It might have been that one, who, bothered by the noise of the wedding and the accordion music, had taken refuge in a familiar room, only to flee at the sound of an unfamiliar voice. "

"What did that *almasty* look like that I could observe? It was as tall as an average man. Its body was entirely covered with hair, not too long, say 3-4 cm. His eyebrows were thick and black and the hair was shorter and sparser in its face than elsewhere. The creature was only a meter away from me. It was clearly an *almasty* and not a human being: his deeply sunken eyes, its savage and beastly look, compared to no other, and its fetid odor were not those of a man. Its silhouette also didn't quite look like that of a human: its arms and legs were longer than in Man. Its head was somewhat more elongated. "

It's only about five years later that comrade Serikova recovered her peace of mind, when she heard from Marie Jeanne Koffmann that Moscovite experts were seriously studying the problem of the *almasty*. "From then on, I frequently broached the subject with cattle breeders. Feeling confident, many of them told me that they themselves had seen *almasty*, or had heard about them from their fathers, grand-fathers or friends. When they trust you and your openness, simple people, like the *tchabans* (shepherds) never lie. But they are afraid of bringing harm to the *almasty*, for they are strongly admonished by the mullahs, who terrify them: they repeat with great conviction that if they were to betray a single *almasty*, its parents would come back to exact their revenge."

Months and seasons have passed in Kabardia, and as difficult as it is for a woman in a Muslim country, Marie Jeanne Koffmann's conquest of the confidence and respect of simple people has continued to progress. Reports have started to accumulate, first by dozens, then by hundreds. Is that nothing but folklore, the eternal background of fairy tales?

Kh. Kh. Jigounov, a forty-six year old worker at the Baksansk brick factory, had the following to say:

"I had decided to take a shortcut and plunged straight into a corn field. I had hardly left the road when I came upon the remains of an *almasty* torn apart by dogs and wolves. Over a radius of about fifteen meters, the corn had been put down and trod upon. In the middle of this wrecked area lay the head of the *almasty*, with what was left of the neck. Its left side had been gnawed on. Up to this point, I had never believed in the existence of *almastys*. So, I began to investigate the head with particular interest. I turned it over and over with a stick and crouched down to study it more closely. It was wrapped in a thick and messy head of hair, with lots of burdocks stuck in. The hair was so thick that once I had turned the head over, it remained raised, as on a cushion. Because of all this hair, I couldn't clearly see the shape of the skull; however, judging from its dimensions it was like that of a human being. The forehead is sloping. The nose is small and upturned, without a root and flattened like a monkey's. The cheekbones are prominent, as among Chinese. The lips are not as in Man, but straight and thin as in a monkey. The chin is also different from Man's: it is heavy and round. The ears are very human-like. One of them had been torn off, the other was intact. The eyes are strongly downwards slanted. I could not tell their color: the eyelids were closed and I did not lift them. The skin was black and covered with dark brown hair; they were lacking around the eyes and upper cheeks. There are a few short hair on the lower cheeks and on the ears; they are much longer on the neck. The head emitted a strong and repulsive odor. It was not the stench of putrefaction since the corpse was fresh, free of flies and worms. By all appearance, it had been torn apart only a few hours earlier. That was then the smell of the *almasty* itself, a stench so repulsive that I almost vomited. That's why I had to examine the head while pinching my nose with my left hand as I was manipulating the stick with my right. The smell was reminiscent of long-unwashed bodies and mold. Not far off, there were other pieces of the body. I could see the whiteness of the bones still covered with pieces of dark meat, but I did not approach any closer and did not examine them."

Here is now what Maghil Elmesov told us. In 1938-39, he was taking the kolkhoz's horses to pasture in the Malka Valley, on the flanks of Mt. Elbruz. A Russian beekeeper from around Naltchik brought his hive up there every summer. Elmesov had paid him a visit and the beekeeper had told him that a *satan* had gotten into the habit of stealing his honey and provisions and that they had ended up killing it.

As the beekeeper used to sleep on a nearby hillock and not in his own hut, somebody would at night sneak into the latter and eat anything edible. The beekeeper had returned home to fetch his brother, who had just completed his military duties. He had left the hive for three days under the watch of a neighboring Kabardian. When the brothers returned, they found the latter in a state of terror: he had also noticed that someone came to pilfer the hut at night. To find out for sure, the younger brother decided to spend the night in the hut, with his gun. Shortly after midnight there was a pair of shots: the *satan* had come into the house and the soldier had shot it. At dawn, blood was found nearby. A bloody track led to the bushes. Only one hundred and fifty meters away, the shriveled up corpse of the *almasty* was discovered. He had two bullets in its belly.

At that point in his story, the beekeeper brought Maghil Elmesov to see the corpse: "In seven days, said Elmesov, it had significantly decomposed. There, in the bushes, lay a dead creature which looked a lot like a man. Its body was covered with hair and its face was prognathous, like a beast. His hands and feet were long and out of proportion with the rest of its body." Elmesov even remembered that there was no hair in the palm of the hand, and that the

toes were very long. Such was the *almasty*, which the Russians had taken for Satan, or one of his henchmen.

So much for deaths. Let's look at births. Khuker Akhaminov, a fifty-five year old Kabardian kolkhoz member, told us what follows: "On August 10, 1964, I was mowing the grass in a sunflower field. There were places where none had been planted and grass had grown tall and had to be cut down. Suddenly, I heard a strange noise: a snuffle or a sneeze – like when a dog takes a fly up its nose. I stopped for a moment to listen. Then I continued mowing. Again the same noise was heard. I once more stopped mowing. When the sound was repeated for the third time I dropped my scythe and went to have a look. Suddenly two arms, much like a man's but long and hairy, shot out from the grass towards me. The fingers were particularly long. I quickly stepped away and climbed onto the *arba* (two wheeled cart) which was eight to ten meters away. Standing on it, I saw a bent-over human silhouette walk away among the sunflowers.

I could only see its back, covered with long red hair, like a buffalo. There were longer hair on the head. After the *almasty*, for that was what it was, had left, I climbed down from the *arba* and returned to where I had left my scythe. At that same time, I heard some chirping coming from the same area. I stepped in carefully and pushed the tall grass aside. On a bed of hay, as on a nest, there lay a pair of new-born.

"The female *almasty* had just given birth. The babies were just like human babies except slightly smaller. no more than two kilos. Besides that, there was no way to tell them apart from human babies. Their skin was pink and hairless, they had the same small head, small arms, and small feet. I repeat: they were hairless. They were moving their arms and legs. I hastily left and rode the *arba* to the village. I told my parents and neighbors about the encounter. Two or three days later, I returned to the spot. But there was nothing to see. "

Question: Why did you not let somebody know about this?

Answer: And who was I supposed to tell, and why?

Question: Didn't you know that this was something very important of great interest to scientists?

Answer: How was I to know this was important? In all my life I had never heard it said to be interesting.

And now here's what is probably a case of sickness. In the words of Mukhamed Pchukov, a Kabardian mason: "It was before the war, in the summer. We lived in the village of Batekh, in the Zolsk area. One day a female *almasty* showed up, we don't know wherefrom, and settled herself in the middle of our corn field. She had spread rags and dried grass on the ground. She stayed with us for a whole week. She was eating green corn. She was hairy all over and had long hair on her head. Her breasts hanged low, much lower than those of a woman. Her fingernails were very long. Her eyes were reddish and slanted. Her teeth were larger than human teeth. During the day, she stayed lying down, on her side, but often turned, never remaining long in the same position. Many people came over to look at her.

"If many people came close at the same time, she became restless, cried, stood up and tore her hair. She was very loud! When she calmed down, and when there was only one person left, she approach slowly and licked them, like a dog."

And now, for a face-to-face encounter.

Kabardian shepherd Amerbi Tatimovitch Kotsev had often heard a friend tell him that he sometimes met an *almasty* in the small Akbetcheiuko valley, near Sarmakovo: it approached the sheep pen and ate some bread. "I would have liked to see it myself, and one day in August 1959, I took my horses grazing to that valley."

The shepherd put some bread out as a lure and stayed up, by the full moon, watching in his hut until 2:00 a.m. Nothing happened.

"The following morning at about 7:00 o'clock, related Koltsev, I was riding up the valley to gather the horses which had dispersed during the night, when all of a sudden, coming around a thicket of brambles, I practically found myself nose to nose with an *almasty*. It was jogging in my direction. It stopped on the spot, and so did my horse. We were about 3-4 meters from each other. It was short - approx. 1.50 m – and bent over. Its arms were longer than a Man's and came down to its knees; it was holding them off its body, its elbows slightly bent. It was entirely covered with thick grey hair, as long as buffalo's. Its forehead was not as high as a Man's, but rather low and sloping. Its eyes were slanted. Its cheekbones were prominent, as among Mongols. Its mouth was quite wide. Its chin was not very human like: in Man, the chin is fine and pointed, in contrast its chin was round and heavy. His feet were pointing inwards, and his knees were slightly bent forward, as would a good horseback rider. I think it was a male, for I didn't see any breasts. Its head hair wasn't very long, but very messy, pointing in all directions. Here's an interesting detail: in Man, the face is narrower, smaller with respect to the skull. Among *Almasty*, the perimeter of the head is quite large, but as the skull is much flatter than in a Man, it makes its face look enormous.

For long minutes, we stood, staring at each other. Its breathing was regular and it didn't appear winded from running. It ended up spinning to the right and walking quietly into the bushes. I then continued along my way".

Everything in this carefully presented observation should strike an anthropologist familiar with fossil neanderthals. And it's only one quick sketch among many others.

One day, during a meeting of the Geographical Society, Dr. Koffmann sketched on chalk on the blackboard – with all her skill as a surgeon and anatomist – a most revealing comparison. First, she drew schematically the contours of modern man's skull. Next to it she sketched a Neanderthal skull. Then, next to it, she drew the skull of an *almasty*, based on the accumulated reports of dozens of eye-witnesses. *The third drawing was identical to the second.*

To draw from a multitude of reports those features which are constant and common to all is not a simple task. But the result is most instructive. Not only do the reports lose their allure of folkloric legends, they are the very negation of such legends. The key to myth is repetition. However, in our Kabardia laboratory, there are no two identical reports. There is no archetypal leitmotiv nor characteristic style. On the contrary, what we find is an infinite diversity of original details. And it's not so much as by superimposing them on top of each other as in comparing them side by side that a researcher eventually draws out the image of a paleanthrope. There is nothing standard about that image. As much as by their external appearance as by their behavior, *almasty* are strongly individualized. In each one of them, one can find distinctive personal characteristics. In her latest field season, Marie Jeanne Koffmann has achieved a new goal: she managed to gather a wealth of information on a single *almasty*, easily recognizable, seen by various people in nearby places over a short period of time. That is a great step forward, which brings us deeper into the still poorly known world of these enigmatic creatures.

Our Kabardia laboratory must do everything possible to understand these creatures. We cannot count on some providential revelation. We must, above all, learn more about them.

It has already happened a number of times that an *almasty* was nearly in our hands. But, blindly and clumsily tracked, they escaped. Here's a prime example, related by Erjiba Kochokoiev, a seventy-year old Kabardian.

"The first time I saw an *almasty* was in September 1944. At that time, there existed in our

republic volunteer groups charged with maintaining public order, fighting banditry, etc. I was a member of one of those; there were Karatchaevs, Ossetians, Kabardians from everywhere. One day we were riding our horses through a hemp field along the Tchernaya (the Black River). I was second in line; ahead of me was a man from Argudan, now deceased. Suddenly his horse stopped so abruptly that mine nearly bumped into it. "Look, the man shouted, an *almasty*!" A few meters ahead of us there stood a *gubganana* (female *almasty*). She was busy stuffing the top of hemp plants, with seed, into her mouth. The whole detachment piled up noisily behind us. Seeing us, the creature ran quickly away towards a nearby hut. A number of men brought up their rifles to shoot her, but our Russian officer from Naltchik yelled: "Don't shoot! Don't shoot! We'll catch it alive and bring it back to Naltchik."

We dismounted and undertook to surround the hut. As there were enough of us we could easily do so. As for myself, I was in front of the door and I could see everything perfectly. As we were getting closer, the *goubganana* came out of the hut two or three times. She appeared quite excited, as one can easily imagine. Out she pops all of a sudden! She fidgets, gesticulates, rushes to one side but almost runs into some of the men. She quickly goes back inside, but immediately comes out again, rushes to another side: but there are men there too. All the while, she is making grimaces, her lips are moving quickly and she's muttering something incomprehensible. However our noose is tightening. We are now walking elbow to elbow. At this point the *goubganana* runs out again and uttering a terrifying cry rushes at the men. She ran faster than a horse! The boys couldn't hold the line. She broke through easily, ran down into the ravine and disappeared into the thickets bordering the river."

"She was about 1.80 m high and rather thick set. Her face was difficult to see because of her hair. Her breasts were hanging down to her lower belly. She was entirely covered with long reddish hair similar to those of a buffalo. Her footprints, which I went to check out in the ravine, were rather small. I was struck by the discrepancy between her stature and the size of her feet." [She was obviously running on her toes. B.P.]

Clearly, we cannot base our plans on such random incidents. The first thing to understand is that one cannot capture an *almasty* just like that, with bare hands. One has to proceed in a completely different way, seeking the help of natives who have already tamed, fed, or secretly kept an *almasty* in some shed or hangar. From all we heard, the links between these creatures and their master is often very strong. But how to break the conspiracy of silence?

Only once were we very close to success, but at a time when we still didn't know very much and did not really understand the situation. It's very difficult to say today what we would have done if we had not let that exceptional chance slip by.

The gist of the story lies in the fact that a young Kabardian, Khabas Kardanov, had become acquainted with a female *almasty* which, by all appearances, had already been tamed by some Muslim and for some reason had lost her protector. In fact, she had been much too easy to win over. For a long time, respectful of the code of silence, Kardanov hid the existence of that *almasty*, although he had difficulty hiding the particular attachment she showed towards his house, a topic about which many inhabitants of Sarmakovo as well as his own parents had talked freely. His uncle Zamirat Leghitov had even personally encountered the creature in Khabas's hut. Finally, it was his friends who convinced him to talk.

Here's what had happened. A few month earlier, while he was turning his flock out to pasture, Khabas Kardanov had fallen upon, among the bushes, a horrible looking hairy woman. He froze in place, drenched in sweat in horror. She seemed to be less afraid than he was: she had stayed seating there while he was walking backwards. He had met her again a few days later, and

this had happened many times. Once, Kardanov had made bold to throw her some food: bread and cheese. Subsequently, he had acquired the habit of feeding her regularly, so that she had become used to come and beg, even in his hut. One day, the shepherd brought back his flock to Sarmakovo and the *almasty* had followed him there and had settled near his house. Khabas told how he had even taught her some simple chores. "She was very robust, and she clearly understood what I asked of her. She worked fast and with great vigor." For example, she would stack hay bales on a cart. She sometimes wandered far from Sarmakovo to steal tomatoes for her master. She did not master human speech and only mumbled unintelligibly. On the day that the uncle had met her, she was just back with an armful of stolen tomatoes and was sitting on the ground, groaning and mumbling. It's interesting to note that neither of Khabas's parents respected his secret but expressed openly to their friends their concern that the *almasty* would bring their son bad luck. Actually, although he was at first pleased with the presence of the creature, after two or three years, he didn't know how to get rid of her: it was impossible to drive her away.

In 1959, the cheese industry engineer M. Tembotov, prompted by his brother the zoologist A. Tembotov of Naltchik University, began to gather information on *almasty* in the region. He heard about Khabas Kardanov and his strange companion and started to talk to him. Kardanov had let him understand that he was by no means opposed to the idea of getting rid of the tame but embarrassing *almasty*. However, he was asking for a hefty sum of money. We seemed to be within grasp of our goal! Tembotov had contacted a member of our committee by phone, for instructions. Let's not forget however that this was in the spring of 1959. The presence of a Snowman in the Caucasus was still at that time unimaginable, and our Commission had just been scuttled by the Academy of Sciences. We couldn't raise the required amount. Tired of it, Tembotov dropped his negotiations with Khabas Kardanov. Shortly afterward, the latter left to work in Siberia; his family suggested that his wish to get rid of the *almasty* was not unrelated to that decision. There is not much of a chance that we shall ever see such an opportunity again.

Under the enlightened leadership of Marie Jeane Koffman, our Kabardia experimental field represents more than just a leap into a new field of research. It is no longer a matter of wandering, hoping for a lucky break; our march forward is now inexorable. What is then the essence of the results obtained so far? It's the fact that with each year that passes we become more familiar with the beast. Its true nature stands out more and more clearly. Each expedition reveals a detail hitherto unknown. Such a constant progress assures us of success. We are no longer trapped in a dark cavern; we are moving towards the exit, as the light gradually increases. We know now that we will come out one day.

As for me, this continuous progress reinforces my feeling that there remains such an immensity left to discover. The paleanthrope, surviving from the high pastures and forests of the Elbruz to the Kabardian villages of the plain would seem to possess skills which we cannot yet guess.

Actually, although we have gathered numerous reports, our informers represent only a small fraction of the Kabardian population, and most of them have personally seen an *almasty* only once or twice on their life. These encounters are thus only rare exceptions to the rule. But, what is the rule? Why these exceptions? That's what still left in the dark.

It's hard to say whether we are actually half-way there. Today, we understand more clearly than ever how hard it will be to reach our goal. And that's precisely why I believe that the hardest part of the work is done.

In November 1967, Marie Jeanne Koffman and I were invited to present reports to the regional congress on medical geography, in Pyatigorsk, which we gladly accepted. From there,

in her Zaporozhets, I joined her for the first time in her domain. To contemplate the people, nature, the horizons. At least to see for myself those two tiny rooms in a shaky old cottage, the headquarters of our Kabardia laboratory, in the village of Sarmakovo, strung for kilometers along the Malka River.

From the heights of Mt. Djimal, one can view the valley of the river, snaking its way around the foothills of the Elbruz and, beyond, an ocean of rocky crests crowned with the foam of the snowy hilltops receding into the sky. People only live along the ribbon on the Malka.

To cross the series of mountainous ramparts stretched in the distance, it would take days and days of climbing – even months. There is every kind of habitat around here: from dry rocks to dense forest. There are bird nests, animals of all kinds, roots and berries; animal life is everywhere, even in the soil and the streams. What is lacking is people. Majestic, enormous, still bare of tourists: that's the mountainous North Caucasus. I have looked everywhere and I have not seen anything here which could be an obstacle to the presence, especially sparse, of a few relict hominoids in this virgin immensity, whence need sometimes drives them to fields and pastures.

Later, down below, driving along one of the side ravines, many kilometers long, along the shores of the torrent, I saw under overhanging rocks, in the thick underwood, many shelters where these creatures could hide, living incognito in the very vicinity of settled areas. An elderly Kabardian with whom I was chatting on a bench in Sarmakovo had told me: "Ah! They know how to hide. one of them could be hiding across the street at this very moment and you couldn't pick them up. It's true, they do exist here in Kabardia. You can't doubt it. But you'll have a hard time studying them, for they rarely come to us and we never go to where they live. That's the custom."

The same thought came to my mind at the top of Djimal and on the bench in Sarmakovo. Everything we had learned, in Kabardia as elsewhere, was based on strictly accidental encounters (the only exception being that of poor Merejinsky!) We find ourselves today at the threshold of another problem: how to move forward from the passive stage of unforeseen encounters to that, more active, of planned meetings. Beyond the need to laboriously convince people of our serious intentions and good faith so as to end up, sometimes, with a "yes, maybe." That should be the next step in our research. Only a sufficient corpus of accidental encounters can provide a basis for the next step. Have we already learned enough for a council of wise men to draw from our knowledge a method to provoke planned encounters? In any case, one must try. And, if we find that we do not know enough, we must multiply by ten the number of reports we have on accidental encounters. Sooner or later, we will be so well informed of the biology of surviving paleanthropes and of the relationship with human beings in all parts of the world, that the technique to create planned encounters will emerge naturally.

Thus will begin the second phase of our study of the troglodytes.

CHAPTER 12

DESCARTES' ENIGMA

The philosophical problem of the wild man and its importance in our conception of the world

Abominable Snowman! What a funny name. That's what hides behind the smirks. Great is the isolation, the loneliness of our tiny group, surrounded on all sides by silence. Like Robinson on his desert island, we send desperate signals but we are ignored: people pretend not to see us. Why are we condemned, as if we were lepers? What we advocate is so new, so important and so indisputable that we should have expected hundreds of arms reaching out to help us! From time to time, there are some who have, but each one of these volunteers is then condemned to a similar ostracism. This is of course part of the struggle for the youthfulness of Science, for its conscience, its ethics, and its very basis. True, the scientific authorities work for the same goals. But why, do they, by their silence, pretend to ignore us.

I could quote many examples of this organized dumbness. Here's one, from the early days of our research, followed by another more recent.

In May or June 1959, two of the leaders of the Chinese Academy of Sciences were visiting Moscow. I spoke on the telephone with one of them and learned some upsetting news. The two scientists had just agreed on what they were authorized to tell me: "Our Academy of Science, I was told, has some extremely important information on this matter. This cannot be sent to you at the moment, but will be forwarded to your commission in its entirety, at the latest in August." At the same time, the most senior of the Chinese delegates paid a visit to the editorial office of a high circulation Moscow magazine. In answer to questions by the journalists as to what, if anything, was new about the Snowman, he had declared that there was much new information on the problem, of such importance that their revelation would overturn all our ideas about the origin of Man. You can imagine how difficult it was for me to wait until August! However, August passed and so did many more months without bringing in anything. I ended up writing to my Chinese colleague, who chaired a commission parallel to ours, focused on the problem of the Snowman. My letters remained unanswered. Finally, much later, I learned informally through a third party that: "Professor Porshnev should not imagine that we are trying to hide anything, but the information that we have, and the question of their publication are still under consideration by the highest authorities." Discreetly, I was also led to understand that some of that information had not exactly been gathered within the borders of the State. Nine years have passed. Still silence.

In 1964, at the International Congress on Anthropology in Moscow, there was a symposium organized on a fascinating topic: "*The boundary between Man and Beast.*" Professor L.P. Astanin, a doctor in biological sciences, walked to the podium and started as follows: "I would like to say a few words about what is called the Snowman." Those "few words", he never got to say. The president of the session was Soviet anthropologist V.P. Yakimov. He leapt to his feet. For the first time in an international scientific congress, a speaker was physically ejected from the podium. In vain, Astanin explained that he was going to speak about the anatomy of the

hand.

I know that the same stereotype objection is raised to whatever we say: "First catch one. Then we'll talk. "That's as if one had said to K.E. Tsiolkovsky: "First go to the Moon. You can deliberate later."

We are not actually looking today for sensational "proofs" of what we are saying (there are already enough proofs for the experts). We are trying to dig deeper into the nature of the phenomenon and to analyze the theoretical aspects of its scientific explanation. At the same time, others work in the field. To pursue the analogy with space exploration, our field workers could be compared to the pioneers in the development of rockets who, at the beginning, fashioned primitive do-it-yourself machines, without any financial assistance, preparing for Man's assault of the Cosmos. It's obvious that such an enterprise could not have succeeded without the powerful support of the State, Society and Science.

What is most important is not so much to capture a specimen as to photograph these creatures in their natural environment, to partly tame some and to plan already for the creation of a reserve for paleanthropes. That goal can only be achieved through a most obstinate study. We must systematically find every way to counter two lines of defense: first the sphere of resistance of our own species towards our research, and also the auto-defense sphere of the paleanthropes. Till now, we have merely scratched that double shield, without piercing it. It's clear that a flood of unpredictable difficulties will arise when we try to feed these beings in nature, and to capture them. In any case, there is already an obstacle which we can clearly foresee. Everything we know agrees to show that these creatures soon perish when locked up in a closed space. It will be necessary to consult our body of information as closely as possible to find a way to ensure their survival and well-being in captivity.

So, let's imagine for a moment that we have in hand a captive specimen, or that we have managed to photograph one with a telephoto lens. Experts will urgently be summoned. We can anticipate a complete fiasco. For those "experts" will not possess the appropriate categories and references. They will have nothing to say, not being skilled in the problem. And they will not be able to discover anything. To quote the great Mendeleev: "To find something, it's not enough to look, and to look with great care, but one must be sufficiently well informed to know where to look."

Those who will follow us and will want to observe or capture paleanthropes will, above all, need to be very well informed on the problem so as to clear their mind of preconceived ideas. They will need to discard all kind of nonsense about men who are not wild, but only have secondarily become wild for having lived too long outside human society. They will also have to sweep away those incredibly naive images showing the life and appearance of Stone Age men, with an animal skin prudishly skirting their loins and a divine spark in their eye.

A vision so encumbered with such nonsense will not discover much. What is more likely to cause complete blindness is the veil of philosophy.

Already in the 12th century, a Persian writer in Afghanistan, Nizami Arudi Samarkandi, in his *Chahar Maqala* (the Four Discourses), was sketching the nature of the universe as a line: inanimate nature, plants, animals, people, God. The animals themselves also form such a linear progression: from the inferior to the higher organisms, from the simplest to the most complex beings, following which came human beings. "This one (the *gi-khwara* or *ghak-kirma*, meaning the maggot or the earth-worm, depending on the translators) is the most inferior animal, while the highest is the *gessnass*. The latter lives in the plains of Turkestan; it stands erect and has wide flat fingernails. The *gessnass* is strongly attracted to human beings. Whenever it sees any, it stops and observes them carefully. When it finds a lone one, it captures him; it is even said to be able to breed with man. The *gessnass* is the highest of all animals: it comes immediately after man, and looks very much like him in many ways: the erect posture, hair on the head, flat fingernails. You should recognize that it is the most noble of all animals by those three traits.

When, over the ages and with the passage of time, nature became more delicately balanced and the turn came for the space included between the elements and the heaven⁷³, man appeared, bringing with him all that was already present in the inanimate world, the plants and animals, but adding the power to understand all those things by the force of reason."

In Western Europe, also in the Middle Ages, whenever some writers, such as Richard de Fournival, wanted to contrast man to plants and animals, they rightly placed the wild man within the latter. True, other authors suggested that it should rather stand at the bottom of the ladder of human beings.

The contrast between man and the rest of nature was to become much coarser, sharper and un-bridgeable in the eyes of western thinkers of later centuries once the memory of the highest rung in the animal ladder, the paleanthrope, had faded from consciousness. Scientific thought entered modern times through Descartes' enigma: can one explain all natural phenomena through a single physical principle (physics) and can man be included in such a system?

The answer to the first question was clearly positive; natural sciences have staked their overarching claim to that domain. Descartes himself predicted that not just inanimate objects, but even animals would be explained by purely physical mechanisms, like automata. An idea called mechanicism. However, Descartes' answer to the second part of the question was negative. For him, man could not just be explained by the laws of physics: its spiritual life resided on a different plane. It has often been said that this was a way for Descartes to reconcile science and religion. Nevertheless, the question remains, even to this day: is it possible to explain human consciousness entirely through natural causes? To provide an answer to that question is perhaps the ultimate goal of science, which has already forcefully attacked that problem.

The first attack against the absolute opposition between Man and Nature was the materialism of 18th century Enlightenment. Man, it was proclaimed, is a plant, a machine. It is of course a very complicated machine, and to understand it and to be able to repair it becomes possible only through ideas such as "the state of nature", or "natural rights", or "the impact of the environment on the senses and behavior of human beings."

Decades passed. The level of scientific thought rose considerably. A new attack was launched against Cartesian dualism: Darwinism. Its basis was something that was not even mentioned in the *Origin of Species*: that man descends from apes via natural selection! This onslaught over the moat, past the draw-bridge, into the open door and into the inner courtyard of the fortress – in the drunken enthusiasm of the Darwinian adventure – a stunning victory, required a solid consolidation of the background of paleontological research, as well as an attempt at a comprehensive phylogenesis of *all* living species, including mollusks, sponges and infusorians.

A few more decades pass and a new, crushing attacks was launched. The Cartesian abyss between man and animal was still wide open. This time, the attack took place at the level of the functioning of the higher layers of the brain, led by the Russian physiological school, guided by the genius of Setchenov, Wedensky, Pavlov and Ukhtomsky. Natural science was now invading the very seat of thought, the organ of consciousness. The echo of victory resounded in many other disciplines. Still, after a few more decades, we still feel – perhaps even more so than Descartes, because more acutely – the open wound that is the enigma of man within nature. All along the history of science, we perceive between the waves of the rising tide, the dark ebbing flows, laden with mud and sand: the extension of human spirit to animals, to all of nature. The gap, they say, is easy to fill and doesn't require too much mental gymnastics. Perhaps. But even

⁷³ That fourth space (*furja*) lies between the "fiery sphere" and the "lunar sky". It thus corresponds in practice to our bio-sphere, what was formerly called the "sub-lunar" sphere.

under the most scientific cover, just to pretend is not really science.

All these tides have seriously unsettled our *weltanschauung*, our vision of the world. Each one has taken science though colossal progress. But, as to solve the essential problem, they all crashed on the rock, while smashing it to pieces. A new wave is already swelling, unavoidable. The ninth perhaps?⁷⁴ Already the pillars standing in its way are crumbling. In this enormous undermining task, the most powerful battering ram is undoubtedly the review of the Neanderthal problem. As the reader has seen, the *revizor* has arrived, and he's not incognito.⁷⁵ Everyone tries not to see him, lowering their eyes.

The discovery or surviving neanderthals will not reveal how man was born, but surely how he couldn't be born. Half of the hillside that hid the solution has already crumbled and clouds of dust are rising to the sky. It is not possible within such an essay to describe, even briefly, the problem of human origins. We have only a few words to add.

This work is just the story of a scientific tragedy taking place over ten years, an optimist tragedy.⁷⁶ Here's another scene.

Once I presented, in an extremely condensed form, an entirely new point of view on some fundamental questions relative to human origins. A point of view which I had mulled over for many years. It was presented in an article whose title was much like a challenge in a duel: "Is a scientific revolution possible today in primatology?" The article appeared in a journal of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, *Voprosy filosofiyi (Philosophical Questions)* (1966, No 3). In consultation with the editor, we had decided to include some controversial questions, calling again for a response. It was up to the anthropologists to initiate a serious discussion. Well, we were wrong. Nobody took up the challenge; there was no controversy at all. Still, the journal had a circulation of thousands, abroad as well as at home, and in other socialist countries. Silence was perhaps thought to be a mark of disrespect, but all those who remained quiet mostly showed a poor regard for themselves.

There was however a tiny reply in the press. It appeared in a brochure of cartoons by N. Edelman "In Search our Ancestors" (Moscow, 1967) Towards the end, there was a sneaky little barb to the effect that "amateurs" are wrong to want to lecture "professionals" on the most effective way to foster a "revolution in primatology" (page 24). That's what is called in boxing a "blow below the belt": to dismiss as amateurish a scientific perspective which does not fall within the orthodox line. As for myself, I was certainly not asking scientists of a different persuasion to start a controversy, but only to express their objections to my own ideas, rather than hiding them, since neither I, nor the public, nor Mr. Edelman were aware of their arguments. Calling your opponent names can never replace a clear presentation of your objections to his ideas.

It will soon be ten years since we shouted our first "Eureka"! This ten year ordeal required a maximum of stress but ended up establishing beyond doubt the undeniable nature of our discovery. It has been like a bulldozer, pushing aside all obstacles along the way, towards a renewed assault on the enigma of human nature. It's not surprising to find that my interest in the snowman arose because I already had in mind a new idea on how to handle Descartes' question. I am now writing a book on the overall problem, but one of the most important basic facts remains subject to the obstinate silence of the scientists.

We demand to wage battle. There are two possible outcomes: either everything summarized in these pages, fully developed and documented within the four brochures of our *Material on Information* and in my larger volume *The Present State of the Question of Relict Humanoids* is

⁷⁴ In Russian, the ninth wave is said to be the highest.

⁷⁵ An allusion to Nicholas Gogol's play, which describes the disruption introduced in a society by the incognito visit of a *revizor*, an inspector of finances.

⁷⁶ The name of a well-known play by V. Vichnevsky.

just a horrible nightmare, or it is the shining proof that Anthropology has sunk into the darkness of obscurantism. Courage Gentlemen!!! Discuss, debate, demolish, and scream!!! Or else, sob over your defeat.

Will Anthropology remain silent in the face of such a challenge?

CHAPTER 13

LAST WORDS

An answer to attacks, last clarifications, consequences, philosophy

I don't recognize myself as guilty of what I have been accused of. I am not guilty for example of seeking sensation. How could one label as "sensational" such thankless work, performed entirely in the shadows. Even today, there are few who understand that the discovery of the troglodytes is a capital event from a philosophical perspective. Yes, members of the jury, the fact is that a *sensational* event has happened in the realm of philosophy, which I gladly recognize, but that is not what I have been accused of.

Materialism is a cure for blindness. Thanks to it, we managed to see what was under our nose, but was unseemly to look at. Not a fabulous monster, nor some trivial curiosity from the forest or the hills, but a fact of utmost importance for "philosophical anthropology".

I also do not think that I am guilty of encroaching on the realm of biology. I have often heard this rumor: "By his very presence, Porshnev, a historian, throws into disrepute the problem of the snowman. Why should a person with his training be concerned with this problem? If that question was truly worthy of interest for natural science, this would not be the case. We must drive that intruder from our biological fiefdom!"

Please allow me to bring up a few fragments from my own biography. Already at home, my father, who was a chemist, communicated to me his passion for natural science. The seeds of a mode of thought are deeply rooted for the rest of ones' life. At Moscow University, in the faculty where I was a student, two disciplines, psychology and history were closely linked. I dedicated myself to both. However, the study of psychology under professors G.I. Tchelpanov and K.N. Kornilov required, as they advised, mastering a third discipline. Thus, at the same time, I followed courses in the faculty of biology. By the end of my time at the university, I had become convinced that psychology is the link between biological and social sciences; while biology is complex, sociology is even more so, and whoever does not understand the first remains unable to access the second. As to history, it is for me an alloy of all the sciences of human society. After long and persistent work, I mastered the skills of the historian, first dedicating myself to the history of the 17th century, then focusing on the historical course of feudalism, and finally addressing a much broader theme, that of the evolution of humanity from its beginnings to the present. All that was a necessary background before returning to psychological aspects. During that time, I had read numerous psychological and physiological works, not to be left behind. And, especially, to continue to think like a biologist.

The hour of synthesis came when I could put my finger on the very beginning of History.

I took part in archaeological expeditions in the upper Paleolithic, on the Don, in the middle Paleolithic on the Volga, and in the lower Paleolithic in southern Ossetia. I found myself quite perplexed: my eyes did not see the same things as did leading prehistorians, my masters. Brilliant and erudite within their specialty, the seemed incapable –to the point of sterility – of thinking like biologists. For example, faced with the bones of animals scattered on Paleolithic sites, I tried to imagine their life. That was not the case for the prehistorians. For them, the idea of "hunting",

which did not shed any light on the life within nature, took the place of the *biocoenosis*,⁷⁷ of which prehistoric man was only one component. When, starting from a few shards, prehistorians begin to speculate on zoological matters, the results are as disastrous as when zoologists apply their ideas to human phenomena. With dogged determination, I applied myself to absorbing the most recent ideas in ecology and on the ethology of mammals and birds. At the same time, I was carrying on experimental studies on dogs and apes, and theoretical studies on the higher functions of the nervous system in animals.

There remained the last decisive step in the domain of human sciences: psychology and anthropology. As a historian and a biologist, I learned during my career to notice what was not supposed to be seen. This propensity attracted me towards two subjects: the psychophysiological mystery of human speech, and the problem of surviving troglodytes. There are those who are interested in the Snowman because it's a fascinating enigma, wondering what truth it might hide. As for me, my only interest lies in an attempt to answer this question: what is Man? Because of the clear resemblance to neanderthals, living troglodytes offer an ideal bridgehead to progress in understanding our own species.

Given all that, it would seem that I could have restrained from claiming to be entitled to a diploma in biology. After ten years, it's a little late to ask for permission to sit in a place which one has already occupied over all that time. Whoever has accomplished biological work is a biologist.

On the other hand, my mode of thinking as a historian has saved me from the scholastic perspective of lab assistants and technical personnel. These people are capable of insisting that you lay on the table the cervical vertebrae of Louis XVI to prove that he was indeed guillotined. As if that fact was not perfectly well established by other means, equally scientific.

I do not acknowledge as an error my article, *Materialism and idealism in the problem of anthropogenesis*, published in 1955 in *Voprosy filosofiyi* (no. 5). That article brought more than a sentence: a complete excommunication! Although I did not insult any of our distinguished specialists by calling them idealists, there arose a general and unanimous outcry. Calmly, I responded with two new articles: *Always, the problem of anthropogenesis* (*Sovietskaya antropologiya*, 1957, no. 2) and *On discussions regarding the problem of the origin of human society* (*Voprosy historyi [Historical Questions]*, 1958, no. 2). My opponents lowered their flag and disappeared and I had the last word. However, it was as if I had proclaimed my proofs into the wilds of the desert.

The matter was most simple. Marx never defined man as "an animal making tools", or as "the creator of tools". Marx quoted hundreds of bourgeois stupidities which did not really reflect life or deformed it in a characteristic fashion. Among those, he cited in particular the above expression, due to Benjamin Franklin, which he thought characterized the Yankee spirit, inspired by short-term practicality and business-like individualism. From the very beginning, Marx defined man, not as a solitary being wielding a tool, but most fundamentally as a "social being". To characterize human work, Marx did not emphasize the purpose of the work, which anyway does not distinguish man from animal, nor the existence of a particular tool; what he emphasized was the goal of the work, the deliberate intention, the *project*.

If man has acquired the capacity of establishing goals, it's entirely because of speech. How is each organism linked to society? By speech. Speech is a purely social phenomenon. An activity stimulated by a pre-determined goal is the psychological outcome of speech, in other

⁷⁷ A biocoenosis, or biological community, is the association of plants and animals within their environment (the biotope), components of a system that is unstable under prevailing conditions.

words, a social phenomenon within an individual body.

At the completion of a piece of work there is a result which pre-existed in the imagination of the worker, in the form of an idea. Ideal, in this case, does not denote pure spirit, but the expression of the social nature of the worker. Psychology studies how the power of speech transforms, within the human brain, and particularly within its frontal lobes, into the potential of a project, into a directed intention. The tools and the materials used are never more than the means of achieving that goal. To see in them the very essence of mankind is to look at the problem from the wrong end. Within that perspective, the original savage would be by itself, breaking stones and shaping sticks, not much more than a monkey.

That's why I protested against that poor Yankee philosophy, wrongly attributed to Marx or Engels, a philosophy of the lone individual who hopes to achieve success thanks to his hands and his own brain.

The prehistorian discovers the bones of fossil forms before mankind, associated with roughly hewn stones. They are stereotypes, he exclaims, and draws psychological deductions. However, the psychologist studying objects dating from the lower and middle Paleolithic comes to the conclusion that those objects are by no means signs of the participation of speech and ideas. Another mechanism can explain the similarity of all these objects: an innate behavior, associated with a facility for imitation, important among various vertebrates, and particularly developed among primates. One can easily teach by direct imitation, without need for a verbal description. The paleanthrope imitated what it saw. It was a mute and imitative apprenticeship. The study of that same mechanism of imitation among animals provides an indirect explanation of the gradual modifications of the "pattern" or "model" of Paleolithic tools, a transformation which is in some ways more rapid than the species' anatomical evolution.

For example, careful observations by naturalists have shown that, among birds, a local variant in their song can over just a few generations spread by imitation to a whole a geographic zone and even beyond. After some time, it's the whole species that sings differently. As a general rule, however, modifications of a complex behavior through an imitation mechanism requires a long time, since the whole process plays by definition the opposite role, that of imitating the "pattern". Anyway, the presence of archaic tools is not necessarily linked to any spoken or intellectual activity. Science is perfectly capable of explaining them without that hypothesis. Speech and conceptual thought came later.

However, some dissenter will object, a prehistorian often discovers, side by side, many kinds of tools, presumably with different functions, that had to be explained in words. Sure, their functions were different, but within quite a narrow field. Just think about how many different instruments one finds in a dentist's or surgeon's office. Actually, all the "tools" of pre-human creatures were dedicated to diverse details of the process of butchering the carcass of a large animal. This is a strictly biological adaptation. The feeling of hunger, or the very presence of the carcass, were the stimuli for the instinctual preparation of means to assuage hunger, as were also the difficulties, beyond the power of teeth, encountered in trying to butcher the animal.

Consequently, the reason why relict paleanthropes no longer use today the kinds of tools that prehistorians dug out of the strata of the mid-Quaternary is not related to the history of these beings, but to that of the ambient fauna. At some point, the immense herds of large herbivores disappeared and the neanderthals' basic food source changed. At the same time, they lost the habit – kept alive only by imitation – of making "tools" out of flint or other stones. Within geographical areas where large herds persisted longer, the "Mousterian" cultural phase lasted longer than elsewhere: in central Asia, its remains lasted until a much more recent period than in

Western Europe, nearly to the recent past. Prehistoric archaeology of the Paleolithic in the North shows the same trends.

If that is indeed the case, a question arises. Would it be possible, once one of these creatures had been captured, to rekindle within it the forgotten instinct and the lost habit of making primitive "tools", from the coarsest to the most refined within the Mousterian toolkit.

One can readily imagine how to conduct the experiment. It would consist in stimulating the captive individual through hunger as well as by seeing a carcass, and by a demonstration of the gestures which make it possible to break up a stone and make it sharp and pointed. Would the wild man learn to do as much? That remains an unknown. Would it be tempted to imitate a member of another species – ours in this case – with as much zeal as it would one of its own? The day will come when experimentation will provide all the answers.

The objector speaks up one last time. How could fire, Prometheus' gift, have existed among neanderthals without speech or ideas?

In fact, it is well known that nobody ever "discovered" or "invented" fire. For thousands of years, the problem was to get rid of it, to fight it. True, it wasn't such a great problem for there was little of value to burn. But here and there, in the paleanthropes' dens, the bedding would sometimes catch fire and emit suffocating smoke. In nature, bedding in any kind of nest, or terrier, is made of materials that can easily ignite from a single spark. At that time, only our species of interest had the habit of throwing sparks around, which they produced accidentally while working on sharpening stones. Fire was an accidental by-product, and it's only gradually that arose the thought of taming it. In 1954, with the aid of two assistants, I performed a series of experiments, making sparks with flints without any metal, to ignite a variety of materials. The results of these experiments were published. There never was a Prometheus!⁷⁸ Neither was there a clever observer who took advantage of some volcanic eruption or brush fire to gather some sacred embers and keep the captive fire going for his descendants. There was none of that because there were no humans around. *Paleanthropes were not humans.*

It is undeniable that from an anatomical perspective the difference between neanderthals and *Homo sapiens* is at the level of species⁷⁹ or perhaps even higher. This fact has been invoked to justify racism. It has been scientifically shown, say the racists, that there may, in principle, exist human beings belonging to different species. To which one may answer: No, even theoretically, there cannot exist specific differences between humans. The error lies in considering neanderthals as human beings. Creatures who lack articulated speech do not fall within the concept of "man". It is quite surely known, on the basis of arguments from various disciplines, that fossil neanderthals did not possess speech, any more than do the relict neanderthals today.

It is not much to say that they are not human. The abyss that distances them from men would be better defined if we were to call them *anti-men*.

Some people, after learning about the appearance and habits of relict paleanthropes, wince and shout: "How disgusting! It's enough to cause nausea! "Splendid, no? This is in perfect agreement with the idea of evolution. The creature whose appearance has gradually been

⁷⁸ Nobody thinks of an inveterate smoker setting fire to his bed as a genius. This is just the same kind of accident.

⁷⁹ As undeniable as it might be, there are still arguments about it. At the Burg Wartenstein symposium, which brought together in 1962 most of the world leading anthropologists, it was decided nearly unanimously to consider Neanderthal man and Modern man as sub-species of the same species: *Homo sapiens*. This resolution has since then been generally respected.

revealed through the pages of this book is the very entity which our entire history has rejected with horror and increasing energy as we have become more human. Should one wonder what people today hold as the height of abomination and abjectness, one would find that it is precisely what was characteristic of its prehistoric ancestor. Should you wish to reconstitute its image? It's quite simple. Think of what you find most horrifying: much of that will be useful in drawing its portrait. Were it otherwise, history would not be a wide road, but a narrow path. A single trait characterizes man in a unique fashion: it is a creature that inexorably distances itself from its original nature, at an ever faster rate.

Troglodytes are in no way human. This is important to note for practical reasons. Glancing at the photos taken by Roger Patterson in the wooded hills of northern California, we appear to see a human being, covered with dark hair perhaps, but still human looking. Which brings out a thorny issue. Don't we have legal or moral obligations towards these creatures?

Well, no! Troglodytes belong to a different species from ours, even perhaps a different genus, and in my mind, to a different family, although we are descendants from similar creatures.⁸⁰ Nothing prevents the use of force against them, or to shoot them if necessary. One should once for all dispel the idea of an ambiguous being, half-human, half-beast. By creating such a fiction in his novel, *Les Animaux Denatures*, Vercors has raised a plethora of apparently insoluble legal and moral problems which actually do not exist. Troglodytes are only a subject for natural science, nothing more.

And I don't feel guilty for having brought this deeply scientific subject to the pages of *Komsomolskaya Pravda* and a dozen other popular science magazines, artistic and literary publications. I am not guilty of having discredited science by doing that. When a river is blocked by an enormous boulder, its waters have to go around it by creating small lateral channels and filling up lowlands. Similarly, it's impossible to suppress real science: the truth will always finish by springing up somewhere, sometimes in the most unexpected and humble areas.

In our case, circumstances were quite special and without precedent. Discovery had to be achieved with the aid of the knowledge, initiative and assistance of the people. We had to question people and ask for their collaboration. That was the "royal road" of our current research. It was the shortest path to reach the unknown. It would have been natural for the direction of our socialist society to encourage people's contribution to a vast scientific endeavor. Our country's leadership in research, discovery and description of living troglodytes would brilliantly confirm once more the superiority of our regime. We have a network of regional newspapers beyond anything found in other countries; we can count on the intelligent sympathy of the masses for daring enterprises; we have already effected the collapse of outdated prejudices. Where else than in our country could we have brought together such a crowd of volunteer informers; where else could we have simultaneously found such experts?

The crux of the problem lies therein that, without this discovery, the science of man will not be able to develop any further, and neither will our knowledge of that special human tool: speech. Therefore the commanding necessity – even a duty – for us to lead the way through thickets of unexpected and unforeseeable obstacles.

⁸⁰ This is zoological heresy. Taxonomy is supposed to reflect phylogenesis and a species, *by definition*, can only descend from a species of the same genus, and certainly from the same family.