

APE, MAN, APEMAN: CHANGING VIEWS SINCE 1600. Edited by Raymond Corbey and Bert Theunissen. Leiden: Department of Prehistory of Leiden University. 1995. 408 pp. ISBN 90-73368-05-7. npg (paper).

In 1893, the Dutch physician-anatomist-paleontologist, Eugene Dubois, sent a telegram back to Holland from Java announcing his discovery of "the long-expected Missing Link of Darwin" (p. 4). Never mind the fact that Darwin had not used the term, and that it owed its currency in the mind of the public more to the promotional skills of that American showman, P. T. Barnum. Still, that public was quite correct in realizing that the revolution in thinking wrought by Charles Darwin had properly generated the expectation that somewhere in the fossil record there should be evidence for a form that was intermediate between ape-like ancestors and full human beings. Dubois had indeed found the first such fossil that was generically in between apes and humans, and he had every right to label it a "missing link."

It is only fitting, then, that the Dutch should have organized a Congress—*Human Evolution in Its Ecological Context*—commemorating the centennial of Dubois' discovery. This was held at Leiden University from the end of June to the beginning of July 1993, and it brought together an extraordinary roster of figures representing interests that span a spectrum running from anatomy to zoogeography and including anthropology, archaeology, paleontology, primate behavior, folklore, political propaganda, ethics, literature and the history of ideas. There were four broad sessions at the conference and an exhibition on "*Pithecanthropus*" held at the National Museum of Natural History in Leiden. The sessions on *Evolution and Ecology of Homo erectus*, on *Humans on Earth*, and on *Adapting to Change* are represented in separate volumes, while the one that dealt with humans' perceptions of their place in the world vis-à-vis their incipiently human ancestors and their nearest non-human relations is the

subject of the book under review: *Ape, Man, Apeman: Changing Views Since 1600*.

This was edited by Raymond Corbey and Bert Theunissen, the latter being the author of *Eugène Dubois and the Ape-Man from Java* (1989), the only full-scale biography of Dubois is a splendid depiction of the man and his time, originally presented as a doctoral dissertation in 1985. There are 32 chapters in *Ape, Man, Apeman* by nearly 40 authors with an Introduction by Raymond Corbey and a post scriptum by Bert Theunissen. The contributions are arranged in four Sections: "Interpreting Apes," "Apish Ancestors," "Ape Ethnzoology, Apelore, Ape Imagery," and "Apes and Ethics," the last of these being only half the length of the others. The subject matter of many of the contributions is not strictly confined to the theme of the sections named.

Nearly half of the chapters are by Dutch authors which are rendered in excellent English. The five French and one of the two Italian authors produced their five contributions in French. The rest of the contributors include five from England, three from the United States (although Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney is really Japanese), and one each from South Africa, Australia, Canada, Germany, Northern Ireland, Israel, and Scotland. The authors represent everything from social anthropology to free-lance writing and include members of faculties of African studies, anatomy, anthropology, archaeology, bioethics, English, government, history and philosophy. In spite of this enormous scope and the very different backgrounds of many of the contributors, the caliber of scholarship displayed is unfailingly of the very highest order. The writing is generally clear and engaging, and the topics covered are always interesting and thought-provoking.

With one exception, the themes of human perception articulated from the diverse perspectives represented mesh with each other very well. Chapter 1 by Frank Spencer, "Pithekos to Pithecanthropus: An Abbreviated Review of Changing Scientific Views on the Relationship of the Anthropoid Apes to Homo," is a splendid synopsis of many of the

concerns of the Congress as a whole. This is followed by Remke Kruk's treatment of "Traditional Islamic Views of Apes and Monkeys," where it is demonstrated that the themes of racism, sexism, and assumptions of proximity of Africans to apes are held in common in the Islamic as well as the non-Islamic West and have strong roots in the same hierarchical neoplatonic Aristotelianism of classical Greece.

Over two dozen chapters later, Marina Warner, in "Cannibals and Kings," is able to demonstrate that these same currents run through the "Beauty-and-the-Beast" juxtaposition of Caliban and Miranda in Shakespeare's *Tempest* and continue on to govern the imagery and treatment of the giant gorilla and Fay Wray in the 1933 film, *King Kong*. If, as many of the other chapters demonstrate in detail, the scientific realm has radically altered the way it thinks about the status of humans in the natural world, it is clear that there has been little if any change in the feelings of the nonscientific public at large.

In his post scriptum, Theunissen articulates his regret that there was no contribution to the history of thought in paleoanthropology represented at the Congress. It is a point well taken since, in its absence, the one paper that could have been put into perspective by such a treatment remains otherwise almost incomprehensible. This is the essay by Tim Ingold, "People Like Us: The Concept of the Anatomically Modern Human." The term "anatomically modern human" certainly deserves critical dissection, but the one offered has almost nothing to do with the flaws in the concept as it is currently used by paleoanthropologists such as Christopher Stringer or Erik Trinkaus, just to name two currently prominent figures from a whole roster not mentioned in Ingold's treatise.

Ingold sets up his straw man by referring back to Howells' *Mankind in the Making* of 1959 (revised in 1967), but his real focus is not Howells—or Stringer, or Gamble, or Hublin, or Vandermeersch and so on. Instead, his quarrel is with the Darwinian traditions of evolutionary biology and the treatment of the realms of genetic potential, phenotype, and culture as entities war-

ranting separate consideration. In his view, "There can . . . be no separation between ontogeny and phylogeny, development and evolution. Ontogenesis, far from being accessory to evolutionary change, is the very fount from which the evolutionary process unfolds" (p. 251), and he has insisted that "the differences we call cultural *are* biological" (p. 256). Elsewhere he has stressed the importance of the many ways in which humans "become," and of the "agency and intentionality" of how that takes place.

Ingold is a member of the Department of Social Anthropology at Manchester University, but he is very far from being an unlettered social scientist out of his depth or a self-absorbed post-modernist denying the existence of reality. As he has demonstrated abundantly elsewhere, he is in full control of the literature on contemporary evolutionary theory. To be sure, he writes with the prolix self-satisfaction of Geertzian modernism, but, in the absence of any perspective on the history of the field, the sources of his orientation are not immediately obvious. The references to the stance of the philosopher of biology, Mae-Wan Ho, may alert some readers, but even that may not suffice to put the position into perspective. If one goes back to an earlier English anthropologist, Sir Arthur Keith, one begins to get some hints, especially in Keith's insistence that the essence of organic material is its "purposiveness" and in his obeisance to the evolutionary position of Ernst Haeckel as opposed to that of Charles Darwin. The vision defended by Ingold is remarkably like the transcendental focus on "becoming" of the early 19th century Romantics and the Naturphilosophie incorporated into the developmental "evolutionism" that Haeckel promoted in Germany a century and a third ago.

While Ingold makes it a point to deny that his views can be used to support racist conclusions, it is not at all clear why this should not be so. Certainly Haeckel did just that in the latter half of the 19th century through World War I, and this was simply extended with appalling consequences by Adolf Hitler in World War II. Whatever else it may represent, Ingold has taken an antic position that is self-consciously opposed to contemporary evolutionary biology and clearly out of step

with the general understanding of the other contributors to the Leiden Congress.

There are fascinating chapters on indigenous perceptions of chimpanzees in West Africa, orangs in Borneo, and macaques in Japan. In the last instance, the contributions of both Ohnuki-Tierney and Pamela Asquith have taken the depiction of the simian in Japan as a reflection of how the Japanese regard the human condition. This works quite well to an extent, but both have accepted the Japanese self-assessment of their picture of the world as being *sui generis*. Both, however, completely miss the extent to which the Japanese depiction of "Monkey" is indistinguishable from the Chinese rendition of the "Monkey King," *Sun Wu-kong*, itself derived from the earlier Indian "Monkey God," *Hanuman*, in the Ramayana epic as noted in Pieterse's chapter, "Apes Imagined: The Political Ecology of Animal Symbolism."

Unfortunately, except for this very brief mention and an equally brief comment by Corbey in his "Introduction," there is no consideration of the use of primates to reflect on the human condition from the perspective of the largest and most enduring human presence in Asia, the culture of China. Asquith suggests that the lack of a "human/ape contrast" in Japan is a reflection of the Japanese "de-emphasis on categorical opposition" (p. 314). However, the Greek-derived dualism that pervades the thinking of both the Islamic and non-Islamic West has a parallel in an equally venerable and pervasive dualism in China and the countries it has influenced in the East. The difference between the Greek and the Chinese dualism is that *Yin* and *Yang* in the East co-exist in the same person and cannot be represented by separate individuals. This is the source of endless renderings in Chinese literature and drama, and is abundantly displayed in the trials and exploits endured by the "Monkey King," one of the central figures in that epic drama of the Tang Dynasty, *Journey to the West*. Surely the development of the characteristics of "Monkey" in Japan owe as much to the traditions of their rendering in China as they do to anything unique to the culture of the Japanese. And when they are

not conditioned by such imported forms, the Japanese are as capable of demonizing individuals and groups in categorical fashion as anyone else in the world.

Possibly the most satisfying chapters are those by Wiktor Stoczkowski, "Portrait de l'Ancêtre en Singe: L'Hominisation sans Évolutionisme dans la Pensée du XVIIIe Siècle," and Giulio Barsanti, "Les Singes de Lamarck." Stoczkowski has mined the scholarship of his brilliant doctoral dissertation, published as *Anthropologie naïve, anthropologie savante* (1994), and omitted the flawed portion that attempted to extend his perspective to the 20th century. Instead, he has concentrated on tracing the currents of thinking concerning the genesis of the human condition as they were articulated in the world of biblical and classical antiquity and the course by which they became established in 18th century thought. Barsanti, on his part, has provided an explanation for the situation, described as "ridiculous" in a later chapter (Rijksen p. 291), wherein the Asian orang is formally designated by an African (Angolan) name. As he demonstrated, the process by which the great apes received their now-accepted "scientific" names was, as Stoczkowski observed in describing the debate between Cuvier and Lamarck, "often strange, always unforeseeable" (p. 150). However "ridiculous" it may be, the tale is indeed weird and wonderful, and this is the only place I know where the whole history is fully spelled out.

The last section, "Apes and Ethics," has a somewhat more uniform viewpoint than the others and proposes what amounts to a manifesto for the consideration of all chimps, gorillas, orangs and humans as full "persons" of equal worth. The guiding spirit in this final section is clearly Peter Singer, author of *Animal Liberation* (1975) and second author after Paolo Cavalieri of the chapter, "The Great Ape Project," which had been launched in London just before the Leiden Congress in June of 1993, and which was grounded upon the positions described in the *Declaration on Great Apes* published by Cavalieri and Singer in 1993. In this, they propose that apes, like people, should be removed "from the realm of mere things or

property" and granted "moral equality and basic rights under the law" (p. 367). The other authors in Section IV all agree. The final chapter, "Riding on the Backs of Apes" by Vernon and Janie Reynolds, surveys the present and impending plight of the anthropoid apes and stresses the common spirit present in all life. Harking back to Pythagoras with Singer as their guide, they conclude with a plea in favor of vegetarianism and add a further stoic denigration of the pleasures of alcohol and sex.

All told, the volume is a richly rewarding production. If it ends more with a whimper than a bang, there are few who would be inclined to read it sequentially all the way

through. Instead, it is a resource for browsing. With some exceptions, the views expressed are a largely compatible if not comprehensive expression of how the educated world looks at itself in the light of our nearest relatives as the current millennium comes to an end. The organizers and editors deserve the thanks and praise of those who were not able to attend—and of those who were as well.

C. LORING BRACE
Department of Anthropology
University of Michigan
Ann Arbor, Michigan

Books Received

- Berenbaum MR (1966) *Bugs in the System: Insects and Their Impact on Human Affairs*. New York: Addison-Wesley, 377 pp. \$15.00 (paper).
- Boaz NT, and AJ Almquist (1996) *Biological Anthropology: A Synthetic Approach to Human Evolution*. New York: Prentice Hall, 595 pp. \$45.00 (paper).
- Cavalli-Sforza LL, P Menozzi, and A Piazza (1996) *The History and Geography of Human Genes*, abridged paperback edition. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 413 pp. \$35.00 (paper).
- Kane G (1996) *The Particle Garden: Our Universe as Understood by Particle Physicists*. New York: Addison-Wesley, 224 pp. \$12.00 (paper).
- Larsen CS, and RL Kelly (eds.) (1996) *Bioarcheology of the Stillwater Marsh: Prehistoric Human Adaptation in the Western Great Basin*. New York: American Museum of Natural History, 170 pp. \$20.50 (paper).
- Leahy C, JH Mitchell, and T Conuel (1996) *The Nature of Massachusetts*. New York: Addison-Wesley, 226 pp. \$40.00 (cloth).
- Officer C, and J Page (1996) *The Great Dinosaur Extinction Controversy*. New York: Addison-Wesley, 209 pp. \$25.00 (cloth).
- Ravenhill PL (1996) *Dreams and Reverie: Images of Otherworld Mates among the Baule, West Africa*. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 102 pp. \$29.95 (cloth).
- Weir BS (1996) *Genetic Data Analysis II*. Sunderland, MA: Sinauer Associates. 445 pp. \$34.95 (paper).
- Willis D (1996) *The Sand Dollar and the Slide Rule: Drawing Blueprints from Nature*. New York: Addison-Wesley, 234 pp. \$12.00 (paper).