

Introduction

In 1964 I met Professor Boris Porshnev, read his book *The Present State of the Question of Relict Hominoids* (416 pages—only 180 copies printed by the ruling of the Soviet Academy of Sciences), and became a participant in the research, called since 1972, *Hominology*. My first Caucasus expedition, led by Marie-Jeanne Koffmann, was a great eye-opening event in my life. I realized then and there that Porshnev was right in saying that under the mythological names of *devils*, *wood goblins*, *domovoys* (*brownies*), etc., stood *real beings!* That transpired from the fact that local witnesses of hairy “wildmen” called them interchangeably by corresponding ethnic names, such as *almasty*, *kaptar*, *meshi adam*, etc., as well as *devils*, *shaitans*, *wood goblins*, etc.

I knew, as all people do, that in popular fairy-tales the names of animals—bears, wolves, foxes, and so forth—indicate imaginary mythological creatures, whose real counterparts exist in nature. In a Russian folk tale a bear walks on a wooden leg, and in another tale the cunning fox is riding on the back of the simpleton wolf. So the names of real beings are also used for mythological entities. To my great surprise I learned that people, living in much closer contact with nature than I was, used mythological names, such as *wood goblin*, for indicating hairy “wild men” who they regarded as real. A local man said to Koffmann: “There are wild goats, wild rams, wild hogs. Why shouldn’t there be wild men?”

Indeed, why? Ah, simply because peasants call such hairy wildmen by the names “goblins,” “devils,” “shaitans” etc. For educated people, for men of science especially, this means nothing but mythology. The main argument of academic opposition to Porshnev was that he took popular myths, the wood goblin myths in particular, for reality. Incidentally, academic opposition to the reality of bigfoot/sasquatch in North America is deadbent on using the same argument.

This set me to study folkloristics, demonology and the history of religion in order to fill in this shameful gap between the knowledge of common people and the ignorance of scholars. Soon I came up with the work *In Defense of Devilry*, claiming that there was a reality to devils, shaitans and wood goblins. The work couldn’t be

published in the Soviet Union with its restrictive and dogmatic ideology. It was published in 1991, the year of the Soviet Union's disintegration; the book's title changed to *Wood Goblin Dubbed Monkey: A Comparative Study in Demonology*. The work was based on the study of the ethnic folklore and demonology of many peoples of the former Soviet Union.

Among Professor Porshnev's many opponents, the toughest and fiercest was zoologist and paleontologist Professor Nikolai Vereshchagin (1908–2008), who called our research “pseudoscience,” and was most sarcastic and critical in his article, “Wood Goblins of the 20th Century.” I wrote about the battle waged by Vereshchagin and his colleagues against Porshnev and hominology in *America's Bigfoot: Fact, Not Fiction* (pages 100-106). So for laugh's sake, I sent him a copy of my demonology book, inscribed “With Greetings from the Wood Goblins of the 20th Century,” but never expected a response. To my surprise it did come, with the opening words, “Dear Dmitri Yurievich [my patronymic name], I received your excellent book about devils the other day,” and ending with, “Thanks for the book. I wish you success.” But in the middle of the message he bad-mouthed Porshnev again, calling him a “paranoiac.” As a result, it took me some time to explain to the professor that without Porshnev my “excellent book” could not have appeared, and that I wished the science world would have as many “paranoiacs” like Porshnev as possible. To make a long story short, we became friends and he stopped denying the reality of wood goblins, but did not become our ally in practice because of his age. He died in 2008, one month short of age 100.

I take this conversion of the worst critic into a friend and supporter after reading my book and communicating with me as my major achievement in hominology. It shows that we could win over many scientists, who are critical or don't care about our research, if we could let them know the truth we possess instead of the misinformation they have from the tabloids and the rest of the mass media—as well as direct lies in the books of dedicated debunkers. This point pertains in particular to this book because folklore makes up a large part of it.

In 2009, U.S. anthropologist Kathy Moskowitz Strain kindly presented me with her large book *Giants, Cannibals & Monsters: Bigfoot in Native Culture*, which is a treasure-trove of North

American Native folklore on what we call bigfoot and sasquatch. Naturally, I couldn't help examining it and learning from it the way I examined and learned from the similar folklore in Europe and Asia. The latter is presented in Chapter 1— Historical Evidence for the Existence of Relict Hominoids (a paper written for The Relict Hominoid Inquiry Internet site); the former in Chapter 2 – Learning from Folklore, a paper that along with others (Chapters 3 to 7) did not make their way into my book *Bigfoot Research: The Russian Vision*. The last part is devoted to material by Marie-Jeanne Koffmann whose exchanges with Professor Valeri Avdeyev in the 1960s press sound very topical today. Her paper on the ecology of alomasty presents the strictly factual aspect of hominology equally dealt with in this book.

Professor Porshnev believed that our research would bring a revolution in science. I hope to live to witness it.

D.B.

Moscow, November 2013

CHAPTER 1

Historical Evidence for the Existence of Relict Hominoids

(Published on *The Relict Hominoid Inquiry* website, Idaho State University, 2012.)

ABSTRACT: Hominology is the study of evidence for the existence of wild bipedal primates, presumed to be relict hominoids or hominids. Investigation of the subject began simultaneously in Russia and America last century, beginning with the Himalayan expeditions in search of the yeti. The first international scientific organization that united academic and non-academic investigators was formed and functioned in Italy in the 1960s. Its Russian member was Dr. Boris Porshnev, founder of Russian hominology, whose unorthodox views regarding the origin of man and the nature of hominids are pointed out. Hominology is based on six main categories of evidence, of which two, pertaining to the historical aspect of the subject, are discussed in detail in this essay. They are the evidence of natural history, from Lucretius to Linnaeus, and the evidence of myth and folklore, from Babylonian mythos to folk proverbs and sayings in use today. The reinforcement of early natural historians' descriptions by cultural literary traditions attests to the acceptance of wildmen, a.k.a. demons, devils, goblins, as hair-covered creatures in human form. In the author's view, present data testify that hominology deals with evidence of living pre-sapiens relict hominoids.

INTRODUCTION: Systematic hominology in Russia and North America has many similarities and certain differences. In both regions it began in the middle of last century, stimulated by the Himalayan expeditions in search of the yeti. The founders of the research were Bernard Heuvelmans, Ivan Sanderson and Boris Porshnev. They agreed on one thing—that wild, hairy bipeds are real. However, they disagreed on almost everything else. Heuvelmans and Sanderson were zoologists; Porshnev was a historian and philosopher versed in many scientific disciplines. For

Heuvelmans and Sanderson the problem was zoological; for Porshnev it was above all anthropological, pertaining to the origin and position of man (Fig. 1). His theory of man's origin was different from that of mainstream anthropologists, and he held that the evidence for the existence of wild bipedal primates perfectly matched and supported his theory. The theory's thesis being that speech and its morphological and neurological correlates are the species-specific characteristics of *Homo sapiens*. He maintained that all pre-sapiens bipedal primates, including Neanderthals, were

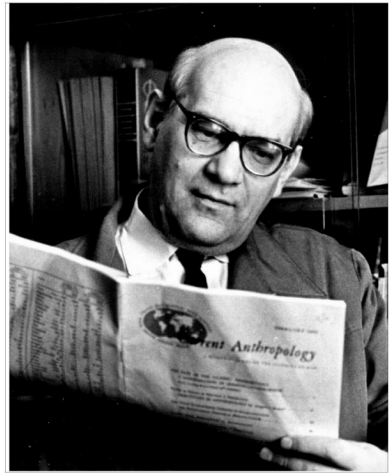


Figure 1. Boris Fedorovich Porshnev (1905–1972), the founder of Russian hominology. (Photo: D. Bayanov)

devoid of the faculty of speech, and therefore belonged to the animal kingdom. In this connection he proposed to change the term for the family *Hominidae* to *Troglodytidae*, and he believed that the extant wild hairy bipeds, reported today, were relicts of Neanderthals, who stopped making and using stone tools and fire (or lost these skills to a significant degree) due to a greatly changed environment, dominated by *Homo sapiens*. It should be noted that recent review of archeological evidence raises questions of whether Neanderthals were habitual fire-users during the Mousterian, and indicates that it may be possible that fire use was not a significant component of the Neanderthals' adaptation to their local environments. (Sandgathe, et al., 2011). The origin of *Homo sapiens* is thus viewed as tantamount to the origin of speech (Porshnev, 1974; Bayanov and Burtsev, 1974, 1976).

Porshnev, Sanderson, and Heuvelmans were good friends and members of The International Committee for the Study of Hairy Humanoids (the name owes its origin to Heuvelmans), an organization created in Rome in 1962 by Dr. Corrado Gini, Emeritus Professor of Sociology at Rome University. Opening the Committee, Dr. Gini said, in full agreement with Boris Porshnev,

“The Snowman and other hairy bipeds present a subject worthy of a profound scientific study. (...) This is a subject of the greatest importance for understanding the origin of man and the initial stages of human society.” (*Genus*, 1962).

The Committee included some 30 persons from different countries, among them Dr. George Agogino, Dr. Raymond A. Dart, Dr. John Napier, Dr. W. C. Osman Hill, Dr. P. R. Rinchen, Prof. Philip V. Tobias, as well as yeti investigator Ralph Izzard, yeti and bigfoot investigators Tom Slick and Peter Byrne, sasquatch investigators John Green, Bob Titmus, and René Dahinden.

The journal *Genus* (not peer-reviewed), published by Gini, printed many articles by the Committee members, e.g., “Almas still exists in Mongolia,” by P. R. Rinchen; “Report on a Sample of Skin and Hair from the Khumjung Yeti Scalp,” by M. Burns, “Being Some Notes, in Brief, on the General Findings in Connection with the California Bigfoot,” by Peter Byrne, “Hairy Primitives or Relic Submen in South America,” and “Preliminary Description of the External Morphology of What Appeared to be the Fresh Corpse of a Hitherto Unknown Form of Living Hominid,” (so-called Minnesota Iceman – D.B.) by Ivan T. Sanderson, as well as a number of articles in French, Italian, and Spanish, contributed by, among others, Porshnev, Gini, and Heuvelmans.

The organization ceased to function after the death in 1965 of its creator. Had it continued to exist, I am sure our situation today would be quite different, as the Committee included prominent academics who provided a vital link with mainstream science. After a break of forty-five years this favorable condition is being revived and re-established anew with the creation of The Relict Hominoid Inquiry.

HOMINOLOGY: Boris Porshnev envisaged our research as a new and distinct discipline, which I named “hominology.” Not surprisingly, terminology for the objects of hominology proved a protracted problem. Porshnev used the term relict hominoid, actually implying relict hominid in the classification generally accepted at the time. I have used both terms interchangeably, always implying “hominid.” For the sake of convenience, by way of *professional* jargon, I have also been using a contraction—“homin”—as a substitute for hominoid, hominid, wild bipedal primate, wild man, yeti,

almasty, sasquatch, and the rest of ethnic names for the creatures under study. This term also serves to avoid the current state of transition in the substitution of hominin for hominid in the technical literature, in accordance with the current cladistic approach to taxonomy.

Hominology's database consists of the following main categories:

1. Natural history
2. Folklore and mythology
3. Ancient and medieval art
4. Eyewitness testimony
5. Footprint evidence
6. Photographic evidence

In this essay I will limit my treatment to the first two areas of the historical aspects of hominology in the Old World, using as illustrations samples of ancient and medieval art from the third category. Today, a corresponding collection includes scores of hominid images (pictures, sculptures, petroglyphs) from across the world. It presents two kinds of portrayal: realistic and "ritualistic," i.e., symbolic. The first is true to life and helps the hominologist to study the creatures' appearance and anatomy. They show hairy bipeds with certain typical features setting them apart from humans. Symbolic portrayals may be a caricature that shows not so much the real object as the artist's attitude towards it. Images of grotesque monsters in ancient and medieval art have therefore led scientists and art specialists to believe that these monsters were merely figments of the imagination, with no basis in reality. Hominology offers a potential alternative to such views.

Natural History: A celebrated source here is Lucretius Carus (1st century BC), who in his famous *De rerum natura* (On the Nature of Things) describes a race of wildmen who had very strong bodies covered with hair. These wildmen lived in woodlands and caves with neither language nor clothes or industry. They hunted animals with sticks and stones and ate meat and other foods raw. It is most remarkable that Lucretius says that these woodland wildmen were ancestral to modern man (Lucretius, 1947).