

M0006383: Wellcome Historical Medical Museum display: the evolution of the primates, left wing

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The EVOLUTION of the PRIMATES

The tree in the adjoining section 2 illustrates the principal developments of the PRIMATES from a common stem deeply rooted in the early Eocene. The relative position of the scheme is indicated in Blue in the diagram suggestive of the evolution of plant and animal life Fig. 1. The scope of the tree itself is shown in Blue in Fig. 2.

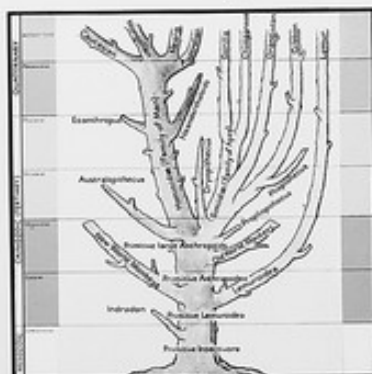
About the middle of the Eocene issue two branches, one including the NEW WORLD MONKEYS and the other the LEMUROIDEA. By the beginning of the Oligocene the branch which comprises the OLD WORLD MONKEYS is well established.

First sending forth two short-lived branches,

AUSTRALOPITHECUS and PROPLIOPITHECUS, in the Middle Oligocene, the primitive Large Anthropoid trunk bifurcates into two great boughs, on the right the SIMIIDAE (Ape Family) and on the left the HOMINIDAE (Human Family). From these respectively spring the different extinct and existing races of apes and men.

From the bough of the Apes a small gibbonoid branch, PLIOPITHECUS, develops at the end of the Miocene to die away in the Pliocene. Falling away about the same time, but having an apparently earlier origin, DRYOPITHECUS, is shown as a primitive humanoid scion.

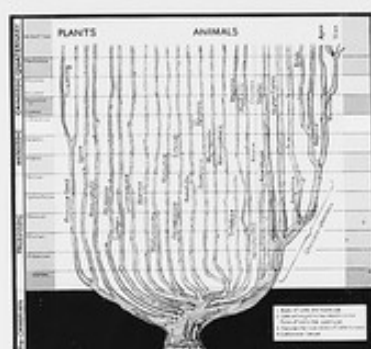
The earliest human types here exemplified are PITHECANTHROPUS (Java Man) and EOANTHROPUS (Piltdown Man) rising in the Pliocene and dying in the Pleistocene. Contemporaneously emerge SINANTHROPUS (Peking Man) and NEANDERTHAL MAN, the former to disappear somewhere in the Pleistocene and the latter to be displaced



THE EVOLUTION OF THE PRIMATES
The relative scope of the tree in the adjoining section 2 is here indicated Blue.

in the same epoch by HOMOSAPIENS (True Man), one early representative being of the CRO-MAGNON race.

From the late Pleistocene onward the main human racial branches develop.



THE EVOLUTION OF PLANT AND ANIMAL LIFE
The relative scope of the tree in the adjoining section 2 is here indicated in Blue.

HOLOCENE

PLEISTOCENE

PLIOCENE

MIOCENE

OLIGOCENE

EOCENE

QUATERNARY

TERTIARY

Fig.
2

Fig.
1