

Palaeoanthropology in the periphery. An introduction

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1. In search of a title

It was not easy to find a title for this dossier. Our search reflects the complexity of its topic. In the end we settled for: «Searching for Stones and Bones. Catalan Palaeontologists and human origins research in Spain». I will try to explain the components of this particular title. This dossier deals with Catalan scientists, principally Miquel Crusafont (1910-1983), Josep Gibert (1941-2007) and Eudald Carbonell (b. 1953). Yet their field work, their network and their impact on their discipline have gone well beyond Catalonia and encompassed Spain (and beyond). The adjective «Catalan» is meant to imply more than just a geographical denomination. It points to issues of national identity. Yet as we shall see, the researchers in question differ substantially in the way they consider themselves culturally and politically as Catalans (as something distinct from being Spanish).

The expression «stones and bones» is sometimes used as colloquial shorthand for human origins research. The latter term indicates that this search for origins has long become a multidisciplinary endeavor. Nowadays it encompasses not only palaeoanthropology, palaeontology, prehistoric archaeology and geology but also specialist disciplines such as palynology, geochronology, zooarchaeology and so on. Not to mention molecular biology and palaeogenetics (the study of ancient genetic material) which play an ever more important role in the deciphering of our origins.

Up to very recently, the history of human origins research was mainly written by the actors themselves, chiefly in their numerous popular science

books¹. Only in the last two decades have historians of science turned to this field². It has turned out that the issues that emerge when studying the history of human origins research merit an in-depth analysis. To name but the most «appealing»: epistemological uncertainty (and hence controversy) as a central characteristic of human origins research³; the appropriation of stones and bones into narratives of identity, in particular nationalist ones⁴; the role of mass media and of images (in particular reconstructions of early humans) in shaping the ideas of our «origins» of the general public but also of the scientists themselves⁵; the (inevitable?) use of narratives and stereotypes in the accounts of how «we» became humans⁶.

Yet the specific topic of this dossier with its focus on Catalan palaeontologists has received little scholarly attention from the part of history of science⁷. Hence this dossier intends to open up a new field of

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1. Hochadel, Oliver. Die Knochenjäger. Paläoanthropologen als Sachbuchautoren. In: Hahnemann, Andy; Oels, David, eds. *Sachbuch und populäres Wissen im 20. Jahrhundert*. Frankfurt a.M.: Peter Lang; 2008, p. 29-38.
 2. For an overview, Goodrum, Matthew R. The history of human origins research and its place in the History of Science: Research problems and historiography. *History of Science*. 2009; 47 (3): 337-57.
 3. Hominid fossils are notoriously difficult to interpret because they are extremely rare, fragmentary and hard to date. The theoretical frameworks (theories of evolution, phylogenies and definition of species) are highly contested among palaeoanthropologists. Similar problems may be encountered in the interpretation of stone tools or other artifacts. Corbey, Raymond; Roebroeks, Wil, eds. *Studying human origins. Disciplinary history and epistemology*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press; 2001; Sommer, Marianne. *Bones & Ochre. The curious afterlife of the Red Lady of Paviland*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press; 2007.
 4. Schlanger, Nathan. Un berceau pour l'humanité? Parcours d'illusions et d'espoirs. *Les Nouvelles de l'Archéologie*. 2005; 101: 12-15; Schmalzer, Sigrid. *The People's Peking Man: Popular science and human identity in twentieth-century China*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press; 2008.
 5. Goulden, Murray. Boundary-work and the human-animal binary: Piltdown man, science and the media. *Public Understanding of Science*. 2009; 18 (3): 275-291; Hochadel, Oliver. *El mito de Atapuerca. Orígenes, ciencia, divulgación*. Bellaterra: Edicions UAB; 2013; Moser, Stephanie. *Ancestral images: The iconography of human origins*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press; 1998.
 6. Landau, Misiá. *Narratives of human evolution*. New Haven/London: Yale University Press; 1991; Stoczkowski, Wiktor. *Anthropologie naïve, anthropologie savante. De l'origine de l'homme, de l'imagination et des idées reçues*. Paris: CNRS; 1994.
 7. See the notes of the following articles for each individual case in question. The situation looks entirely different as regards the historiography of Catalan and Spanish (prehistoric) archaeology where in recent years numerous books and articles have appeared (although in this case also by scholars trained and still active as archaeologists). It must suffice to mention the most recent books of Margarita Díaz-Andreu and Francisco Gracia: Díaz-Andreu, Margarita. *Archaeological encounters. Building networks of Spanish and British archaeologists*

research. Obviously the five articles assembled here will address many of the more general issues just mentioned. Yet the aspirations of this dossier go further. Our claim is that the history of human origins research in Catalonia (and Spain) offers more than just «local variations» of already well-studied topics. We would like to suggest three major themes that might be of interest to the history of science as such. First, ideology, religion and the more general context of the theory of evolution. Second, the complex relationship between «center» and «periphery». This represents a specific variant of the aforementioned nationalist appropriation of prehistory. Finally, our case studies may offer some instructive insights into what has been called the «science-media-coupling» or the «medialization» of science⁸. Hence in what follows I will not summarize each article individually but rather try to flesh out the common themes that connect them.

2. Ideology, religion and evolution

The «confrontation» between science and religion (and its ideological ramifications) is a «classical» topic when dealing with the history of human origins research in the second half of the nineteenth century⁹. Yet by and large these issues seem to vanish in current historiography if we enter the twentieth century¹⁰. It is exactly this apparent void that renders the Catalan/Spanish case so interesting. In Spain, the question of how to accommodate Christian beliefs with evolutionary thinking remains a highly contested issue until 1975. Censorship was in place until the very end of Franco's dictatorship, in particular with respect to the public discussion of the origin of

in the 20th century. Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars; 2012; Gracia, Francisco. *Arqueologia i política. La gestió de Martín Almagro Basch al capdavant del Museu Arqueològic Provincial de Barcelona (1939-1962)*. Barcelona: Universitat de Barcelona Publicacions i Edicions, DL; 2012.

8. These terms have been coined by Peter Weingart: see my article on Carbonell for references.
9. The literature on the nineteenth century is vast. To name only two contributions dealing with the Spanish case: Pelayo, Francisco. *Ciencia y creencia en España durante el siglo XIX. La Palaeontología en el debate sobre el darwinismo*. Madrid: CSIC, 1999; Girón, Alvaro. *En la mesa con Darwin. Evolución y revolución en el movimiento libertario en España (1869-1914)*. Madrid: CSIC; 2005.
10. Notable exceptions for the Spanish case are the publications of Francisco Blázquez y Alfredo Iglesias. See the article of Florensa for further references.

man. Yet the authors of this dossier do not intend to draw a simple picture of an oppressive regime and oppressed scientists. The emerging picture is far more ambivalent. Our main point of reference is the palaeontologist Miquel Crusafont. The articles of Carlos Acosta and Jesús Catalá focus entirely on him, the contribution by Clara Florensa in part.

Crusafont is a highly interesting character, not only because of his scientific achievements but maybe even more so for his ambiguities. He was a fervent Catholic and yet at the same time, a staunch defender of evolution (in a finalist version, in short: evolution is directed towards man and is not determined by mere chance, there is room for divine intervention). Crusafont was innovative in his methodology, in concrete as regards the application of quantitative tools in the analysis of fossils. Yet he held on to his teleological ideas in his understanding of evolution until the very end of his life. He may be described as an authoritarian scientist and administrator yet he did not associate himself with the Francoist regime more than necessary.

In the 1950s and 1960s, Crusafont (and other palaeontologists such as Bermudo Meléndez and Emiliano Aguirre) made palaeontology palatable to the regime and thus helped to slowly reintroduce the topic of evolution into the Spanish public as Florensa shows in her analysis of articles dealing with evolution in the Catalan newspaper *La Vanguardia Española*. Crusafont was a palaeontologist, not a palaeoanthropologist. His research on vertebrates from the Miocene did not touch on the contested question of the origin of man. Thus the «stigma» of man —God's image and creation— allegedly descending from apes could be avoided, as Florensa argues. Backed by his finalist views, Crusafont was able to reinstate the concept of evolution and dissociate the scientific theory from a «cruder» form of Darwinism.

Acosta and Catalá use the large number of letters from and in particular to Crusafont that have survived. These letters provide privileged access to the situation of Catalan and Spanish palaeontology and prehistoric research in the 1950s and 1960s. In his analysis, Acosta identifies «ambiguity» as a key strategy of Crusafont allowing him to successfully maneuver between the seeming contradictions we mentioned above. His conciliatory attitude as regards science and religion allowed him to promote his own research and the field of palaeontology as such within a national-catholic dictatorship.

Catalá analyzes in detail Crusafont's relationship with the prestigious US-palaeontologist George G. Simpson. It is intriguing to follow how the

Spanish finalist vision of evolution «meets» the New Synthesis (or Neodarwinism) of which Simpson is one of the «fathers». Despite their opposing and incommensurable views as regards the directionality of evolution, the two palaeontologists stayed in touch for nearly four decades exchanging dozens of letters, discussing both scientific and personal matters. In 1956 Simpson himself facilitated the publication of an article by Crusafont —«contaminated» by orthogenetic and finalist ideas, as Catalá says— in *Evolution*, the leading journal of the proponents of the New Synthesis. In a sense, this publication represents the culmination of their relationship and epitomizes its tensions. Thus Catalá also points to the «human element» in the history of science, a topic that is difficult to grasp methodologically and therefore in danger of being neglected.

Ideologies are important driving forces of scientific debates. Yet one of the more general conclusions of Acosta and Catalá is that in the case of Miquel Crusafont, strong ideological convictions do not prevent a scholar from interacting in a highly productive way with his national and international scientific community.

Gibert and Carbonell can be placed on the other end of the political spectrum, they were both politically active in the late 1970s on the far left. In the case of Carbonell, the contrasts with Crusafont go beyond their political leanings. When addressing the general public, Carbonell is openly anti-religious and scientistic. He cannot imagine reconciliation between religion and science —the driving force of progress. Yet in Carbonell's thinking, ideology may be considered just as crucial as in Crusafont's. Carbonell clearly conceives of his research on the early history of man as instrumental in order to promote his own political agenda, the «socialization of knowledge» which is supposed to «humanize» our society.

3. «Center» and «Periphery»

The relations between «center» and «periphery» in various forms have received much attention in recent history of science, notably the circulation of knowledge between the European metropolis and overseas colonies. This perspective has turned out to be particularly fruitful if this relationship is not understood as by definition hierarchical, i.e. the «center» as producer of knowledge and the «periphery» only as supplier of observations or raw

materials (such as zoological specimens, fossils or rare plants)¹¹. Less prominent are studies focusing on «peripheries» within Europe (or within the «West»)¹². Yet this dossier addresses exactly this constellation. «Center» and «periphery» are actors' categories, therefore they should be put in quotation marks. In accordance with the historiography just cited, these terms are understood as historically constructed. The historian's task is therefore to contextualize them and elucidate the motivations of the historical actors when they are talking about «center» and «periphery».

For most of the twentieth century, Catalan (and Spanish) palaeoanthropologists and prehistoric archaeologists perceived themselves as being at the margins of their scientific community. Despite quite a number of important sites on the Iberian Peninsula, they felt that the «important things» happened in leading countries such as France, Great Britain, Germany and the US. Worse, they lamented a long tradition of «scientific colonialism» according to which foreign scientists would come to do research in Spain, exploit its prehistoric treasures without giving due credit to the «indigenous» scholars. These scholars clearly see themselves as defending and sustaining their cultural heritage, something that belongs to the nation. Stones and bones are turned into valuable remnants and vestiges of a long-gone past. In that sense, palaeontology and human origins research are historical sciences, tied to issues of identity and memory.

The self-perception of being «peripheral» is common to all the Catalan actors studied. Crusafont, Gibert and Carbonell are entirely different personalities and scientists yet they all share a deeply ambivalent attitude toward the «center». This ambivalence may be summarized with two slogans: «Keep off, this is ours. Yet come and see what we have»¹³.

In Acosta's analysis, Crusafont emerges as a skilled «networker» both nationally and internationally. Already in 1946 (!) he traveled through Western and Central Europe establishing contacts. He proudly sported

11. To mention but one historiographically particularly ambitious book: Raj, Kapil. *Relocating Modern Science: Circulation and the construction of knowledge in South Asia and Europe, 1650-1900*. London: Palgrave Macmillan; 2010.

12. Papanelopoulou, Faidra; Nieto-Galan, Agustí; Perdiguero, Enrique, eds. *Popularizing science and technology in the European periphery, 1800-2000*. Aldershot: Ashgate; 2009. For the interesting case of a colonialism «within», that is the Habsburg empire: Ash, Mitchell G.; Surman, Jan, eds. *The nationalization of scientific knowledge in 19th-century central Europe*. London: Palgrave; 2012.

13. I owe this catchy phrase to Nathan Schlanger.

his relationship with prominent US-scientists, in particular with George G. Simpson, as Catalá shows. The three articles in this dossier dealing with the time of the dictatorship clearly demonstrate —in tune with recent research on science in Franco's Spain, e.g. physics— that it can no longer be maintained that Catalan/Spanish scientists were working in isolation¹⁴. Yet at the same time, Crusafont staged himself as a defender of Spanish science and lashed out against «the Americans», who he alleged were trying to plunder the prehistoric riches of Spain. This may appear to be yet another inherent ambiguity in Crusafont's complex personality. Yet in this case it rather points to a certain opportunism. He mobilized this «anti-colonialist» rhetoric in quarrels with Spanish colleagues in order to get access to promising palaeontological sites.

Eudald Carbonell is the only Catalan among the three co-directors of the Atapuerca research project (Burgos, Northern Spain). He heralded the spectacular fossil finds in the Sima de los Huesos and the Gran Dolina as instrumental in overcoming decades of «scientific colonialism». Only in the late twentieth century could Spain assume its place among the leading nations in human origins research. Yet from the very beginning of his career in the early 1970s, Carbonell established a close relationship with the palaeoanthropologist Henry de Lumley. In what one may describe as a «deal», Carbonell and his fellow Catalan archaeologists benefitted immensely from the support of their influential French colleague: his reputation, his international network, opportunities to publish in prestigious journals or to do PhDs. In return, Henry de Lumley —referred to as «the emperor» by Catalan researchers— as well as his wife Marie-Antoinette de Lumley could publish about prehistoric sites in Catalonia.

The case of Josep Gibert is different as Miquel Carandell argues in his article. Gibert also turned to the de Lumleys for help. He asked them to analyze a fragment of skull —found in 1982 at the site of Orce, Andalusia— which he and his collaborators believed to be hominid. Marie-Antoinette de Lumley told them that it belonged to an equid. Yet in the case of Gibert and his defense of the «Orce man», the tensions between center and periphery do not coincide with national borders. The interpretation of the de Lumleys was soon adopted by most scholars. This included Gibert's Catalan

14. Herran, Néstor; Roqué, Xavier, eds. *La física en la dictadura. Físicos, cultura y poder en España, 1939-1975*. Bellaterra: Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Servei de Publicacions; 2012.

colleagues and co-discoverers Jordi Agustí and Salvador Moyà-Solà. More and more, Gibert found his support reduced to a small group.

Gibert attempted to position an alternative model for the population of Europe via the Strait of Gibraltar (as opposed to via the Levantine corridor and Eastern Europe). In this way he positioned himself against the «establishment» (at home and abroad), fighting «traditional» ideas and thus portrayed himself as a David fighting Goliath. Yet once more there are similarities with the cases of Crusafont-Simpson and of Carbonell-de Lumley. Gibert consistently tried to «tap» the support of renowned foreign scientists in order to get approval for his ideas, i.e. by inviting them to congresses he organized, as Carandell shows.

Both Gibert and Carbonell tried to prove that what is today Spain, respectively Catalonia, was inhabited much earlier than was originally thought. Interestingly, both scholars sought the support of the seminal figure of Thomas S. Kuhn and his notion of the paradigm as a powerful assembly of assumptions governing a given scientific discipline. Yet Gibert and Carbonell did not do this as historians of science in order to understand a theoretical shift within a discipline, but as actors trying to legitimize their own research program. The two Catalan scientists invoke Kuhn's ideas in order to claim that it will only be a question of time before the «old paradigm» will be overcome and replaced. This new paradigm is of course their own, i.e. the early population of Spain/Europe¹⁵.

In their entirety, the cases show how fruitful it may be to follow the different layers of «center» and «periphery» in the history of human origins research. This perspective reaches well beyond the merely geographical dimension. It also casts light on inner-scientific struggles for hegemony: practically —in terms of access to excavation sites, to stones and bones— as well as epistemologically —in terms of expounding new accounts of our origins.

15. Carbonell, Eudald; Bermúdez de Castro, José María. *Atapuerca. Perdidos en la colina. La historia humana y científica del equipo investigador*. Barcelona: Destino; 2004, p. 301. Kuhn is misspelled «Khun». For Gibert see the article of Carandell.

4. The science-media-coupling

Human origins research has been a «public» discipline since its beginnings in the 1860s¹⁶. Scholars have used the public arena to legitimize their own often conflicting theories and thus to boost their scientific authority. One way to understand this relationship between science and the media (and by extension with politics, but also the economy and society at large), is to try and show how they use each other as resources¹⁷.

The history of palaeontology and palaeoanthropology in Catalonia offers instructive examples of how researchers such as Crusafont, Gibert and Carbonell —in different ways— turned to the public in order to have their scientific discipline as well as their concrete ideas validated. As Florensa and Acosta show, Crusafont was a skilled and tireless public advocate of palaeontology. The most tangible results of Crusafont's successful public relations work are the internationalization of Spanish palaeontology through the workshops held in the 1950s in Sabadell, and the foundation of the *Instituto Provincial de Palaeontología* in 1969. Yet the benefit of his presence in the public sphere was certainly mutual. The figure Crusafont allowed *La Vanguardia Española* to address questions of evolution in a sanitized way. And Franco's regime congratulated itself publicly for having an internationally renowned researcher in Spain. Studies on the science-media-coupling refer in general (and without further reflection) to liberal societies with a free media. Yet as Florensa's analysis of *La Vanguardia Española* suggests, this medialization may even be detected in authoritarian regimes (although clearly more research is needed in this respect).

Eudald Carbonell has nearly always managed to turn the media into reliable allies, in particular the Catalan ones. He has understood media as instruments to support his own personal agenda regardless of whether he is working on Catalan sites or in Atapuerca. This includes the quest for public visibility, the validation of his scientific claims, the appeal for funding as well as the boosting of his specific political agenda, i.e. the aforementioned

16. Landau, n. 6. Or one might even go back to pre-Darwinian times, namely the 1840s: Secord, James A. *Victorian Sensation. The extraordinary publication, reception and secret authorship of vestiges of the natural history of creation*. Chicago/London: The University of Chicago Press; 2003.

17. Nikolow, Sybilla; Schirrmacher; Arne, eds. *Wissenschaft und Öffentlichkeit als Ressourcen füreinander. Studien zur Wissenschaftsgeschichte im 20. Jahrhundert*. Frankfurt a.M.: Campus; 2007.

socialization of knowledge. Yet my own article tries to show that the media use Carbonell as a resource, too. They have turned him into a «celebrity-scientist» and ultimately into a commodity for public consumption.

Once more, the case of Gibert is different, as Carandell argues. For three years, between 1984, when the debate about the «Orce man» erupted and 1987, when the first academic publication on the quarrel appeared, the arguments between the two camps were exchanged exclusively in the press. Thus the media itself turned into a scholarly battlefield, breaking with all academic conventions. Even after 1987, the scientists involved in the dispute continued to use the media to have their arguments made public and to attack their opponents. The scientists benefitted from the media as their loudspeakers, and the media cashed in on the public appeal of a heated controversy.

5. Desiderata for future research

The five articles of this dossier aspire to address research topics that go well beyond a merely «local» history of human origins research in Catalonia/Spain. It may be interesting to pursue issues such as the three mentioned in this introduction, the relevance of ideology and religion, the «center-periphery» relationship and the science-media-coupling, in other historical settings in Europe. Yet it goes without saying that many promising topics have barely been touched at all, even within this geographically and historically limited context. In this sense we hope that this dossier may serve as a first step that may lead to further research. In what follows we would like to offer but a few suggestions.

Obviously there is a «prehistory» to the story told in this dossier, i.e. the search for human roots in Catalonia prior to 1940. At around 1900, research on prehistory and the origin of man (and specific «people») was not yet institutionalized and «disciplined». There is more research needed in order to contextualize these investigations within the emerging political movement of Catalanism of the time¹⁸. Scholars from art history, geolo-

18. The research of Lluís Calvo may serve as a point of departure. See his *Historia de la antropología en Cataluña*. Madrid: CSIC; 1997 and *Prehistoria, etnología y sociedad en la Cataluña del primer tercio del siglo XX. La investigación al servicio del catalanismo cultural y político*. Complutum. 2001; 12: 293-296.

gy, anthropology, archaeology and related fields pursued similar research agendas; the disciplines of palaeoanthropology and palaeontology were still *in statu nascendi*. «Amateurs» were competing with university professors. Future research should address the pertinent issues of professionalization and institutionalization in the Catalan context in this early phase¹⁹. To name but three cases that might be pursued:

1. In 1887, amateur scientist Pere Alsius (1839-1915) unearthed a Neanderthal mandible in Banyoles. It was nobody else but Marie-Antoinette de Lumley who published the first extensive article on the fossil based on new methods²⁰. In the meantime the mandible has been thoroughly investigated²¹. Yet what we lack is a critical historical study of this important discovery and its appropriations.

2. In 1909, the amateur archaeologist Amador Romaní (1873-1930) discovered an archaeologically very rich Neanderthal site near Capellades that was named after him: Abric Romaní. Once more the same actors appear: around 1960 Henry de Lumley investigated the site, since 1983 Carbonell has directed the excavations²².

3. Starting around 1915 and for many decades to come, amateur prehistorian Salvador Vilaseca (1896-1975) from Reus explored several Palaeolithic sites in the province of Tarragona²³. In his own genealogy Carbonell cites Vilaseca as someone searching for a Lower Palaeolithic in Catalonia well before him²⁴.

For the time period covered by this dossier, the Palaeontological Research Institute in Sabadell is central. Its «prehistory» starts in 1934, when the young Crusafont and some of his colleagues, hardly more than amateur

19. For the Spanish case: Lanzarote, José María. Prehistoria Patria. National identities and Europeanisation in the construction of prehistoric archaeology in Spain: 1860-1936. PhD. European University Institute, Florence; 2012.

20. Lumley, Marie-Antoinette de. La mandíbula de Bañolas. Ampurias. 1971-1972; 33-34: 1-91.

21. There are numerous studies, e.g. Maroto, Julià, ed. La mandíbula de Banyoles en el context dels fòssils humans del Pleistocè. Vol. 13. Centre d'Investigacions Arqueològiques. Girona: Centre d'Investigacions Arqueològiques, 1993.

22. Helpful is Bartrolí, Raül et al. A frec de ciència. L'atles d'Amador Romaní i Guerra. Capellades: Ajuntament de Capellades; 1995.

23. The existing literature on Vilaseca consists rather in uncritical homages. See e.g. Figueras, Anna; Massó, Jaume, eds. Salvador Vilaseca. Una obra perdurable. Reus: Museu Comarcal Salvador Vilaseca, DL; 1996.

24. Sota Terra, episode «La Boella», TV3, 21 Jun 2010, 4.14-4.39 min; 48.25-49.12 min. Available from www.tv3.cat/sotaterra/capitols/la-boella.

palaeontologists at the time, created a division of palaeontology within the *Museo de Sabadell*. In 1969, the *Instituto Provincial de Paleontología* was founded. After the death of Crusafont in 1983, it was renamed *Institut de Palaeontologia Miquel Crusafont*. This time the name of the institute was in Catalan, while before it was in Spanish. From 1969 to 2006 the institute depended on the *Diputació de Barcelona*. In late 2006, the institute became the *Institut Català de Paleontologia Miquel Crusafont*. Its patrons are the *Generalitat de Catalunya* and the *Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona*.

It would be a desideratum to have a critical «institutional» history, also in view of the fact that the institute hosts an extensive archive. One could try to reconstruct the network of researchers which evolved around the institute and their exchange of ideas as well as scientific (funding) policies pursued by the political authorities in the dictatorship and later in the democratic period. One might also follow the circulation of palaeontological material, i.e. the acquisition, loans, exchanges etc. of fossils and other epistemological objects with other institutions and scholars.

The present director of the *Institut Català de Palaeontologia Miquel Crusafont* (ICP) is Salvador Moyà-Solà. The original proposal for this dossier included an article that would deal with his research and that of his collaborators on Miocene apes in the last two decades. For various reasons this article did not materialize²⁵. Yet more research on this topic could illuminate further the issue of the nationalist appropriation fossils in the twenty-first century not least because it is immediately connected with the science-media-coupling.

To illustrate this briefly with the example of «Pau»: starting in December 2002, more than 80 parts of the skeleton of a Miocene ape were discovered in Can Mata, a site near Els Hostalets de Pierola, 30 kilometers west of Barcelona. In 2004, Moyà-Solà and his co-authors presented the nearly 13 million year old *Pierolapithecus catalaunicus*, the scientific name of Pau, as a possible common ancestor of our entire family, i.e. the great apes and us²⁶. *El Mundo* sported the headline «the missing link is Catalan» and *El*

25. For a first approximation see: Moreno Fernández, María Laura. Los primeros catalanes. Jordi, Pau y Lluc, el influjo nacionalista en la búsqueda de los orígenes humanos. Tesina. Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona; 2010; Hochadel, n. 5, p. 192-201.

26. Moyà-Solà, Salvador et al. *Pierolapithecus catalaunicus*, a new Middle Miocene great ape from Spain. *Science*. 2004; 306: 1339-1344.

País referred to Pau at least once as «the first Catalan»²⁷, we may assume in a tongue-in-cheek fashion. By contrast, and maybe surprisingly, *La Vanguardia* eschewed this reference to national ancestry. Instead, science journalist Josep Corbella referred to Pau as «the great-grandfather»²⁸. Yet the name Pau was actually a suggestion from Corbella and one of his colleagues once they had heard about the still unpublished find in early April 2003. The ICP researchers liked the name, also because of its political significance. Pau is not only a typical Catalan name, it also means peace. In mid-March a military coalition led by the US had attacked Iraq. The Spanish government under Aznar had joined this coalition, which evoked massive protests particularly in Catalonia. So Pau reflects both, nationalism and internationalism: the fossil was «catalanized», also through his official name *Pierolapithecus catalaunicus*. Yet at the same time the long extinct Miocene ape became «our pacifist banner, our small contribution towards peace», as Moyà-Solà put it²⁹.

6. Catalan (?) Palaeontologists

To conclude and to return to our reflections about the title of this dossier: our case studies show that what it means to be «Catalan» for a palaeontologist or a prehistoric archaeologist may differ widely. Miquel Crusafont certainly considered himself Catalan. After the Civil War he was accused of Catalanism by the new regime yet the trial was suspended. Thus Crusafont could pursue his career during the dictatorship without further friction. He clearly adjusted to the political reality —the existence of a Spanish national state that left no place for a Catalan political entity— and presented himself as a Spanish scientist. In a sense, his «Catalanization» occurred post-mortem. As mentioned before, the actual name of the institute he founded is *Institut Català de Palaeontologia Miquel Crusafont*.

Josep Gibert did not emphasize his identity as a Catalan. Rather, he emphasized the contrary. Due to his long struggle to have his fossil

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27. Valenzuela, América. *Pierolapithecus catalaunicus*, el eslabón perdido es catalán. El Mundo. 19 Nov 2004; Antón, Jacinto. Pau, el abuelo en la basura. El País. 31 Jul 2005. All translations are mine.
28. Corbella, Josep. Pau, el bisabuelo de la humanidad. *La Vanguardia*. 19 Nov 2004: 29-30.
29. Redacción. ¿Y por qué Pau? *La Vanguardia*. 20 Nov 2004: 38.

recognized as hominid, he developed strong ties with the village of Orce in the province of Granada in the Spanish South. Unlike the Andalusian politicians, the people of Orce supported him continuously. The village even named him «adopted son» and re-baptized the local museum to bear his name. Gibert had decreed that his ashes would be scattered in Orce. Both examples prove that the identity is to some degree a personal choice.

The «most Catalan» researcher dealt with in this dossier is Eudald Carbonell. He conceived of his archaeological research, particularly in the 1970s and 1980s, as political, contributing to the national Catalan identity in the transition to democracy. And he has always spoken out in favor of the self-determination of the Catalan people. Yet Carbonell had no qualms in cutting out a new role for himself as an advocate of Spanish science when he became the co-director of the Atapuerca project in 1992 (and he will have his ashes scattered in the Sierra de Atapuerca). What is more, he subscribes to a «post-nationalist» Catalanism that concedes that there is no «natural essence» to what may constitute being Catalan.

Salvador Moyà-Solà, a native of Mallorca, is politically a Catalan nationalist. At the same time he strongly disapproves of expressions such as «the first Catalan» as nonsensical. He always speaks of the Mediterranean as the cradle of our distant ancestors, and never of Spain or Catalonia³⁰. Yet Moyà-Solà also knows that he cannot escape the nationalist appropriation of the research of the ICP: «Everything that singles out Catalonia is considered to be important here: the palaeontological wealth, the great finds with impact in the media and first-rate research»³¹.

Human origins research is still clearly tied to identity politics. Yet in how far a Catalan —or any other— scholar pursues his or her own scientific and/or political agenda, or reacts to the demands of the media and of politics seems contingent. It was and is determined by the political circumstances and the scientific constellations as much as by personal choices.

30. El mediterráneo podría ser el crisol donde se cocinó el diseño moderno de orangutanes, chimpancés, gorilas y humanos. www.fecyt.es/entrevistas/smoya/entrevista1.html (cited 11 Feb 2013); Corbella, Josep. Descubierta en Cataluña un ancestro de los homínidos. *La Vanguardia*. 2 Jun 2009: 25.

31. Interview of the author with Salvador Moyà-Solà, 8 Jul 2009, Bellaterra.

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