



Bits & Pieces – Issue No. 115

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Edited by Gene Baade



*I was asked to provide more information on the Dr. Karapetian experience in 1941, as discussed in BP#113. I reasoned that others might also like to know the full story. Dmitri Bayanov provided the following information in his book *In the Footsteps of the Russian Snowman* (1996).*

In 1966, a Soviet popular-science magazine *Tekhnika Molodyozhi*, #8 (Technology for Young People) carried the following information:

In December 1941, Vazghen Sergeyeovich Karapetian, a Lt-Col. in the Army Medical Corps, happened to observe a strange hairy man in the Caucasus. Our correspondent asked Karapetian to tell our readers about that incident and his attitude to it, 25 years on.

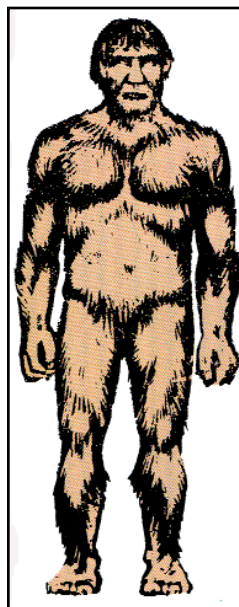
The man I saw," said the army doctor," is quite clear in my memory as if standing in front of me now. I was inspecting him at the request of the local authorities. It was necessary to establish whether the strange man was an enemy saboteur in disguise. But it was a totally wild creature, almost fully covered with dark brown hair resembling a bear's fur, without a mustache or beard, with just slight hairiness on the face. The man was standing very upright, his arms hanging down. He was taller than average, about 180 centimeters. He was standing like an athlete, his powerful chest put forward. His eyes had an empty, purely animal expression. He did not accept any food or drink. He said nothing and made only inarticulate sounds. I extended my hand to him and even said 'Hello.' But he did not respond. After this inspection I returned to my unit and never received any further information about the fate of the strange creature."

I heard Karapetian's story many times, as told by him at our seminar and to other audiences that invited him.



Dr. Vazghen Sergeyeovich Karapetian, a Lieutenant Colonel in the Russian Army Medical Corps. (Photo: 1972)

Here's what should be added in summation. Karapetian stressed the fact that the whole thing happened during the war with Germany, in fact at a critical moment of it, which explains, firstly, why the authorities (a group of local home guards) became interested in the creature, captured and investigated it (suspicious of an enemy ploy), and secondly, why there was



Drawing of the hairy man seen, created under Dr. Karapetian's direction.

no follow up, the records of the incident having been lost or concealed; nobody at the time gave a thought to the potential scientific value of such freaks of nature.

Looking back, Karapetian mused that besides its beast-like hairiness, the captured subject differed from humans in three respects. Firstly, he was resistant to the cold, in fact he preferred cold to the warmth of normal room temperature. The creature was shown to Karapetian in a cold shed and when he asked why it was kept in such cold conditions the answer was: because he sweats very much in the room. Secondly, the subject's eyes and face held a very non-human, animal-like expression. Thirdly, the army doctor noticed that the creature had lice of a much bigger size and of a different kind than found on humans. As a result of the medical check-up, Karapetian gave the home guards his conclusion to the effect that it was not a man in disguise but a really "very, very wild" subject and "all that hair is his own."

He asked the guards what they were going to do with the captive, and they answered: "We shall report your conclusion to our superiors and, depending on their order, shall either dispatch him or set him free."

Subsequently, proceeding from the possibility that the hairy man was shot by a firing squad, my colleagues addressed the Minister of the Interior of Daghestan where the incident took place, with the request to provide information on the case. The Minister's reply was to the effect that after so many years of Soviet power in Daghestan the entire population had become fully civilized and it was pointless to search for any wild men. The captive was, according to the Minister, just a saboteur, to which the law of wartime had been applied (i.e., he was executed). No details were supplied.

In 1958, when the USSR Academy of Sciences set up a commission to investigate the problem of the snowman, Karapetian was one of the first to supply information, which took the commission

by surprise since nobody at that time could accept the possibility of such creatures in the Caucasus (the idea was considered just as absurd as snowmen in California). Following Karapetian's report, and some others, as well as initial trips to investigate the situation on the spot made by Marie-Jeanne Koffmann and zoologist Dr. Alexander Mashkovtsev, the Caucasus, of all places, became for many years the main site of our fieldwork.

Further insights from Murphy

A lieutenant colonel was a senior officer in the Russian army. Karapetian would have been given this rank because he was a medical doctor. As such he was a highly valued officer. He likely did not carry a gun, had staff that looked after him and was protected in every way possible. Men (or women) of this caliber are generally given a lot of credibility in what they say. I doubt that Russian scientists told Karapetian that he was hallucinating or what he saw and examined was simply something else, but as far as I know nothing much was done about his experience, save follow-up research by Marie-Jeanne Koffmann and Dr. Alexander Mashkovtsev. The only photo I have of the latter is the one showing the Russian founders of hominology, as follows. He is second from the left. Koffmann is seen last.



Just how much information about the Karapetian incident came to North America was likely very minimal until Ivan Sanderson mentioned the event in his book, *Abominable Snowman: Legend Come to Life* (1962). Of course, few self-respecting anthropologists in North America would read anything by a non-PhD and not published by a university. Whatever the case, Sanderson got the information in, or prior to, 1962. What he

provides therefore predates the Soviet popular science magazine article (1966).

I am providing the material in Sanderson's book below as it has additional details not included in the account provided by Dmitri Bayanov:

This is by no means the only close encounter with a *Kaptar* in modern times. First there are literally dozens of reports from locals including whole village populations who reported them about at various times, and sometimes for months and at low levels. Then also, one appears to have been captured in 1941 and physically examined by a lieutenant-colonel of the Medical Service of the Soviet Army, by the name of V. S. Karapetyan. I give this report verbatim as supplied to me, already translated, by the courtesy of the Russian Information Service. It goes as follows:

"From October to December of 1941 our infantry battalion was stationed some thirty kilometers from the town of Bui-naks [in the Dagستان A.S.S.R.]. One day the representatives of the local authorities asked me to examine a man caught in the surrounding mountains and brought to the district center. My medical advice was needed to establish whether or not this curious creature was a disguised spy.

"I entered a shed with two members of the local authorities. When I asked why I had to examine the man in a cold shed and not in a warm room, I was told that the prisoner could not be kept in a warm room. He had sweated in the house so profusely that they had had to keep him in the shed.

"I can still see the creature as it stood before me, a male, naked and bare-footed. And it was doubtlessly a man, because its entire shape was human. The chest, back, and shoulders, however, were covered with shaggy hair of a dark brown colour [it is noteworthy that all the local inhabitants had black hair]. This fur of his was much like that of a bear, and 2 to 3 centimeters long. The fur was thinner and softer below the chest. His wrists were crude and sparsely covered with hair. The palms of his hands and soles of his feet were free of hair. But the hair on his head reached to his shoulders partly covering his forehead. The hair on his head, moreover, felt very rough to the hand. He had no beard or moustache, though his face was completely covered with a light growth of hair. The hair around his mouth was also short and sparse.

"The man stood absolutely straight with his arms hanging, and his height was above the average—about 180 cm. He stood before me like a giant, his mighty chest thrust forward. His fingers were thick, strong, and exceptionally large. On the whole, he was considerably bigger than any of the local inhabitants.

"His eyes told me nothing. They were dull and empty—the eyes of an animal. And he seemed to me like an animal and nothing more.

"As I learned, he had accepted no food or drink since he was caught. He had asked for nothing and said nothing. When kept in a warm room he sweated profusely. While I was there, some water and then some food [bread] was brought up to his mouth; and someone offered him a hand, but there was no reaction. I gave the verbal conclusion that this was no disguised person, but a wild man of some kind. Then I returned to my unit and never heard of him again."

In *Sasquatch: the Apes Among Us*, John Green quotes from Sanderson, as provided here. René Dahinden in his *Sasquatch* gives a full account based on a letter from Bayanov with the Soviet article mentioned.

Dr. Grover Krantz and Dr. Jeff Meldrum do not mention Karapetian in their books. I think they reasoned that this particular Russian hominoid had nothing to do with sasquatch so no need to mention the account, no matter how credible it might have been.

They were both wrong, of course, because full proof of one relict hominoid would naturally increase the credibility of others. Both Krantz and Meldrum went to Russia and could have looked into the Karapetian event. As PhD anthropologists, I believe they would have had

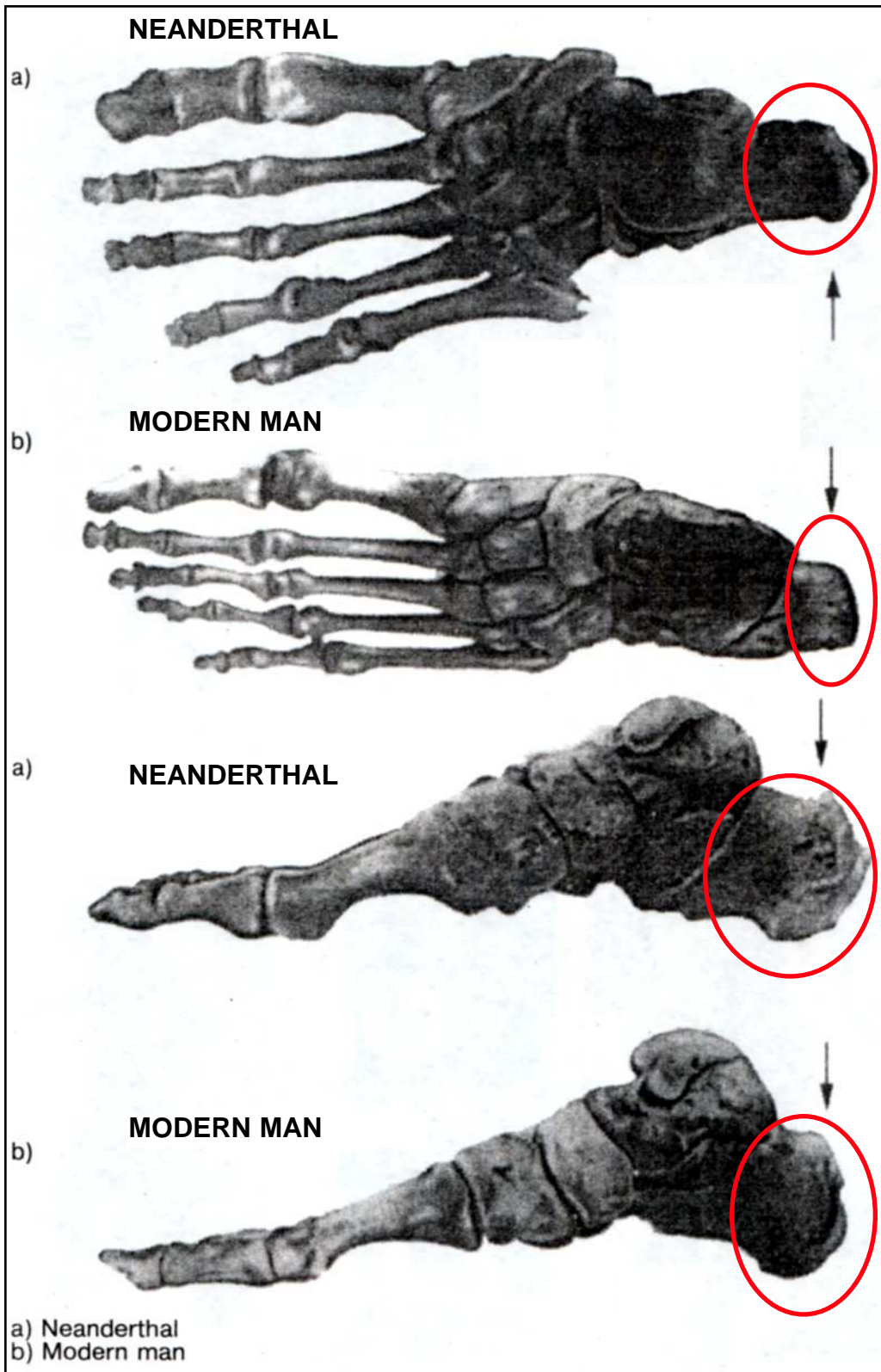
access to records in Moscow, perhaps shedding a little more light on the event. To my knowledge, this was not done. There are obviously other factors involved here. One of them may be the strong inference that this hominoid was a human being just like us. Both Krantz and Meldrum did not, or don't like, that connection; nor did Green, but he was more liberal in his writing. As to Dahinden, he went with the Russian flow and actually met with Karapetian and likely got his personal thoughts—now lost with all Dahinden's papers, if they indeed still exist.

Whatever the case, we have to wonder why the Russian scientists did not try to do more; find the remains, for example. Indeed, this may be applied to the entire situation of hominology in Russia. I believe the short answer is, people just don't have the money, and that includes all the professionals. When the decision is food on the table or shoes for the kids, well, to hell with hominology.

Dmitri Bayanov tried very hard to get scientists in North America to do something about hominology. I once asked why he did not concentrate on Russian scientists. He told me things were far worse in Russia than in North America. In other words, there was absolutely no use trying to work with Russian scientists. As I have stated, money is likely the main factor. Generally speaking, you need to do everything yourself; getting funding is difficult, if not impossible.

The bottom line on the Karapetian event is that a medical doctor and high ranking military officer came forward and told us that he personally examined a Russian hominoid. He provided a detailed report and was not apparently afraid of being criticized and harassed by his peers and superiors.

Now, you have to consider that this is either not enough for North American scientists (i.e., the Smithsonian or National Geographic) or they simply just don't care. I am torn between the two, but am leaning towards the latter. Such institutions are "public driven" and it does not appear that the public is that interested in hominology.



At one point in the mid 1990's, René Dahinden directed my attention to frame 72 of the P/G film as shown above and said, "You can see that the left foot heel is extended due to film motion blur, can't you?" I simply said yes. It was obvious to me that the foot was moving and this causes what we call "motion blur."

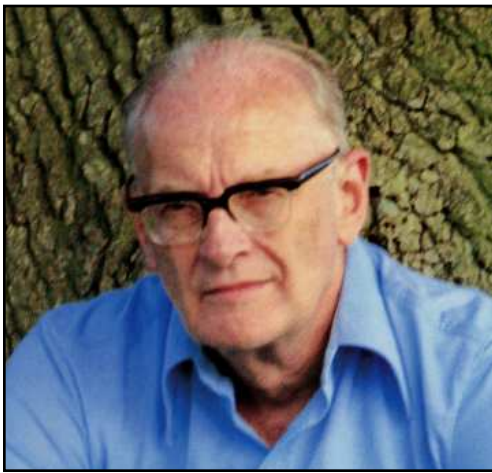
This is a bit odd because as early as 1973 he had acknowledged in the first edition of his book, *Sasquatch*, the findings of Bayanov and Burtsev, that the extended heel of the P/G film subject was similar to the heel of the speculated Neanderthal foot (i.e., not motion blur). Dahinden used the images shown on the left in his book as did Bayanov in his 1997 book, *America's Bigfoot: Fact Not Fiction*. I used the images from Bayanov's book.

I don't know what happened as to René's change of mind. It could be that he did not understand things. It is not properly explained in either of his book editions (1973 and 1993).

The overall and underlying inference is that there may be a relationship between sasquatch and Neanderthal, which was definitely very human-like. It is believed that we (*Homo sapiens*) eradicated the Neanderthal because they competed with us. Nevertheless, Neanderthal reconstructions definitely don't look like sasquatch, but that does not preclude a distant relationship of some sort. —00—



In addition to frame 72 of the P/G film, frame 323, seen on the left, indicates an extended heel. It does not appear to be as pronounced as what is seen in frame 72, but this is likely camera angle. There is definitely no motion blur in the film frame. I would say that the Neanderthal foot is very similar.



Arthur C. Clarke (1917–2008) was one of the most famous explorers and authors of the unexplained during the last century. He is shown here in the frontispiece of the book, *Arthur C. Clarke's Mysterious World*, by Simon Welfare and John Fairley, 1980. The book is based on Clarke's experiences and vast knowledge on unexplained subjects. After a fairly detailed presentation entitled, "The Missing Ape Man," Clarke comments on the subject are as follows:

Arthur C Clarke comments:

Personally, I would take reports of contemporary apemen more seriously if there were not so many of them, and in such heavily populated places. But if 'Bigfoot' *does* exist, I would like to propose an open season for shooting those people who want to shoot him—even in the name of science. . . .

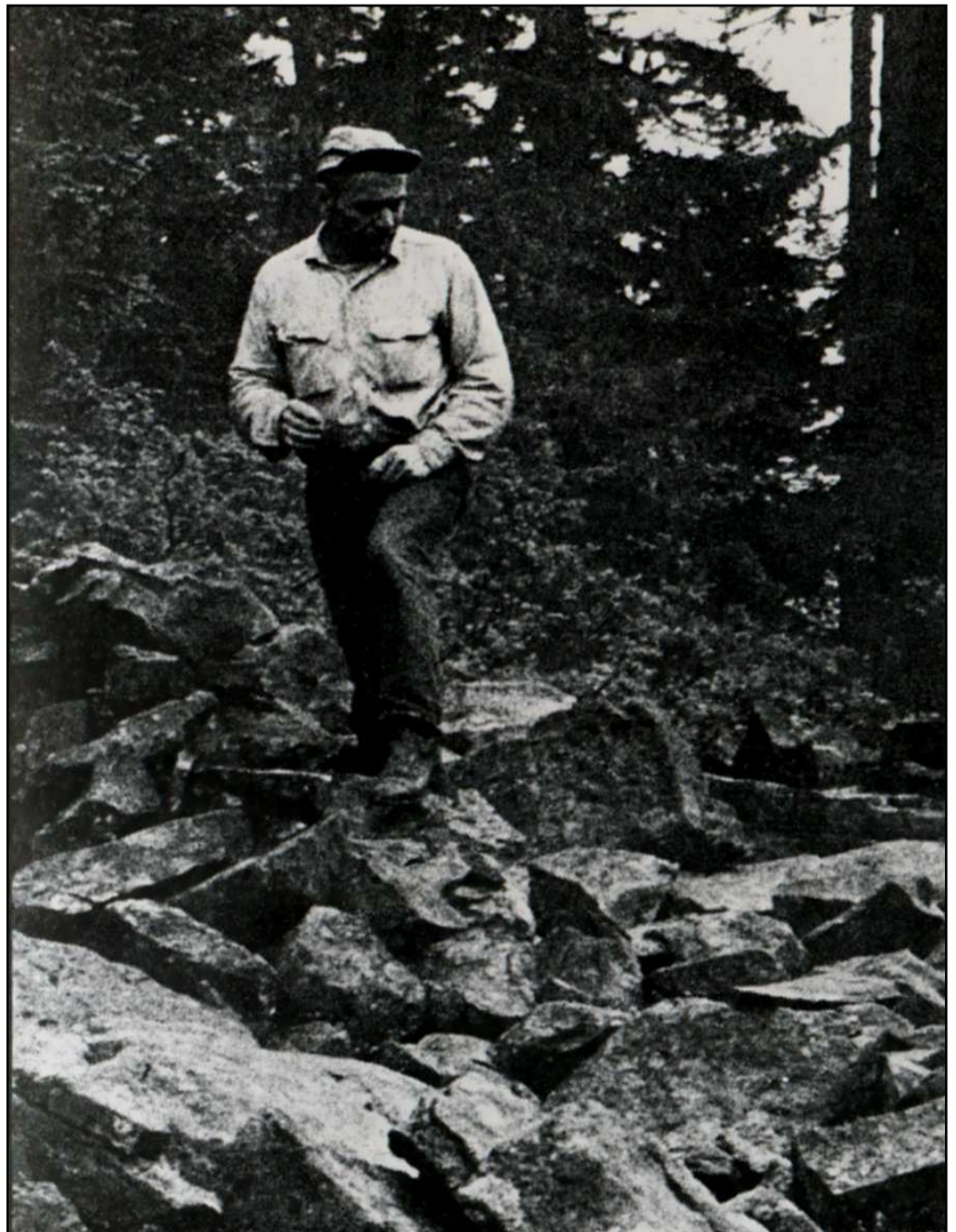
Although there is nothing impossible in the idea that some of our remote ancestors might have survived down to quite recent times, the sad fate of the Tasmanian and other aborigines suggests that it is rather unlikely. The Tasmanians were members of our own species; and where are they now?

Yet we may have missed the Neanderthals by only a few centuries, not by millennia. For many years I have been intrigued by a Ceylonese legend that could be interpreted in this manner. The island's shy, forest-dwelling Veddas, who until recently* lived a virtually Stone Age existence, tell stories of conflict with even more primitive, ape-like creatures who were able to talk but did not possess fire. The last of these man-apes, so the Veddas claim, were driven into a cave and then suffocated by fires built outside it.

This is supposed to have happened only a few lifetimes ago. So, just possibly, somewhere in the remote jungles of Sri Lanka, there may be a cave holding bones that would revolutionize the science of anthropology. . . .

* A few are still around. They grab their bows and arrows and hide their transistor radios when they hear the tourist busses approaching.

I could not find anything on the "ape-like creatures" mentioned, so just another little mystery. —00—

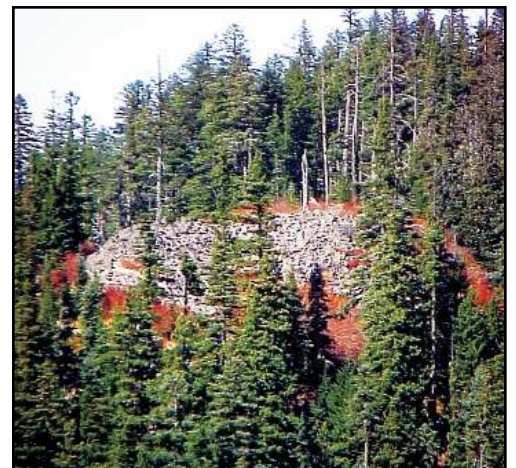


Glenn Thomas is seen here at the natural rock pile, near Estacada, Oregon, where he witnessed three sasquatch foraging for food in 1967. He is quoted as follows:

I was screened by the trees, but through them I could see those three huge figures digging in a rock pile. They looked just like Bigfoot is supposed to: hairy, huge hands and very powerfully built. There was a big one with a female and a young one. They were lifting rocks out, the big male one, and digging down all of 6 or 7 feet. Then the male reached down and took out a nest of rodents and ate them.

Glenn provided highly detailed information on the event, which I and

many other authors have provided in books. It appears Glenn was in the forest at the back of him, or on either side. The following photo shows the rock pile from a distance.



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