A CUBAN CHIMPANZEE¹

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Translated from the Spanish by C. S. Rossy²

In a notable report on "The order of the Primates. an anatomical parallel between man and apes" (Paris, 1877), Broca, in discussing the phenomena of gestation and the evolution of certain parts of the foetal membranes in the Primates, states that in this connection one can say very little about the anthropoid apes, because these animals do not reproduce themselves in captivity, and that "the little that is known of them has been observed from some female killed while in gestation." For this reason, the procreation and birth of a chimpanzee in Cuba constitutes a scientific event worthy of registration in the annals of natural science. According to our knowledge, it is the first time that an anthropoid ape has been born in captivity. The following data have been obtained concerning the family of the anthropoid ape to which we refer.

Jimmy, the father, came from London to Havana in 1914. This adult chimpanzee, 11 to 12 years of age, measures in height 1 meter and 13 centimeters. He is irascible and wild.

Cucusa, the mother, an adult chimpanzee from Sierra Leona, 12 to 14 years of age, is a beautiful specimen of anthropoid ape. She measures 1 meter and 30 centimeters, and her thoracic perimeter reaches 90 centimeters. Cucusa had previously indulged in amorous relations with Chimpí, a chimpanzee which lived in the park of the "Quinta Palatino," the estate of Dona Sra. Rosalia Abreu, from 1904 to 1914. He was a notable anthropoid on account of his intelligence. Because of certain intimate abnormalities of his physical constitution, Chimpí had no succession. He died at the age of 14 years as the result of acute myelitis, according to the reliable data revealed at an autopsy made by Dr. Raimundo Menocal.

¹ A paper read before the Cuban Society of Natural History, "Felipe Poe y," on October 30, 1915.

² In this translation a few paragraphs which lacked scientific value have been omitted. The original article was published by *El Siglo XX*, Havana.

Lastly, the young chimpanzee, product of the relations between Jimmy and Cucusa, was baptized with the name of Anumá (a Simian divinity of India). It was born on the 27th of April, 1915, a date from now on memorable in the calendar of births of anthropoid apes.

About Jimmy I have very little to say, except in reference to the original posture that this ape takes in the act of reproduction. It is known that even in their most intimate acts the apes show the least possible modesty; and, due to this peculiarity, observers have been able to be present during the act of generation, *coram populo*, and to witness the classic position, *more canum*, in this interesting species of animals. Jimmy, however, presents an exception to this classic position. When this master and lord of the cage experiences ardent desires of possession (and this happens very frequently), he sits on the floor, stretches his legs out close to each other, and strikes the floor with the dorsal side of the hands, the fingers relaxed. This signal must be well known to the female, because, whenever she is surprised by it, she turns her head and, without the slightest vacillation, very passively comes to the male, who is waiting in the posture already described. Then she turns her back to him and sits on his thighs, opening her legs at the same time that she executes a movement of inclination towards Jimmy's feet,—prostrating herself, in other words, in the attitude of a Mussulman praying. During the act, the female remains passive until the end, the male assuming all the active part of the function.

With regard to Cucusa, pregnancy was first suspected in the month of August, 1914, because, at the catamenial period, the genital turgency was moderated while there was also a decrease in the flow of blood. These symptoms were significant, as it is known that at these periods the development of the external genital parts reaches a voluminous size. During this period also, Cucusa's usual joviality disappeared; at the same time, she was losing appetite, showing a certain dislike for food, which was expressed sometimes in actual vomiting.

Soon there could be no doubt as to her true condition, as the mammary glands were becoming more prominent and the abdomen was showing already a sensible volume; furthermore, all signs of catamenia disappeared during the last three months of pregnancy.

This last fact definitely settles the doubt expressed by Broca in his report on the order of the Primates. "Regarding the anthropoids, the question of the catamenial flow has remained doubtful up to the present time, as there has been no occasion to study female adults in captivity." Cucusa, in her normal condition, sometimes has had very abundant losses of blood. Another fact which should be mentioned, being of interest to naturalists, is that, contrary to what is observed in the case of most mammals, sexual relations between Jimmy and Cucusa continued during the whole period of gestation, both day and night.

Finally, nine months after the first visible symptoms were observed, Cucusa gave birth to Anumá on the 27th of April, 1915. This event established the duration of gestation of the anthropoids, which up to the present has been unknown, although suspected to be approximately as long as we have indicated.

The parturition of the anthropoid ape must have taken place between 5 and 6 o'clock in the morning, as at 6 o'clock the young ape was first noticed, resting on the contracted legs of the mother and still joined to her by the umbilical cord. His body was completely hairless, with the exception of the head, on which hair was abundant. His eyes were wide open and his gaze indicated bewilderment.

The attitude of the mother at the moment of birth escaped observation. Nevertheless, everything has led us to believe that the obstetric posture of Cucusa was a crouching position, as is the case among other apes.

At 7 o'clock in the morning the umbilical cord appeared separated from the mother, but still adherent to the umbilicus of the young chimpanzee. No one assisted in the severing of the umbilical cord. The placental extremity, together with pieces of the membrane and two clots of blood, was found on the

mattress on which the mother was lying. In one of these clots, the eminent histologist of the faculty of medicine, Dr. Valentín Castanedo, discovered a placental cotyledon, which was shown in the preparation presented to the "Sociedad Pocy." It is regrettable that we have not been able to obtain the placenta in this case, as very little is known concerning the placentae of the anthropoid apes.

(The author here quotes a statement from Madame Louise Toussaint³ regarding the custom among apes of eating part of the placenta after parturition, and then severing the umbilical cord.)

Bouchacourt⁴ emphasizes the fact that all animals after parturition eat their placentae, just as the birds eat the shells of the eggs after the hatching of the young.

We are, therefore, led to believe that Cucusa ate the placenta, as all other apes (monkeys) have done which have given birth to young in the park of the "Quinta Palatino"

During the first two days after parturition; Cucusa, somewhat fatigued, often lay down on her back. She lost very little blood. From the third day, she could easily climb to the board which was fastened high above her bed and which served as a resting place. Lactation began on the second day. Sixteen days after birth; that is, on the 13th of May, there was a normal return of catamenia with an abundant flow for twenty-four hours, but without external genital turgency.

The umbilical cord, dry and flattened, continued to adhere to Anumá for approximately thirty-six hours after birth. We took care to preserve it and find that it measures 70 centimeters. Through the examination of Dr. V. Castanedo we have learned that it contains the normal human constituents.

When Anumá was two months old four incisors appeared, two in the upper jaw and two in the lower jaw. During the third month the remaining incisors developed and, during the fourth month, four molars followed.

Anumá is at present six months old and measures in height 53 centimeters. The circumference of the head is 33 centimeters and the thoracic perimeter is 37 centimeters.

³ Toussaint, Louise. *Causeries d'une accoucheuse*. Paris, 1910.

⁴ Carnot, Dr. Paul. *Opoterapia*. Paris, 1911.