

ROSALIE

The brazilian female monkey of Charcot

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ABSTRACT - Jean-Martin Charcot, the father of Neurology, a very austere and reserved man that did not express affection freely for human being, had a profound affection to animals, particularly to a small female monkey, called "Rosalie", which came from Brazil and was a gift of Dom Pedro II to Charcot.

KEY WORDS: Charcot, female monkey, "Rosalie", Brazil.

Rosalie: a pequenina macaca brasileira de Charcot

RESUMO - Jean-Martin Charcot, considerado o pai da Neurologia, foi um homem de aspecto austero e reservado, que tinha dificuldades de expressar os seus sentimentos para outros seres humanos. Contudo ele tinha profunda afeição por animais, particularmente por uma pequena macaca, chamada de "Rosalie", oriunda do Brasil e que foi um presente dado a ele por Dom Pedro II.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Charcot, macaca, "Rosalie", Brasil.

Jean-Martin Charcot (1825-1893), the father of Neurology, was the first professor of nervous system diseases in a formal way. He studied a vast array of neurological diseases and gave classical description¹ (Fig 1). Charcot created the famous anatomo-clinical method, where he examined the patients and focused on clinical nosography and classification and then, after the patient's death, in the autopsy, he analysed anatomic lesions, both macro- and microscopically².

Despite his studies with human autopsies, Charcot never allowed vivisection of animals at the Salpêtrière's hospital and he had a passionate affection for animals, particularly dogs and a small monkey. Two dogs, "Carlo", the Labrador, and "Sigurd", a big one dog, were close animals, but the favorite pet of Charcot was a small female monkey named "Rosalie"²⁻⁵.

CHARCOT AND "ROSALIE"

Charcot and Dom Pedro II, Brazilian Emperor, were related in both social (close friends) and medical terms (patient-physician relationship). Dom Pedro II had an affection to animals that was deeply shared by Charcot¹⁻⁵. Historical data confirm that

the small female monkey that lived at Charcot's house came from Brazil and was a gift of Dom Pedro II to Charcot³⁻⁷.

Charcot, that was austere and reserved man that did not express affection freely for human being, had a profound affection to this small female monkey, called "Rosalie"². This kind of monkey is very common in Brazil and belongs to *Cebidae* family, *Cebinae* sub-family, probably genus *Cebus* sp or *Cebus apella*. They have peculiar aspect (head and tail) and are very agile jumpers, runners, swinging and leaping through trees. They are very smart, funny, lovely and friendly also⁸ (Fig 2).

According Guillaumin's biography of Charcot, "Rosalie" stayed together to Charcot at table during his meals and Charcot took care of her food, laughed with her, and was delighted when she snatched a nut or a banana from his own plate³. In a paper published by Guillon, after Charcot's death, the author comment: *...Um singe, câline comme une chatte, prope comme um sou. Le patron l'aimait beaucoup et il s'amusait de toutes ses farces. Il lui avait ménagé une place 'à table' coté de lui, sur une chaise d'enfant 'à tablete, et il était ravi quand "Rosalie" lui chipat une noisette ou une*

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Received 3 March 2005. Accepted 29 April 2005.

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Fig 1. Jean-Martin Charcot (1825-1893) (Extracted from <http://webperso.easyconnect.fr/baillement/images/charcot.gif>)

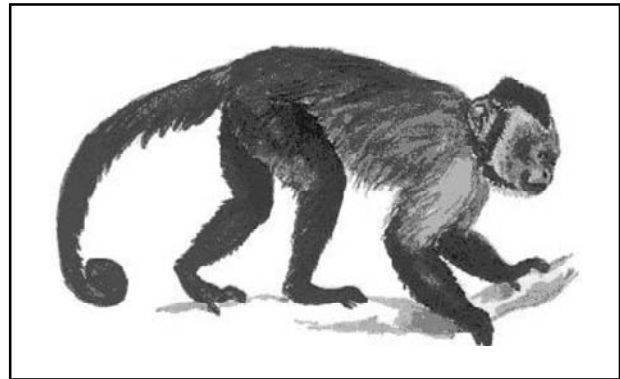


Fig 2. Cebus Apella. Black-capped Capuchin (Extracted from hometown.aol.com/darwinpage/zoo/peru2.htm).

*friandise dans son assiette, ou, observant le moment où on ne la regardait pas, allait du bout de sa queue prévaler une banana dans un compotier. Et alors le patron riait, de ce rire silencieux qui secouait ses joues, sa poitrine et toute sa personne et qui animait et éclairait subitement son regard habituellement concentré...*⁴.

In his famous book about Charcot, Goetz, Bonduelle and Gelfand comments a tale recalled by Charcot granddaughter, about the affair with the small female monkey during a dinner in Charcot's house, with the presence of several famous persons, including the Grand Duke of Russia. "Rosalie" dismantled the dinning room (a elaborate fruit decoration in the dining room centerpiece), but Charcot and the guest friends maintained a good sense of humor².

In conclusion, Charcot, that was austere and reserved man that did not express affection freely for human being. Had a profound affection to animals, particularly to a small female monkey, called "Rosalie", that came from Brazil and was a gift of Dom Pedro II to Charcot²⁻⁷.

Acknowledgment - The authors thanks to Professor Rogério Ribas Lange (Faculdade de Medicina Veterinária da UFPR, Curitiba/PR), Professor José Américo de Oliveira (Faculdade de Odontologia de Araçatuba/SP), Professor Luiz A. de Lima Rezende (UNESP, Botucatu/SP), Professor Andrew J. Lees (National Hospital for Neurology and Neurosurgery, Queen Square, London, UK) and Professor Christopher G. Goetz (Rush University Medical Center, Chicago, IL, USA).

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