

Professor Dr. Dr. h.c. Dietrich STARCK (1908-2001) –  
Eine Betrachtung seines Werkes in Hinblick auf die Entwicklung  
der Primatologie in Deutschland im Zeitraum 1950 bis 1990

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The topic of my master thesis was the investigation of the life and work of Dietrich STARCK with regard to the development of the discipline of primatology in Germany between 1950 and 1990. Until now, there is no work dealing comprehensively with the development and trends of primatology in an historiographical approach. In the German-speaking area, the development of primatology is indispensably connected with the most important comparative anatomist and morphologist of the post-war period, STARCK. He recognized earlier than others the meaning of Primatology and influenced it significantly. Although STARCK was internationally established as a primatologist since 1950, he is hardly cited today in the English-speaking literature.

Since the 1950s, STARCK was important as an editor of the *Primatologia. Handbuch der Primatologie*, as the president of the *Internationale Primatologen Gesellschaft* (IPS) and as the organizer of the first IPS congress in 1966 in Frankfurt/Main. Essential comparative-anatomical “building blocks” in Primatology are linked with the name of STARCK. But since the late 1970s, when he retired, there was demand no further reception of his work.

STARCK’s morphological research today has only insignificant influence on primatology today, but his work on neencephalisation and the fetalisation-problem attracts its due acknowledgement still today.

My work consisted basically in an intensive and critical assessment of Starck as the most important German exponent of the science of primatology and the contextualisation of his position with regard to the beginning, growing and decline of German primatology during his scientific activity.

In my work, I could reveal the trichotomy of STARCK’s primatological activities:

- education and advancement of young professionals
- editorial activities
- organisation and institutionalisation of primatology

Combining expert knowledge within the bounds of the “Kulturganzen” with the interaction between the disciplines distinguishes the work of STARCK. The importance of primatology as a main facet in the work of STARCK is beyond doubt.

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