

# Where Do We Come From?

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From the moment men first began to contemplate their world, three questions have occupied the human mind: Where do we come from? What are we? Where are we going? Artists (notably Paul Gauguin), religious thinkers, philosophers and, most recently, scientists have all searched for answers. This book describes molecular evidence for human descent from the first single-celled organisms all the way to the emergence of Homo sapiens. After distinguishing myth from science, the authors introduce molecular evolution and the molecular approach to the study of human origins and draw conclusions about human identity.

Unique features of this book include:

- \* A concentration on information provided by molecules, first and foremost nucleic acids, unlike most books on evolution, which focus solely on testimony provided by archeology.
- \* Clear explanations of difficult concepts, including mathematical formulas, thus allowing readers to understand without prior knowledge of the subject.
- \* Over 120 detailed figures, illustrations and tables that enhance the text.
- \* A glossary of terms that are highlighted in the text.
- \* Sources for further reading and reference.

The authors describe how scientists decipher human origin from the record encrypted in the DNA and protein molecules, and point out the limitations of ancient DNA analysis. They deal with the concept of race from the point of view of what is now known about human variability, and distinguish between views colored by "political correctness" and views based on objective evaluation of the data. Finally, the book warns the reader that knowledge of man's place on the Tree of Life can change our philosophical and ethical perspective, and considers what the future of the human race may entail.

作者介绍:

Jan Klein is a Czech-American immunologist, best known for his work on the major histocompatibility complex (MHC). He was born in 1936 in Stemplovec, Opava, Czech Republic. He graduated from the Charles University at Prague, in 1955, and received his M.S. (Magna Cum Laude) in Botany from the same school in 1958. He was a teacher at the Neruda High School in Prague from 1958 to 1961. He received his Ph.D. in Genetics from the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences in 1965, and moved to Stanford University as a postdoctoral fellow the same year. He became assistant professor in 1969, and associate professor in 1973 at the University of Michigan. He assumed the position of professor at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical School in 1975. From 1977 to his retirement in 2004, he was the Director of the Max-Planck-Institut für Biologie at Tübingen, Germany. He is currently a Frances R. and Helen M. Pentz Visiting Professor of Science and Adjunct Professor of Biology at the Pennsylvania State University.

Naoyuki Takahata(高畑 尚之, たかはた なおゆき、1946年9月 - )は、日本の集団遺伝学者。総合研究大学院大学の学長、教授。1946年に名古屋で生まれる。1971年京都大学理学部化学科卒、1973年同大学大学院修士課程修了、1977年九州大学大学院理学研究科博士課程を修了、同年より国立遺伝学研究所研究員、1986年同助教授。1992年、総合研究大学院大学に教授として着任、研究科長と副学長を経て

2008年より同大学長。中立説の立場で遺伝学を研究、特に理論集団遺伝学者として多くの研究成果を出した。ミトコンドリアDNA配列などの遺伝情報を元にした集団遺伝学理論、そして主要組織適合抗原 (MHC) 遺伝子の対立遺伝子の歴史を追う系図学理論を構築した研究により遺伝子系図学理論の発展に貢献した。このほか分子時計に関する理論的研究等、一般的な分子進化機構の解明などにも携わる。また理論的な研究ばかりでなく、これらの理論を使い特にヒトの進化に関する数々の研究成果を上げられた。ヒト多型データの解析から人類のアフリカ単一起源説を支持するほかヒト及びその祖先において集団構造の推定の研究は独創的である。最近では生物と環境との相互作用の問題にも視野を広げ、偽遺伝子の研究等を行っている。

1986年日本遺伝学会奨励賞、2002年アメリカ芸術科学アカデミー(The American Academy of Arts and Sciences)外国人名誉会員、2003年日本遺伝学会賞・木原賞、2006年日本進化学会賞・木村賞 など。

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