

# Ernst Haeckel, Image of Human Evolution (1907)

## Abstract

Ernst Haeckel was a biologist, naturalist, and physician who did as much as anyone to popularize Darwin's evolutionary theories in Germany. A friend to controversy, he antagonized religious communities in particular with his in-your-face arguments about the verifiable foundations of evolution and the incompatibility of faith-based doctrines regarding the natural world. In this image of human evolution taken from Haeckel's 1907 book *The Human Problem and Linné's Primates*, we see a depiction of embryonic change in three mammals: a bat, a gibbon ape, and a human being. The image works to collapse the ontological distance between humans and other animals that exist on the same developmental tree, a collapse that was still resisted by religious believers who took the Bible literally.

## Source



Source: Ernst Haeckel, *Das Menschenproblem und die Herrentiere von Linné*. Frankfurt am Main: Neuer Frankfurter Verlag, 1907, Plate III. Universitäts- und Stadtbibliothek Köln. Available online at:

<http://www.ub.uni-koeln.de/cdm/ref/collection/stueber/id/1176>

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