

international effects of the spread of SARS is, of course, recognized and described adroitly; so is the important role played by dissenters brave enough to speak out against the Chinese government's initial attempts to hide the scale of the problem. Yet, in this story the medical and scientific communities (both the national and international chapters of these associations) appear too monolithic, their different parts perfectly synchronised all the time. It would have been nice to have known about the situation of particular departments, their laboratory groups and the international agencies they worked with before the SARS crisis struck; after all, information about their pecking order, in terms of political and economic importance, within larger organizational structures would have left us better informed about how the outbreak helped legitimize the role of particular people and agencies, as well as the level of prestige and power bestowed on them in the long term. That said, I am certain justice will be done to this important book by legions of historians in years to come.

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Photographic regional atlas of bone disease: a guide to pathologic and normal variation in the human skeleton, 2nd ed., Springfield, ILL, Charles C Thomas, 2005, pp. xiv, 297, illus. 234, \$69.95 (hardback 0-398-07539-5); \$49.95 (paperback 0-398-07540-9).

Photographic regional atlas of bone disease is a revised edition of Robert W Mann and Sean P Murphy's book *Regional atlas of bone disease* published in 1990. This new version has replaced some of the drawings with black and white photographic images, allowing the reader a better visual understanding of the bony variations described. The book serves as an introduction aimed at physical anthropologists, whether in the field of archaeology or forensic science, it offers

insight into the history of palaeopathology followed by a guide on points to be considered before and during the recording of physical remains. It addresses the need for familiarity with the processes of bone formation and remodelling in order to understand how certain conditions develop and how best to interpret them. The authors stress throughout how the variations in appearance of subadult and adult bones must be understood to avoid misinterpretation of porotic conditions in subadult human remains. They also look at the normal variations within an adult population.

The book concentrates on methods of description and the meaning of osteological terminology in order to ensure that the correct terms are used during recording. It also studies the distinction between non-metric variations (non-pathological variations) and pathological conditions in the individual bones. As there is a distinct lack of published literature covering the descriptions and possible interpretations of non-metric traits, this book fills a long-standing gap and will be useful to both experienced and novice osteologists alike.

The discussion on bony variation and pathological conditions has been divided into skeletal elements starting with the skull followed by the spine, ribs, pelvis, upper body and lower body. The idea behind this format works, as it enables the researcher to look up specific areas of the skeleton rather than having first to consider why the changes occurred and then to search through the many available pathological textbooks to find a description that matches that of the skeletal element researched. The book also provides a breakdown of the historical and geographical background on a number of pathological conditions including fungal infections and treponematoses. A breakdown of more complex conditions such as tumours is expanded in chapter 8, whilst the distinction between peri- and post-mortem fracture patterns are discussed in chapter 9.

The introductory chapter is written by one of the most distinguished scholars in the field of palaeopathology, Professor Donald J Ortner,

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who outlines the book's scope and limitations. He quite rightly discusses the problem of multifocal pathologies, which are severely limited by the regional approach presented in this book. Having established the possible cause of skeletal change and whether it is indeed pathological and not a non-metric variation, a researcher would therefore be prudent to complement Mann and Hunt's descriptions by consulting more comprehensive books dedicated to pathological conditions. A wide ranging list of recommended literature is provided for this very purpose.

A series of illustrations of annotated complete skeletons showing, from different angles, the main muscle attachments to the skeleton is included. The drawings are somewhat crude, but serve as an overview that can be followed up by more detailed literature on the subject.

Great emphasis has been placed on the interpretation of the conditions noted and on how, in the past, erroneous interpretations were made through a lack of understanding and an absence of solid research techniques. The authors stress that research in modern clinical literature may help to explain, and aid the understanding of, the patterns which occur in past populations. They offer examples and references to work carried out on different skeletal conditions.

As a fundamental overview of the skeleton, Mann and Hunt's book should be available to all novice osteologists. It is certainly a work I wish had been available to me during my university degree and primary years in the field as an osteoarchaeologist.

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Miguel de Asúa and Roger French, *A new world of animals: early modern Europeans on the creatures of Iberian America*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2005, pp. xviii, 257, illus., £50.00 (hardback 0-7456-0779-8).

This publication, which focuses on European depictions of New World animals in

the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, is unique in the history of science and the history of the Americas. Although other histories exist of European interpretations of Iberian American natural history, often focusing on the eighteenth-century "dispute of the New World", this is the first devoted exclusively to the depiction of animals in the pre-Enlightenment period. It is carefully researched, clearly written, and includes a valuable primary source bibliography of many of the most important early modern European texts dealing with Iberian American nature. Each account also begins with a detailed discussion of the author and text examined, further contributing to the book's value as a reference work.

A new world of animals begins with a brief introduction that lays out the chronology of the text as well as an important theme of the book: the Aristotelian and Plinian models for describing animals that many of the writings followed in the early years of discovery, and then moved away from in later centuries. It then goes on to survey various texts that treated the subject of New World animals, moving in a roughly chronological order from the late fifteenth century to the end of the seventeenth. Chapters are organized by the type of sources examined: the first one focuses on accounts from the earliest explorers such as Columbus, Vespucci, and Cabral; the second turns to mainly soldiers' accounts of New World animals, as well as indigenous descriptions and interpretations of them. These accounts, for Asúa and French, make up a first phase of animal descriptions that they call the "jigsaw-puzzle" approach, in which the writer deals with the newness of the animal by "decomposing" it into various parts and comparing each part with that of an animal known to Europeans (p. 14).

Chapter 3 turns to the more academic and learned accounts of animals in the Americas, such as the natural and moral histories of Oviedo and Acosta as well as the chronicles of members of the Spanish court. These works constitute a second phase