



OBITUARY: DENISE FEREMBACH (1924 – 1994)

Denise Ferembach, one of the representatives of French anthropology well-known among her European colleagues, died in Paris on January 8, 1994. In 1961 she attended (together with Profs. V. Correnti and G. Olivier) the 5th Congress of Czechoslovak Anthropologists in Mikulov, and there met specialists from Czechoslovakia and other Central and Eastern European countries. She kept these professional and personal contacts alive until the end of her life.

In today's changed political situation it is difficult to conceive the value and importance of these contacts, which represented an exceptional opportunity for communication among specialists during the era of the so-called cold war. Denise Ferembach was, moreover, outstanding for her sense of friendly cooperation. These qualities of hers won her a place in the memory of an entire generation of Central and Eastern European anthropologists.

In 1951 she defended her *diplôme d'étude supérieures* in Natural Sciences with a thesis on the dentition of anthropomorphs. She attained a doctorate in 1956, and in 1973 became head of the *Laboratoire d'Anthropologie Biologique*. She was a honorary member of the European Anthropological Association, and her scientific work (over 200 titles) received, among other honours, a prize from the French anthropological society Broca (1956), a medal from the *Comité National de la Recherche Scientifique* (1956), the *Aleš Hrdlička Medal* (1979) and an award from the European Anthropological Association (1990). At the core of the wide array of work she published, are the paleoanthropological problems of the Mediterranean region. Together with J. Dastugue and J. M. Poitrat-Targowla she studied the epipaleolithic burial site at Taforalt in Morocco. Her work on skeletons from Moita do Sebastião, Muge, Portugal and a number of other studies were focused on the anthropology of the Mesolithic and Upper Paleolithic. In 1981 she published *Les Processus de l'Homínisation: L'évolution humaine, les faits, les modalités*, the product of an international colloquium organized by CNRS. In 1986 followed *L'Homme, son Évolution, sa Diversité*, written in collaboration with C. Suzanne and M. C. Chamla, a publication which represents a summary of the anthropological knowledge of its time.

A sense of the loss of a rare individual lingers in the anthropological community.

J. Jelínek

Xth EUROPEAN MEETING OF THE PALEOPATHOLOGY ASSOCIATION IN GÖTTINGEN 1994

In the 21st year of existence of the Paleopathology Association its tenth jubilee European meeting was organized by M. Schultz and a group of his nine colleagues from the Georg-August-University in the Anatomie Zentrum in Göttingen, from 29th August to 3rd September 1994. It was backed up by a scientific committee composed of 27 members representing 14 European, 3 American and one Middle East country (Israel). S. P. Berg of Göttingen, E. G. Cockburn of Detroit, H. Grimm of Berlin and H. Schadeewald of Düsseldorf were in the honorary committee. The meeting was attended by about 200 participants from European and extra-European countries.

Except for the first day, when the opening session started after the registration at 9.30, the other days of the week the program started at 8.30 and lasted with a lunch break (12.30 – 14) till about 19 o'clock. There were no parallel sessions, but all oral presentations were delivered in single plenary sessions, each paper lasting 15–20 minutes and allowing time for a short discussion. Five special half-hour sessions were reserved to oral commentaries to more than 50 posters. This good organisation contributed to the convenience of the participants.

In an one-hour opening session there were speeches by professor Schulz, the organizer, professor E. Rüther, the Dean of

the Medical Faculty, Eve G. Cockburn, the president of the Paleopathology Association, professor H. Schadeewaldt, a famous German medical historian, and professor S. P. Berg, a leading German specialist in forensic medicine. A special homage was delivered to the late Dr. Paul A. Janssens, one of the founders of modern European paleopathology.

Altogether more than 80 oral presentations were delivered. Half of them were arranged into sessions called "general paleopathology" which contained papers on methodology or theory, forensic cases, medical history and trephinations, case studies and etiology, as well as population studies and epidemiology. This was a too large and heterogenous grouping which could have been easily subdivided e. g. according to the mentioned themes, or according to groups of diseases, similarly as was the second half of papers, where independent sessions on diseases of the joints, teeth and tooth sockets, tumours, diseases in mummies and mummified tissue, ancient DNA and diseases in infancy and childhood, were organized. Especially the last two sections were well represented by 8 and 9 papers respectively, stressing thus their novelty and significance. A rather high prevalence of meningeal reactions found in children of medieval populations was a surprise for several of the attending paleopathologists.

The oral and poster presentations were complemented by various other activities as a paleopathology quiz, in which the interested specialists had to try their diagnostic abilities in sets of 20 cranial and 20 postcranial osseous changes. Unfortunately, all were on isolated bones, which were not in connection with the remaining parts of the skeletons, and thus the determination recalled efforts of older palaeopathologists or situations with extremely poor preservation of the material. Video films on recent trephinations in East Africa, on three-dimensional X-rays, on wrappings of a mummy and on an interesting case of mycotic osteomyelitis of the spine, revealed by the referee, were a pleasant change at the end of some sessions. A few Egyptian mummies in their coffins from the collection of the Zentrum Anatomie or from the Senckenberg Museum in Frankfurt were demonstrated by M. Schulz. The most exciting day, however, was Friday 2nd September, when seven workshops were organised. The first was actually a general lecture on microscopic techniques used in palaeopathology, the second was devoted to scanning-electron microscopy of tumours in ancient bones, the third on light microscopy of the same disease and the fourth on radiological diagnoses in paleopathology. The fifth workshop concerned diseases in infancy and childhood, the sixth joint diseases, and the seventh diseases of the teeth and tooth sockets. All workshops were organized by M. Schulz in collaboration with specialists from Göttingen or abroad.

The social program of the meeting was also rich and variegated. There was an unofficial get-together of the participants who came already at the eve of the meeting, the Göttingen Lord Mayor reception in the historical Old Town Hall in the heart of the ancient town, a reception followed by a congress dinner in one of the finest restaurants on the outskirts of the city, a meeting of members of the Paleopathology Association and visits to the Institute of Anthropology of the Göttingen University as well as to the Blechschmidt collection of human embryos in the Zentrum Anatomie. Moreover, those who were interested could take part in a Saturday 3rd September excursion to Hildesheim for visits of the Roemer-Pelizaeus Museum with its interesting Ancient Egyptian, Chinese and Peruan exhibitions, of the largely reconstructed historic centre of the city and of its castle Plesse.

The tremendous work in preparing such a large, long-lasting, extremely well organized congress, richly endowed with social program, by M. Schulz and his colleagues should be highly appreciated and thanked. Future organizers of European paleopathology meetings will have to face this high standart which will not be easy to reach or to surpass.

Eugen Strouhal