



14th EUROPEAN MEETING OF THE PALEOPATHOLOGY ASSOCIATION IN COIMBRA, PORTUGAL, AUGUST 28–31, 2002

Professor Eugénia Cunha, Director of the Department of Anthropology, Faculty of Science and Technology, University of Coimbra, and her active and efficient organizing and volunteers committees, were the hosts of the recent meeting of European members of the Paleopathology Association. The event took place in the rectorial auditory of the University of Coimbra, Portugal. Four lectures (on history of human pathogens by O. Dutour, on extraction of ancient DNA by A. Cooper and T. Gilbert, on examination of preserved corpses by C. Rodriguez-Martin, and on paleopathology in the next 40 years by D. Ortner) as well as a round-table (on nomenclature in paleopathology by L. Capasso) were presented.

About 50 oral presentations were offered in thematically arranged plenary sessions (1. on infectious diseases, 2. on populations studies, 3. on various pathologies, 4. on auxiliary techniques to human skeletal analysis, 5. on mummy analysis, 6. on dental studies, 7. on present and future paleopathology, and 8. on human activities reflected in occupational stress markers, joint disease and trauma). An additional 16 oral presentations were grouped into two parallel symposia, one on population studies of paleopathology in the UK, the other on paleopathological analyses of the Moche "Giants" from Prehistoric Peru.

About 80 posters were arranged under identical topics with addition of zoopathology, neoplastic conditions, congenital diseases, metabolic diseases, forensic cases and skeletal collections contributing to paleopathology.

Scientific sessions were well directed and kept by their respective presidents. The single drawback was the time of presentations including discussion limited to 15 minutes, which often caused cuts and cancellations of discussion.

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A rich social program was prepared by the organizers – it started with a welcome party in the rose garden of the Department of Anthropology on August 27, continued through common dinners on the three working days of the meeting, reception at the City Hall on August 28, excursion to the Roman site and museum of Conimbriga and to the Bucaco National Forest on August 30, and culminated with a reception at S. Marcos Palace in the countryside outside Coimbra on August 31. During it, prizes for best students' works were awarded by the Institute of Bioarchaeology, and Fados melodies were performed by *Grupo de Fados Aeminium* (= the Roman name of Coimbra). During the sessions, optional excursions were organized to visit monuments of Coimbra, the halls, chapel and library of the old University of Coimbra and the collections and museum of the Department of Anthropology.

The meeting proved the steadily rising level of research in European pathology. From the high number of almost 200 participants, most came from 17 European countries (mostly from Portugal, Spain, Italy and the UK), about 28 from over-sea (mostly from the USA and Canada, but also from South America and New Zealand). Eastern Europe was represented by Hungary, Croatia, Lithuania, as well as the Czech and Slovak Republics.

Excellent work of the organizing and scientific committees has to be highly appreciated. It was well reflected in the smooth course of the meeting or in the excellently produced book of abstracts. The only drawback was the timing of the meeting whose last day overlapped with the first day of the Congress of European Anthropologists in Zagreb. Moreover, air travel between the two distant localities necessitated at least another day. Therefore, several anthropologists had to choose only one of these two important meetings. There were only a few who decided to be present at least partly in both. The next European paleopathological meeting has been scheduled for Durham, United Kingdom, in 2004.

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