



PALEOPATHOLOGY AND PHYSICAL ANTHROPOLOGY
AT THE 9th INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS
OF EGYPTOLOGISTS IN GRENOBLE (FRANCE),
SEPTEMBER 6–12, 2004

This huge congress of more than a thousand specialists and amateurs in Egyptology was well organized by professor Jean-Claude Goyon (University of Lyon II), head of the organisation and scientific committee, and the general secretary Christine Cardin (University of Grenoble). They divided the programme consisting of exclusively oral presentations into 14 sections covering all present aspects of the discipline and running in six parallel sessions. The main topics were presented in one or two plenary sessions around noon time.

Section 11 on antique medicine and paleopathology included a contribution by Rosa Dinares Sola on correlation of therapeutic and contraceptive methods described in Ebers and Kahun papyri with iconographic sources, amulets and other archaeological finds. The aim was to establish application and incidence of these methods in the society.

Eva Koleva analysed the expression *Xry mt* (to be in the grasp of death) in magic and literary texts.

Panagiotis Kousoulis spoke about dead entities in living bodies, based on the demonic influence of the dead mentioned in the medical texts. The hostile dead (*mut, metet, metyw*) frequently appear with other hostile subjects – gods and supernatural beings – as causes of diseases.

Renata Tatomir analysed the magic, physiologic and psychological aspects of the eye in Ancient Egypt. It could have had beneficial influence (eyes of Re and Horus) as well as malefic one (eye of an unknown enemy) on individuals.

In distinction to the mentioned lectures based mainly on literary and archaeological sources, Ulrich Weser announced the survival of enzymes in embalmed bones from pharaonic Egypt. These were metalloenzymes, of which the zinc enzyme called alkaline phosphatase proved to be the ideal candidate for survival in the course of mummification. Bone tissue as the least affected by embalming substances appeared to be its most promising source. The enzyme was of electrophoretic homogeneity and immunologically active.

Eugen Strouhal's lecture on anthropological and paleopathological examination of individuals buried in the tomb of Iufaa at Abusir was scheduled as a complement of the communication by Ladislav Bareš "The Saitic-Persian Cemetery at Abusir", included in Section 5 and delivered unfortunately only five days later. Mutual relations of the five individuals found in Iufaa's tomb were analysed morphologically, genetically and epigenetically with the result of establishing blood relationship among Iufaa, his sister Imakhetkherresnet and an anonymous male buried beside her. The other two males, Neko and Gemeneferbak, could be brothers. Among diseases found in these individuals, there was a rare case of sacral neurilemmoma (schwannoma).

Other papers concerning anthropology and paleopathology were scheduled for several other sections. Sonia Zakrzewski analysed six osteological series from Badarian to Middle Kingdom and compared them with the 26th–30th Dynasties series from Giza. She found significant changes in time as skeletal responses to stressors, differing for the two sexes. This contributes to reveal gender relations and social organization.

Abeer El-Adany studied mummies of two females called Merytamun, one the daughter of Ahmosis, the other of Thutmosis III, with regard to their examination by Smith, Derry and Harris. CT scan and DNA analyses are planned for the future.

During excavation of the Western tombs at Deir el-Bersha (Middle Kingdom), the expedition of the Catholic University in Leuven led by Christoph Peters found a further probable case of metastatic carcinoma.

Eugen Strouhal

THE FIFTH WORLD CONGRESS ON MUMMY STUDIES
AT TURIN (ITALY), SEPTEMBER 2–5, 2004

Four years after the successful meeting of specialists in mummy studies in Nuuk, Greenland, they gathered again, this time in the easily accessible old cultural city of Turin. The president of the congress, professor Emma Rabino Massa with her collaborators from the Department of Animal and Human Biology of the Turin University, supported by the organisation and the scientific committees, prepared an excellent three-and-half day congress in the historical halls of the University.

After the opening ceremony, invited lectures on recent micromethods used in mummy studies by Don Brothwell, and on physio-pathology of mummification studied in the burial vault of the Capucin order at Palermo by Ezio Fulcheri, were delivered.

The following programme was divided into eight parts, partly as a plenary session, partly in two parallel sessions.

Symposium 1 on applied technology in mummies comprised 17 communications illustrating the recent methodological progress in investigation, mainly concerning mummies from Ancient Egypt and Nubia.

Symposium 2 on paleopathology and paleoparasitology consisted of 14 contributions, among which the immunological detection of schistosomiasis, identification of ancient *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* complex DNA and detection of *Plasmodium falciparum* aDNA, all in Egyptian mummies, were the highlights. Only four papers concerned non-Egyptian specimens.

Symposium 3 devoted to forensic, hair and teeth with 15 papers substantiated the value of forensic approach to mummy finds and importance of hair and teeth studies for detection of ancient nutrition, disease and other topics.

Symposium 4 on advances of mummy studies in Brazil offered 14 papers. Half of them analysed Egyptian mummies from Brazilian collections, the other half mummies found in Brazil, including the Jivaro shrunken heads.

Symposium 5 on embalming methods and funerary archaeology with its 25 papers, was the longest one. Half of them comprised Ancient Egyptian animal mummies, early attempts of mummification, the use of natron and case reports on the examination of individual mummies. The other half discussed findings in European mummies and bog bodies, Andean and other American mummies as well as mummies from New Caledonia.

Symposium 6 on conservation of mummies and mummies in museums consisted of 18 papers, dealing with mummies in different museums and methods used for their preservation and restoration. Special attention was paid to founding of the international Ancient Egyptian mummy tissue bank and to starting the Anubis Project – census and paleopathology of Egyptian mummies in Italian museums. Among mummies from outside Egypt, a "Saltman" found in a salt mine near Zanjan in Iran in 1994 and mummies from Venice, Palmyra, Tenerife and Bogotá were discussed.

Symposium 7 on mummies and the public was the shortest one with 8 papers dealing with more general and popular aspects.

Symposium 8 on frozen mummies was a kind of introduction for the audience before the scheduled excursion to Bolzano. Of its ten lectures, four were devoted to Andean frozen mummies, 6 to the results of different aspects of study of the Neolithic South Tyrolean "Iceman" (Ötzi, Silian Man) and to the low temperature storage conditions in the South Tyrol Museum of Archaeology at Bolzano.

The congress was complemented by presentations of 23 posters, 10 concerning examination of Egyptian mummies, 13 dealing with mummies from Italy, Hungary, Tenerife, Siberia, Greenland and Brazil.

In the afternoon of the Congress last day, a large group of its participants left for a day-and-half excursion to the South Tyrolean

Museum of Archaeology in Bolzano to visit its exhibits comprising the body of the South Tyrolean "Iceman".

The Congress, attended by more than 200 participants, was perfectly prepared and the scope of the famous warm Italian hospitality proved to be unparalleled. Two opulent dinners and a guided visit of the rich Egyptian Museum of Turin filled up the evenings. Sincere thanks to the organizers!

Eugen Strouhal

15th EUROPEAN MEETING OF THE PALEOPATHOLOGY ASSOCIATION AT DURHAM, U.K., AUGUST 10–14, 2004

The well-known British paleopathologist Charlotte Roberts, who has moved from Bradford University to Durham University after the successful ICEPID congress on leprosy in 2001, organized the regular biennial meeting of the Paleopathology Association (PPA) in her new post, the Department of Archaeology, University of Durham, England, from 10th to 14th August, 2004. She was supported by the local organising committee and an international scientific committee.

The meeting was inaugurated in the evening of 10th August by a representative of the University and Keith Manchester, who mentioned his scientific activities during the forty years of the PPA.

The programme of oral communications during the first two days was divided into thematic sessions as population health, dental disease, trauma, infectious disease, metabolic and endocrine disease and miscellany.

In the morning of the third day, a specialized session under the title "Studies of bioarchaeology in Greece" was organized by Chryssi Bourbou of Crete. It comprised 10 papers, mainly concerning paleopathological topics.

In the afternoon of the same day, Aidan and Eve Cockburn Memorial Session in presence of members of the Cockburn family was chaired by Jane Buikstra. Of its six lectures the one by Donald Ortner was cancelled due to his acute disease.

The contents of 50 posters were discussed during coffee and tea breaks.

The social programme of the meeting consisted of a reception in the Oriental Museum of the University, a dinner sponsored by members of the Cockburn family (for invited guests), and a conference dinner with dance at Durham Townhall. The latter event was introduced by the mayor of Durham. After her, Eugen Strouhal paid a personal tribute to the late Eve Cockburn who acted as an unpaid editor of Paleopathology Newsletter and an informal President of the PPA for almost three decades.

Of the scheduled conference tours, the one to the Hadrian Wall was cancelled, the other to the castle Alnwick took place on 14th August.

As a whole, the meeting was an exciting event, extremely well organized, except for the cast sky, wind and rain during the two first days, which was naturally out of reach of the organizers.

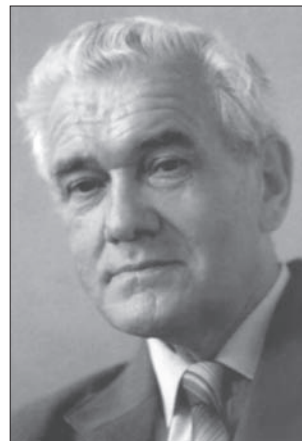
The dates for the next European meeting of the PPA Fira on the Island of Santorini, Greece, have been set to 29th August – 2nd September, 2006.

Eugen Strouhal

OBITUARY

PROF. MUDr. ET RNDr. H.C. EMANUEL VLČEK, DrSc.
MARCH 1, 1925 – OCTOBER 24, 2006

Emanuel Vlček was born March 1, 1925 in Rožmitál pod Třemšínem in the family of a police officer. He graduated from Grammar School in Prague-Smíchov in 1944. Already in his teens he became interested in archaeology and speleology. Until the end of the WWII he worked in the AERO factory. He took an active part in the upheaval of Prague citizens against the Nazi Germans in 1945, was wounded and afterwards



decorated with a War Cross. He enrolled in the Medical Faculty, Charles University in Prague, became a demonstrator at the Institute of Legal Medicine and simultaneously studied Anthropology at the Faculty of Science. He started his scientific work in anthropology by describing a travertine endocranial cast of a skull ascribed to Neanderthal man from Gánovce in east Slovakia; he became internationally famous through his publication "Neanderthals in Czechoslovakia" (in German). He was the first full time anthropologist at the Archaeological Institute in Nitra (SR) and lectured at Comenius University in Bratislava (SR).

He later worked at the Archaeological Institute of the Czechoslovak Academy of Science in Prague. In the course of time he analysed and researched on human fossils deposited at the Musée de l'homme and at the Musée de paléontologie humaine in Paris, those from Weimar, Arago, Verteszelez, Petralona, Bilzingsleben, Kiik Koba, Teshik Tash, Šala I. etc. He studied skeletal remains from Dolní Věstonice, Pavlov, Mladeč and Předmostí u Přerova, and compared their morphology with Upper-Paleolithic finds from various parts of Europe. He ascribed the skeletons from Sungir and Kostienky to the east Brno type. He also anatomically corrected the famous French "Negroid" skull from the Grotte des enfants from Mentone and the "Eskimoid" skull from the department of Dordogne.

Professor Vlček undertook an anatomical study of muscles in the hand of Neanderthal and recent children, took part in an expedition to Mongolia and published a study of the Chalcha Mongols; he also contributed to the issues of determining age from the bones and teeth, and of the thyroid bone.

Since 1955 he studied remains of persons important for the Czech history. In 1967 he founded the Anthropological Department at the National Museum in Prague and in 1977 he made of the study of historically important persons and the development of Man the main research objectives of the museum department which he led until his retirement. He performed medical and anthropological analyses of the Czech kings of the Přemyslid, Luxemburg, Jagiellonian and Habsburg dynasties, as well as of Albrecht of Wallenstein, canonized Hroznata, St. Procopius, composers W. A. Mozart, Bohuslav Martinů and Bedřich Smetana, poet K. H. Mácha, Macedonian king Phillip, and others.

Emanuel Vlček obtained the titles of CSc. (PhD.) in 1962, DrSc. in 1969, *venium docendi* in 1991 and Professor in 1992. The P. J. Šafarik University in Košice (SR) awarded him the title of RNDr. h.c.

He published over 530 scientific publications, including 70 monographs, 140 studies, 170 reports and 23 popularising articles.

Professor Vlček has undoubtedly been one of the main figures in Czech and European anthropology in the second half of the 20th century. He married a colleague from the medical studies. One of his sons is a leading endocrinologist, and the other an economist. Professor Vlček died suddenly at the age of 81 amidst his work on several further monographs. The funeral took place at the Prague-Motol cemetery on November 1, 2006.

Miroslav Prokopec