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Der Archäologe und der Tod: Archäologie und Gerichtsmedizin by Steffen Berg, Renate Rolle, Henning Seemann (Review)

Marshall Joseph Becker

West Chester University of Pennsylvania, mbecker@wcupa.edu

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V, one project: "Neothermal Dalmatia" by Batović and Chapman); Greece (Pt. VI, two projects: Bintliff in Boeotia; Lloyd, Owens, and Roy around Megalopolis in Arcadia) and Libya (Pt. VII, one project: Barker and Jones on the UNESCO Libyan Valleys Survey).

Some of the surveys have a study zone of only a few kilometers square while others consider much larger areas. Accordingly these discussions vary in length and complexity. Many include presentations of the data-acquisition strategies and data-recording methods and forms that were used. Some analysis and interpretation of the data are also given. In this respect the contributions can be viewed as diverse views of the state of the art in archaeological survey. This volume and the broader discussions and abstracts contained in *Archaeological Survey in the Mediterranean* (D.K. Keller and D.W. Rupp eds., BAR International Series S-155, Oxford 1983) are essential reading for anyone interested in archaeological survey strategies and methods as well as the use and interpretation of archaeological survey data in the reconstruction of ancient settlement systems, exchange networks, and societal organization in the Mediterranean basin and Europe. No longer can one rely solely on excavation data to solve the problems relating to a particular culture. The micro-level information provided by site-specific excavations and the study of particular classes of artifacts must be combined with the macro-level information produced by regional surveys if one is to understand properly a culture, its organization, how it functioned, and its interaction with the physical environment. Many North American archaeologists already share the views espoused here by our British colleagues; more should seriously consider adopting them in their research.

DAVID W. RUPP

DEPARTMENT OF CLASSICS
BROCK UNIVERSITY
ST. CATHARINES, ONTARIO
CANADA L2S 3A1

DER ARCHÄOLOGE UND DER TOD: ARCHÄOLOGIE UND GERICHTSMEDIZIN, by *Steffen Berg, Renate Rolle, and Henning Seemann*. Pp. 168, figs. 152. Verlag C.J. Bucher, Munich 1981.

THE BISHOPS OF FARAS: AN ANTHROPOLOGICAL-MEDICAL STUDY, by *Tadeusz Dzierżykray-Rogalski*. (Faras VIII.) Pp. 272, figs. 387. PWN-Éditions Scientifiques de Pologne, Warsaw 1985.

Physical anthropology is one of the many disciplines which archaeologists have called upon with increasing frequency in recent years. Studies of human skeletons recovered in the course of excavations have always been a part of the process of reconstructing the broad record of the past. As with so many other adjuncts to archaeology, however, developments over the past few years have generated much more precise analytical potential from this particular ap-

proach. We can look forward to increasingly informative skeletal reports, as the new advances in human biology are brought to bear on the archaeological problems that are now being defined.

The two volumes reviewed here enable us to look back at traditional analytical techniques, and by comparison to appreciate what other scholars are doing with human skeletons using the methods with which computer technology has provided us. Since these volumes are directed at two different audiences, we must consider how each volume may be of general use to archaeologists who want to secure a better grasp of what can be done with human remains when one or more specialists in physical anthropology are consulted.

Der Archäologe und der Tod provides the literate and interested (but not squeamish) general reader with well-illustrated summaries of some of the better known archaeological cases in which forensic medicine has played a significant role. The text is somewhat wordy, but each section is clearly presented and well illustrated. The illustrations, for the most part, are small but extremely well produced. Many are in vivid color. They make a considerable contribution to the text and to a sense of the macabre that is deliberately emphasized.

After a brief summary of the problems of skeletal excavations, the authors offer a helpful summary of the basic kinds of information which can be derived from the bones. Gender, age, and stature are the basic pieces of information which can be provided with ease. The data on blood groups derived from bones, a continuing puzzle in anthropology, are discussed with too much confidence. At present, results from blood-group studies are far from regular and predictive. Agreement concerning which (if any) technique of blood identification to use is still an elusive goal. The same may be said of methods of portrait simulation based on the facial skeleton. The examples of this process are too few and generally without sufficient control to allow us to feel secure in our attempts to identify individuals in reliable ways.

This volume is only of limited use to archaeologists. Some of the remains which are discussed derive from archaeological contexts, although many of the studies deal with soft tissue analysis, an area of research which infrequently presents itself to the excavator. Yet this volume focuses on the forensic aspects of analysis and makes scant reference to archaeological data. My own experiences with forensic medicine suggest that for the most part archaeology plays a minimal role in the analytical process. Topics which are included in this book, such as "violent death" and the "appearance of the corpse," only rarely have parallels in archaeological contexts. Since the majority of cases in the volume deal with recently deceased individuals or deliberate or unusual examples of mummification, only a few sections can be said to be of direct interest to archaeologists confronted with the problem of recovering human skeletal remains.

On the other hand, one approach that is useful appears in the authors' description of the "Windeby woman" (pp. 84-93). The thumb of her right hand had been placed between the middle and ring fingers, in the position which is termed "the fig." This sign or gesture has sexual as well as

magical connotations. Representations of "the fig" have been in use in Europe and parts of Latin America for at least the past 400 years in the form of pendants carved from various materials. The authors illustrate two such pendants carved from coral in the 18th century. This combination of the detailed study of the position of the human remains combined with an ethnographic knowledge of the historic and/or living people of the area should be emulated by all physical anthropologists working with archaeological populations.

The bibliographic references, grouped for each section, provide a glimpse of the European literature in this area. Unfortunately, the few citations from the New World are dated and fail to reflect the many recent advances which have been made in all of the areas discussed in the book.

The Bishops of Faras is the eighth volume in the ambitious archaeological series produced by the Polish Mission to Nubia as part of the Aswan Dam rescue project coordinated by UNESCO, and it offers an anthropological study in the great tradition of the continental scholars of the 19th century. The Polish Mission focused much of its effort on the village of Faras where the Christian bishops of the region had their cathedral. From about 620 until after 1372, at least 33 bishops were resident here. The graves of at least 14 of them (spanning the eighth to the 14th centuries) were recovered in the excavations. The volume is devoted entirely to the study of the osteological materials recovered from the graves as well as any relevant historical and artistic data about them which permit a reconstruction of their biology.

Three major aspects of *The Bishops of Faras* merit serious consideration by archaeologists who have human remains to study, and every physical anthropologist who produces a text after working with such remains should note these points as well. First, the format of this volume is impressive. The large size, glossy pages, and wide margins all reflect the considerable regard in which the osteological remains are held in Poland. Second, the 387 figures provide an extensive photographic documentation of the osteological record in a field where specialists rarely enjoy such luxuries. The third and perhaps the most intellectually important point is the integration of both osteological and non-osteological categories of data about the bishops in order to amplify and coordinate our understanding of what the bones themselves can tell us. The non-osteological data consist of the historical context within which these bishops lived, a detailed summary of the archaeology of the site (where relevant to the burials), and "direct" biological information in the form of murals found within the cathedral itself. This last data-set is rarely available to scholars. The portraits of the bishops in these murals are iconographic in style, but they may offer clues to the physical anthropology of these individuals.

Other aspects of this volume have instructive value as well. As it happens, they are procedures which should be avoided by archaeologists wishing to employ productively the methods of physical anthropology at present available to them. Age and gender can be derived from discrete sets of information which can be gathered simply (if tediously);

they also can be presented concisely. To my knowledge, however, there is little value in collecting, let alone using space to publish, the vast majority of information which has been so lavishly offered in this work. Furthermore, this study virtually ignores those categories of information which have been recently demonstrated to be of great value in comparing populations, tracing relationships, and demonstrating microevolutionary change. Computer technology and specialized biomedical programs now enable us to use craniometric data and possibly non-metric information to characterize populations. These techniques have advanced studies of human populations from mere description into the realm of a comparative science. *The Bishops of Faras*, unfortunately, falls short here. Even the descriptions of what was found are not up to past standards simply because they are poorly organized. A few tables would have been much more effective in presenting these data. Great volumes of data and gorgeous presentation cannot compensate for a lack of fundamental information.

Dzierżykraj-Rogalski is further handicapped by both poor translation and poor editing. Rather than quibble over the minor difficulties with idioms and other aspects of the translation, let me point out some major obstacles which a reader may expect to encounter. No map is provided to locate the site, which I assume to be the town listed as "Faris" in my atlas. This village is in the extreme north of the Sudan, just down river from the Second Cataract. I can only infer that the ancient name was Pachoras, but the names Faras, Pachoras, and Pachoras-Faras appear interchangeably in the text without an indication of why this is the case. I assume that readers familiar with the series may be party to this information, but one would hope that a series editor would realize that a brief orientation or introduction to each volume might be useful for specialists.

The numerous drawings (really sketches) are inadequate, lacking scales and north arrows, and they frequently contradict the text. The author notes that the graves were measured in place but that these measurements were at variance with later laboratory findings. The discrepancy is not explained.

The photographs, many of which are of good quality, suggest that bone preservation was often excellent. This preservation would have provided an excellent situation for testing various regression formulas now in use for the calculation of stature. Not only was such testing not done, but in his statements regarding the statures of the bishops the author fails to indicate how he arrived at his figures. In some cases the bones supposedly used to calculate stature are noted, but no reference to the formulas which were employed in the computation appears in the text.

Perhaps the most questionable aspect of the entire work is the author's "racial" evaluations of the bishops. One of the few problems which the author directly assesses is that of the geographical origins of these men. Faras was the capital of ancient Nobadia, the northernmost kingdom in the region of Nubia. The author suggests that the early bishops had been sent from Alexandria, while the bishops of the later period may have been chosen from among the local clergy. This

thesis might be tested in any number of ways using statistical analyses in common use and comparative data now in print. Given the small size of this population of bishops, a practical method would be to compare two subsets (early bishops; later bishops) with local and contemporary populations. J.M. Calcagno (*American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 70 [1986] 349–63) provides a bibliography which demonstrates just how much Nubian information was available to the author for such a study (see also Martin, in *Paleopathology at the Origins of Agriculture* [1984], edited by M.N. Cohen and G.J. Armelagos). The author ignores all of this information and all of these approaches, and he offers nothing in their place. When making these “racial” evaluations he presents no evidence to support any of his conclusions.

The Bishops of Faras is a lovely volume from a production point of view, but it lacks the current information and orientation needed to render this effort of use to either archaeologists or physical anthropologists.

The great tradition of physical anthropology has been given new life and clear focus by several scholars (R.L. Jantz, P. Key, J. Musgrave) who employ computer technology to evaluate the masses of measurements which can be derived from human bones. As we use such technology more widely to compare collections of skeletal remains, we will be able to provide archaeologists with more than information on the age, gender, disease, and nutrition of entire populations. Looking at where we have been helps us to maintain a focus on where we can go with biological studies and to which techniques we need to turn for us to get there. Both of the volumes reviewed here can help us to understand the importance of the new developments in physical anthropology. But we must look to other authors for models which can be used to achieve these goals.

MARSHALL JOSEPH BECKER

UNIVERSITY MUSEUM
UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19104

PRESERVING FIELD RECORDS. ARCHIVAL TECHNIQUES FOR ARCHAEOLOGISTS, by *M.A. Kenworthy, E.M. King, M.E. Ruwell* and *T. Van Houten*. Pp. x + 102. The University Museum, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia 1985.

Today when many scholars are reinvestigating sites which were dug by archaeologists of an earlier generation and were published inadequately or left unpublished, the importance of well-preserved notes and records has become increasingly recognized. Conversely, illegible documents have caused much aggravation, and even worse the disappearance or deterioration of records has caused the loss of precious documentation for a site that has been destroyed by excavation and can never be recovered. Clearly, the preservation of records should be given serious consideration by anyone about to begin an excavation or research project to prevent scientific losses in the future.

This book, prepared by archivists from the University Museum, gives valuable information for the preservation of all types of records in a very readable form. Chapter 1 by King discusses the types of documents generated at each stage of a project and sets up guidelines for their evaluation. Her recommendation that archival preservation be given consideration and budgeted in the planning stage of a project is sound advice, yet is probably most often neglected. Chapter 2 by Van Houten lists a number of recommendations for the preservation of paper records: the type of paper (acid-free) to be used for important field records (notebooks could also be xeroxed on acid-free paper for permanent storage), protection against insects, heat, excessive humidity, pollution, light, etc., as well as the care of paper records, including techniques for mending, cleaning and encapsulation. The latter will also be useful to those who are working with archival material.

In Chapter 3, King discusses the problems involved in the preservation of films, photographs and videotapes, and the causes of film deterioration. Machine-readable records are the subject of Chapter 4. Van Houten describes the advantages of machine-readable records, which are well known, the ease with which they can be manipulated, etc. The disadvantages are less well known because the materials are so new: polyester magnetic tape may last only 10–20 years under ideal conditions and floppy disks somewhat longer. Changes in hardware and software can also cause problems within a short time. Chapter 5 by Kenworthy deals with storage conditions. A final table prepared by King lists the steps in sequence for the preservation of records from the planning stage through the final transference to permanent storage. A useful bibliography provides further specialized reading for each chapter. A list of suppliers of archival products is printed as a removable end paper.

This excellent book fills a clear need and should be required reading for those who care for archives as well as those about to begin an excavation.

PATRICIA N. BOULTER

DEPARTMENT OF CLASSICS
UNIVERSITY OF CINCINNATI
CINCINNATI, OHIO 45221

TREMBLEMENTS DE TERRE: HISTOIRE ET ARCHÉOLOGIE, edited by *Bruno Helly* and *Alex Pollino*. (IV^{èmes} Rencontres Internationales d'Archéologie et d'Histoire d'Antibes, 2–4 November 1983.) Pp. 320. Association pour la Promotion de la Diffusion des Connaissances Archéologiques, Valbonne 1984. Fr 150

Earthquakes are among the most widespread, most terrifying, and most destructive of all natural phenomena. The ancients tended to attribute the occurrence of earthquakes to divine retribution for human transgression—a belief that has not entirely died out today—implying that they might be prevented by exemplary behavior. Today, although we do not yet completely understand the causes of earthquakes, we do know that the forces involved are far beyond man's con-