

instruments has moved away from the purely antiquarian and the province of collectors of antiques.

This is also a book written before the study of the social history of medicine, so that the social context of many of these operations is almost entirely missing. The growth of schools of surgery in the Po valley has links with the development of universities and, to take a more modern example, industrialisation, as well as warfare, has a major part to play. The availability of commercial artificial limbs brought about a change in surgical techniques, as surgeons operated in a way that would best adapt to the new limbs. Historians such as Christopher Lawrence have also queried many of the old ideas about Lister and Listerism.

But, at the same time, modern historians themselves must take some of the blame. There is very little available between major histories and chapters in more general histories of medicine that can give the interested reader a good grasp of the history of surgery as it has been interpreted over the last two or three decades. Writing such a book is not easy, especially in light of the great surgical advances of more recent times, and one can see why many have eschewed the task. So Bishop still continues to fill a gap, however much one might lament it.

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Chryssi Bourbou, *Health and Disease in Byzantine Crete (7th–12th Centuries AD)*, *Medicine in the Medieval Mediterranean 1* (Ashgate, 2011), pp. 264, hardcover, \$99, ISBN: 978-0754666158.

The reviewed book examines health, nutrition and lifestyle in medieval Crete. The analysis is based on a detailed survey of human remains found on the island. These findings are then contextualised, using archeological and written sources. The book starts with a foreword by Donald Ortner, which is followed by an introduction by Bourbou. The first chapter outlines the historical, cultural and medical background of medieval Crete, along with a description of the burial sites examined, including detailed statistics. It also describes the methodology used for the anthropological evaluation of the remains.

The second chapter discusses selected specimens found at these burial sites. Here, teeth are of particular interest, as they display the nutrition of the specific individual. Bourbou notes a high rate of dental diseases, in particular in the male population, which she attributes to lack of dental hygiene and possibly a different diet of the male and female population. (Previous research had suggested that the nutrition in Byzantine Crete would have contributed to good oral health.) Other findings in this chapter include a higher incidence of degenerative joint diseases among the male population, evidence of hematopoietic disorders, periostosis, a possible case of sacral actinomycosis, a higher incidence of bone fractures amongst males, a perimortem occipital skull fracture, most likely caused by a weapon, and a 9.8% incidence of spina bifida occulta. This chapter is followed by a very good and detailed discussion of infant health. Chapter four presents the results of an isotope analysis of the remains. It concludes that the nutrition of the persons in question is in accordance with the descriptions in written sources.

The book contains lists of tables and illustrations, a glossary and a very rich 59-page bibliography. Perhaps the most striking feature of the book is the discussion of whether specific changes to the skeleton are caused by thalassemia, iron deficiency or hypovitaminosis B12, whether these changes could, in combination with others, also be indicative of scurvy, and how such a form of malnutrition could develop in an area where fresh fruit would have been easily and generally available.

The discussion of pediatrics and nursing is a particular strength of the book. Not only are these topics often overlooked in the field of Classical and Byzantine medical history, Bourbou also contributes important new insights through an isotope analysis and visual examination of the skeletal remains. For instance, her findings confirm that breast milk constituted a major part of the nutrition (according to remains of deceased children under the age of three), which suggests that weaning did not take place at an early point of time. This fact comes into play in the discussion of whether goat's-milk-based nutrition contributed to infant mortality, as it contains lower levels of folic acid than breast milk.

The scientific data is presented in a very clear manner, so that it can easily be read by a lay audience. Whenever the examination reaches its limits, for instance when soft tissue would be needed for any further conclusions, this is explicitly discussed. The book is readable, always to the point and it contains a large amount of new material. Moreover, it can be used by historians as a gateway to scientific topics and *vice versa*. The extensive bibliography is most useful, as it combines material that is not often found in one place.

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Danielle Jacquart and **Agostino Paravicini Bagliani** (eds), *La 'Collectio Salernitana' di Salvatore De Renzi*, Edizione Nazionale 'La Scuola Medica Salernitana' 3 (Florence, Sismel: Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2008), pp. xvii, 266, €45.00, paperback, ISBN: 978-88-8450-316-9.

This book is the third volume of a most welcome collection devoted to the Salernitan Medical School, a landmark in the history of medieval medicine that has not received the thorough historiographical attention that it deserves. The series intends to provide critical editions and learned analysis of medical texts belonging to the Salernitan tradition, as well as historical studies on the scholarship of Salernitan medicine – ultimately responsible for the creation of the so-called 'Salernitan Medical School'. In order to do this adequately, the project was launched in 2004 as an international endeavour led by Agostino Paravicini Bagliani, who presides over a scientific committee composed of an international team of scholars specialised in the field.

The present volume is the written results of the papers delivered at a conference held in 2007 with the aim of assessing and revisiting the editorial work of Salvatore De Renzi and the historical consequences of the publication, between 1852 and 1859, of his *Collectio Salernitana*, a five-volume work that has since shaped the image of Salerno as a centre of medical practice and learning. However, as Danielle Jacquart states in her introductory chapter, since De Renzi published his collection some of the texts he edited have proved to be not Salernitan; some obscure authors have been identified and