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its methodology (no grappling here with Foucault or the social construction of disease) and none the worse for that. Its chronological span is complete (chapter 1 is entitled 'Les Buveurs Antiques'), and though the focus becomes increasingly medical as we approach the present, the attitudes of preachers, moralists, and governments are not neglected. For the Anglo-Saxon reader, it is particularly valuable to be reminded that there have been temperance movements elsewhere. In chapter 8, Sournia offers a highly illuminating account of how far it was working-men's organizations and socialist guilds which promoted temperance in nineteenth-century France and central Europe: not social control but a self-control which would fortify political strength.

Professor Sournia's account of medical change is somewhat thin on eighteenth-century developments (a rather derivative and sometimes inaccurate account of the "gin craze" followed by a short section on Thomas Trotter). The work of nineteenth-century doctors is much more fully represented. A lucid account is offered of Magnus Huss, which does not stint the importance of Swedish Lutheranism, and Sournia also writes well about the "psychiatrization" of drink problems within the development of mid-nineteenth-century degenerationist thought. Here, one misses, however, adequate reference to the parallels between alcoholism and other contemporary addiction phenomena (e.g., the medical use and abuse of opium and other narcotics). The last chapters survey medical attempts world-wide to counter the present epidemic of alcoholism.

Medical historians are currently paying increasing attention to the "diseases of civilization". The history of the emergence of the idea of addiction and of its medical treatment still remains, however, under-researched. Professor Sournia has made a workmanlike and readily usable contribution to that understanding. One hopes that an English translation will appear in the not too distant future.

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ALFRED W. CROSBY, *Ecological imperialism. The biological expansion of Europe, 900–1900*, Cambridge University Press, 1986, 8vo, pp. 368, illus., £27.50/£9.95 (paperback).

In his latest contribution to ecologically-based historical narrative, A. W. Crosby uses a broad range of primary and secondary historical and ecological sources to document the impact of what he calls the "portmanteau biota" of Old World crops, livestock, weeds, people, and pathogens on previously isolated biological communities in the Pacific, the Americas, and the Atlantic islands. After a brief survey of the failure of the Norse and the Crusaders in the early Middle Ages to establish a permanent foothold in areas either too remote or densely populated, the author suggests that the ecological consequences of European contact and settlement on the eastern Atlantic islands in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries AD display a pattern which would be repeated in later centuries in temperate zones of the Americas, Australia, and New Zealand. In favourable climatic conditions similar to those of Europe, imported animal and plant species could multiply rapidly at the expense of native species while indigenous human societies which were initially able to resist European military technology on nearly equal terms succumbed to hunger and disease. While malnutrition would have magnified the effect of disease on native groups unable to fight and farm simultaneously, their epidemiological vulnerability played an important role. The newly arrived European sailors, soldiers, and settlers would have included carriers of Old World diseases which made the most of the opportunity to attack previously unexposed populations. Although smallpox, tuberculosis, and measles can sometimes be identified, the specific pathogens responsible for many epidemics remain unknown. The micro-organisms responsible for the *peste* said to have destroyed 60–75 per cent of the Gran Canaria Guanches in the late fourteenth century cannot be identified with certainty any more than can those that caused the *modorra*, which eliminated several thousand besieged defenders of Tenerife in 1495, or the later Maori epidemic called *papareti* after a Maori toboggan because of the swift downhill slide of the dying.

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With the earlier accounts, a reader might perhaps question the feasibility of using mortality rates from partly theological narratives intended to illustrate the divine punishment of the Guanches for their sins of infanticide and killing Christian soldiers while resisting invasion, but Crosby is in general conservative when it comes to estimating mortality from disease in post-contact history and is careful to take account of other social and biological factors that favoured the emergence of neo-Europes. To take only one example, Lawson's 1709 description of Carolina is cited for the flourishing populations of imported cattle and peaches which Lawson himself observed, but not for the effects of smallpox, rum, and intertribal warfare which the same author inferred had "made such a destruction amongst them, that on good grounds I do believe there is not the sixth savage living within two hundred miles of all our settlements as there were fifty years ago." Recent studies of the archaeology of the southeastern United States do show massive depopulation of the region between the visit of De Soto and later periods of contact, as Crosby notes, but he reserves his closest analysis of post-contact epidemiology for the relatively well-documented New Zealand population. Within a few decades in the nineteenth century, as the European population increased by one order of magnitude from 2000 to 32,000, mortality of 30–50 per cent decreased the Maori from c. 100,000–120,000 to less than 60,000.

To sum up, this is not just a study of disease, but a vividly written account of ecological transition, and Crosby is careful not to overestimate the significance of any single component in upsetting pre-European adaptations of biota whose ecological niches were invaded by new weeds, crops, insects, and animals whose impacts are also documented.

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MIRA CROUCH and BERND HÜPPAUF (editors), *Essays on mortality*, Sydney, University of New South Wales (Faculty of Arts), 1985, 8vo, pp. xiii, 190, no price stated (paperback).

This volume consists of eleven essays written on the theme of mortality for an interdisciplinary workshop held at the University of New South Wales in November 1982. As with most such publications we do not see the final results of the "interdisciplinary interchange" as much as the preliminary submissions for the interchange itself. Despite the lack of cross-reference to each others' attitudes or findings, the essays do touch upon a variety of subjects—from David Rollison's 'Mortality and society in England 1450–1850', through studies of Australian attitudes to death, to philosophical, anthropological, sociological, and literary comments on the subject.

Preceding all of these is a prologue by Bernd Hüppauf entitled 'Death in the history of ideas in western civilization'. Like the essay by Ray Walters on 'Death and mortality in philosophy', this contains references to classical as well as to Renaissance thinkers. Perhaps because of its brief coverage, some confusion enters when these ideas are connected to those of more contemporary writers. Further problems occur with the telescoping of ideas from Nietzsche, Freud, and Marcuse. Nietzsche is introduced as an example of a critic of the "metaphysical" domination over life by the idea of death. No reference, however, is made to Nietzsche's targeting of Schopenhauer's pessimism in this criticism. When Nietzsche's "Lebensphilosophie", or "yes-saying" to life, is related both to Freud's comments on the concealment of death in Western culture and to Marcuse's on the reduction of death to a mechanical and institutionalized end to life, further confusion results. This is due not just to the fact that the different targets of each have not been adequately spelled out, but because the differences in meaning of the terms used to describe the forces of life and death have also to be analysed further.

In the end, the prologue appears to share the "Marcusean" view that the "instrumentalization" of death in modern society and its health-services may be related to a more sinister instrumentalization of life as a whole by forces which are themselves life-threatening:

Man appears to be thrown back into a situation of extreme vulnerability. His current situation equals that of early man who had no control over a hostile environment surrounding and