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**Melanie M. Beasley, Andrew D. Somerville (eds.), *Exploring Human Behavior Through Isotope Analysis. Applications in Archaeological Research*, Springer, 2023, 303 p., ISBN: 978-3-031-32266-2, ISBNe: 978-3-031-32268-6, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-32268-6>**

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This work represents the effort of a collective of researchers from different backgrounds but with a single purpose: to analyze the anthropic behaviors by means of stable isotopes in addition to the traditional methods of archeological frameworks.

Application of multi-isotopic analyses can shed a new light on how human behavior is interpreted in different circumstances but also the limitations of these type of studies. The presented case studies from experts from different backgrounds are structured in a specific manner to be understood by researchers who are not specialized in stable isotopes, and targets researchers and students alike by providing different approaches for archaeologists how to interpret and analyze the data resulted from multi-isotopic analysis but also what to expect from these types of investigations.

The book is divided in 5 major parts, each encapsulating vital research topics not only from an archaeological perspective, but also from an inter- and pluridisciplinary perspective, such as human diet, human-animal interactions and also migration patterns and mobility.

This work is a beneficial addition to the archaeological research, mostly due to the fact that traditional archaeology methods can answer a very limited questions regarding the research topics mentioned previously.

The book's introduction has a more personal note than other works from the field, in which the author highlights the pros, the cons and the overall challenges involving stable isotope analysis and the need for interdisciplinary approaches and how can tools designed for an initial purpose can be used for other disciplines and how did these kinds of methods evolve other time.

For a better understanding of the concept of stable isotope analysis, the principles of each isotope analysis are broken down in separate parts, each representing the stable isotope in question and what results can we expect from the analysis. The results might also vary

depending on the bone preservation but also on the method used to extract the collagen and the accuracy of the equipment.

Multi-isotopic analyses have come a long way and in recent years, with an influx of overwhelming and positive outcomes for the archaeological research. This topic is highlighted in the second part of the book which deep dives into the paleodiet and life history, as the title suggest.

The chapters within this part tackle one of the quintessential subjects regarding the diet of children, namely the weaning age of children from past populations, comparing foragers' children with the farmers' children and if the transition from a period to another affects the diet or not.

As we can see from the very beginning, this book is not limited by geography nor by a certain time period from history or prehistory. This adds benefits to the multi-isotopic approaches, as it can focus of the emergence of populations before colonizations, as explores the dietary patterns of the pre-Columbian Maya civilization (Belize), but also can explore the micro-regions (West Polynesia) and the impact of the agriculture on an isolated land and the population's diet, as intensive agriculture, adaptability of the communities to local and non-local sources of food in the event of climate changes can be also determined through stable isotope analysis.

The biogeochemistry of the bone collagen and the apatite were already a debated subject as the bones and the teeth are primarily used as materials in the multi-isotopic analyses but current methodological approaches revealed a new set of data in regards to the dental calculus and as a new potential source of isotopic signature, generating positive data in addition to the information provided by the bone collagen and apatite, a topic discussed at length in a chapter within the book.

In the third part of the book, the authors engage in a discussion of a topic that has already been debated before but the topic of human-animal husbandry has so many branches and still open cases, which generate opportunities for further research.

In the chapters within this part, the domestication of animals and the human-animal interactions is discussed at length by analyzing different aspects during the prehistoric societies but also during pre-Colonial and Viking periods by giving insights about animal managements through the stable isotope data. The authors also noted that most of the isotopic data we currently have in regards to the human-animal interactions are mostly done in Europe, the management of domestic and wild animals are still in debate.

The collapse of societies is one of the most debated topics, primarily related to the climate changes. The last part of the book compresses two chapters which aim to shed new light on this type of events and detail aspects of the collapse from multiple points of views which can give fresh perspectives regarding the mobility of the humans, migration patterns and switch in dietary practices.

In conclusion, rather than focusing solely on a specific topic and method, the editors organized the chapters to reflect the novelty approaches as needed for providing balanced introductions and foundations in crossing disciplinary boundaries. Given the new methodological approaches in biogeochemistry and answering some of the most burning questions regarding the human diet and mobility, with old and new bibliography, the book *Exploring Human Behavior Through Isotope Analysis. Applications in Archaeological Research* is a comprehensive and an exhaustive work which can help provide current and relevant data regarding the archaeological process and can be used as a tool to help researchers from all fields in reconstruction past behaviours.