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THE MEMORY OF BONES

SCIENCE AT THE SERVICE OF HISTORY

Monograph coordinated by Elisa García-Prósper and Manuel Polo-Cerdá

*In memory of José Delfín Villalaín Blanco,
Professor of Legal Medicine of the University of Valencia.*

Science, especially social science and forensics, plays an essential role in our interpretation of the past, from the most ancient to the most recent. Human bones are not only the essential trace of who our ancestors once were, but also a memory repository that cannot and must not be forgotten.

The well-known phrase «those who do not learn history are doomed to repeat it» is essentially the cornerstone of this monograph, which offers a multidisciplinary overview of a diverse historical memory, analysed from different but complementary scientific perspectives, where history, archaeology, physical anthropology, forensic medicine, criminalistics, and genetics, among other sciences, intertwine to shed light and evidential value on heterogeneous facts based on the biological vestiges of the past.

In the following pages, we propose a diachronic journey from ancient times to the present. The different authors approach history from twenty-first century lines of research, and bioanthropological and genetic heritage is the subject of the different studies, as well as the vehicle for understanding the memory of past societies.

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The articles in *The memory of bones* are accompanied by compositions by Alex Francés (Valencia, 1962), a graduate in Fine Arts from the Polytechnic University of Valencia and a renowned artist. For this monograph, the artist entrusts us with his particular vision of the passage of time and memory through games of fabrics, textures and objects that appeal to the five senses.

On the left, Alex Francés. *Memorabilia III* (detail), 2018. Paper, cardboard, and fabric, 90×105 cm.