

BOOK REVIEW

Modern Epidemics. From the Spanish Flu to Covid 19 *by Salvador Macip*

Paperback, 288 pages

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Salvador Macip is a cell biologist and medical writer with an international perspective. This book is based on the original version, translated from Catalan. Translated texts have potential disadvantages, either gaining or losing something during translation. *Modern Epidemics*, however, reads well and gives an international description of Infection without particular focus on the English-speaking world. There is a glossary and comprehensive index. The text is factual but not stuffy. It is interspersed with entertaining vignettes in boxes, describing relevant events.

Macip divides the book into two parts. Part I gives an overview of microbes and pandemics, vaccines, bioterrorism and antibiotics. There is considerable descriptive history of pandemics from ancient times. The coronavirus discussion appears to be written in the early days of the pandemic, and, as things are changing so rapidly, gives a picture of the status when written which may be of interest when looking back in the future. However, much has happened since then. Pandemic preparedness, or lack of it, is also well discussed. Forgotten or neglected tropical diseases are mentioned. Part II is about current pandemic diseases, including a good section on tuberculosis and malaria, together with AIDS and influenza.

The book is well written and informative and relevant for this difficult era of covid. It is not primarily a history text. However, it contains a good deal of historical information on Infection. I would have liked to see some relevant illustrations and figures. *Modern Epidemics* should be of interest to the general reader and the medical historian who wants an overview of pandemics, prior to deeper study. I suspect many similar works will appear in the next few years as we try to understand and interpret the enormity of the covid pandemic and the response and put it in historical perspective.

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