

Editorial

This special issue of *Bioarchaeology of the Near East* has been inspired by the session “Bioanthropology in Western Asia: Moving forward”, held at the 28th Annual Meeting of the European Association of Archaeologists (EAA) in Budapest, Hungary, in 2022. The session was held to take stock of recent developments and gauge the future direction of research in the region. Additionally, the session aimed to spotlight the efforts done by the scientific community today to promote diversity, accessibility, and inclusion; to do this, the session welcomed topics with not just research but public-facing aims and offered support to cover conference costs, particularly for the early career researchers. The presentations covered a variety of topics with case studies from Lebanon, Iran, Egypt, Syria, and Jordan, ranging in time from the Neolithic to the Byzantine period.

- Dental pathologies at the dawn of Neolithization in the Near-East: new methods applied to ancient collections (Bérénice Chamel)
- Social violence at Neolithic Çatalhöyük (Christopher Knüsel)
- Continuity during times of change – evidence from Middle Bronze Age Sidon (Lebanon) (Nina Maaranen)
- Between the mountains and the desert: Isotopic evidence of alluvial fan subsistence at Tepe Challow in NE Iran (Arkadiusz Sołtysiak)
- New genomic evidence of a Bronze Age Levantine-Egyptian nexus (Tina Saupe)
- Identity and disability in Egyptian bioarchaeology (Sonia Zakrzewski)
- Repurposing open access isotopic data in ancient Egypt and Western Asia (Christina Stantis)
- What to do with all this data: New initiatives for large-scale bioarchaeological research in the Mediterranean and Middle-East (Mahmoud Mardini)
- Following the traces of Parthians at the Vastmin archaeological site in Iran (Motahareh Amjadi)
- Integration, communities and exclusion in Byzantine times through burials from Hierapolis of Phrygia (Turkey) (Caroline Laforest)
- Untangling Western Asian bioarchaeology: Data management and research of commingled samples (Megan Perry)

This volume of *Bioarchaeology of the Near East* offers papers by the conference presenters, based either on their conference or a related topic, for further consideration. The session was held in honour of (Jochen) Holger Schutkowski who passed away in March of 2020, organized by Arwa Kharobi and Nina Maaranen who had the honour of collaborating with Holger. Holger was a Professor of Bioarchaeology at Bournemouth University, with deep commitment to advancing bioarchaeological research in Western Asia, particularly through his work in Lebanon and the United Arab Emirates. His work was always marked by the importance of a holistic approach to the study of the past, integrating osteoarchaeology with interpretive archaeology. His name commemorates the annual student award given by BABAO (British Association for Biological Anthropology and Osteoarchaeology). Holger has left a profound and lasting legacy within the field and among his colleagues; he is warmly remembered and sorely missed.

Nina Maaranen and Arwa Kharobi
Co-editors, *Bioarchaeology of the Near East* special issue