

Preface by the Series Editor

The 13th volume of the OREA series addresses ‘Textile Workers. Skills, Labour and Status of Textile Craftspeople between the Prehistoric Aegean and the Ancient Near East’. It represents the outcome of a workshop held on 25th of April 2016 at the International Congress on the Archaeology of the Ancient Near East (ICAANE) organised by Louise Quillien and Kalliope Sarri. The 10th anniversary conference of the ICAANE took place from 25th to 29th of April in Vienna and was hosted and organised by the Institute for Oriental and European Archaeology (OREA) at the Austrian Academy of Sciences. Altogether 800 participants from 38 different countries found their way to Vienna to celebrate the 10th anniversary of ICAANE with 8 scientific sections, 28 workshops, round tables, a huge poster exhibition and a special section about ‘Cultural Heritage under Threat’. While the proceedings of the sections were published by the Harrassowitz Publishing House in 2018, the experts’ workshops appear as separate peer-reviewed volumes of the OREA series which are generously supported by the Austrian Academy of Sciences Press.

The present volume is edited for our internationally peer-reviewed series by Louise Quillien and Kalliope Sarri, who also initiated and organised the workshop. The editors aimed to shed more light on the people behind the highly important crafts by focussing on textile technologies, working conditions and the social status of textile workers in a diachronic approach from the Neolithic until the late Antiquity. They successfully managed to bring together new data, scientific analyses and comprehensive studies from altogether 12 authors in 10 different contributions. Compiling Aegean and Near Eastern case studies offers the opportunity to contrast and compare different social, economic and cultural contexts of the people behind the textile production in the different regions. The editors’ helpful introduction is not only setting the scientific framework, but also summarises the main outcome of the collected papers regarding the workers’ social status, working conditions and applied technologies as quick overview.

I warmly thank the authors for sharing their expertise and perspectives about textile workers and Louise Quillien and Kalliope Sarri for editing the 13th OREA volume.

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