Archaeology and History in Lebanon

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A Note from the Editor

This issue commemorates the life of the distinguished Lebanese geologist Prof. Ziad Beydoun. It reflects the close links of geology and archaeology in appreciation of Lebanon's natural and man made heritage.

In today's forum of Archaeology, it has become increasingly evident that various disciplines are needed to insure a proper analysis of all data when looking at a site. Indeed, for the first time, core sampling in the Lebanon while excavating in the ancient city of Sidon, led to the chronicle of the development of Sidon's ancient harbour. Results from these cores, (some of which are published in this volume), relied upon different indicators, such as biological indicators, (macro-fauna and ostracods), granulometric indicators (using sand/silt, grain size distribution, and shape) and many others. This initial effort has been so encouraging that a new coring program was initiated with the support of the Lebanese Directorate General of Antiquities, but this time, not only for Sidon but also for other coastal cities in Lebanon, mainly Byblos and Beirut. Some of the results carried out in these two cities are also covered in this volume.

Other reliable chronological indicators dating the rock formations of Lebanon through unicellular organisms called foraminifera are also included in this issue. Ceramic petrologists looking under the microscope at Sidon's pottery thin sections have encountered these organisms and have found it very helpful to refer to the articles published in this journal. Geologists, geomorphologists, sedimentologists, vertebrate paleontologists and underwater archaeologists have given in this volume, as a tribute to the late Prof. Ziad Beydoun, the most up-to-date results from work undertaken in the Lebanon in the past 5 years. They follow the trail of the multidisciplinary approach started in the mid nineties by the late Prof. Ziad Beydoun. In that time and in an earlier issue of this journal (National Museum News *5, 1997), he identified through a diagnostic sounding the geological imprints of a major earthquake within the sedimentary layers of the excavations of Beirut city centre.*

Perhaps the best tribute one can give to his memory is to pursue academic excellence and to encourage multidisciplinary work for the advancement of archaeology and geology in Lebanon.

Claude Doumet-Serhal

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