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## Osteobiographical investigation of disability and care in Medieval Europe

*Étude**ostéobiographique du handicap et des soins dans l'Europe du Moyen Âge***Ileana Micarelli****Édition électronique**

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*Étude*

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**Ileana Micarelli**

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- 1 The bioarchaeological characterization of disabled individuals from the past is particularly challenging because it pushes the boundaries of the interpretation of pathologies recognisable on human remains. With my project, namely B-CARED, I will investigate the bioarchaeological approaches for recreating "Past to life". In so doing, the osteobiographical approach offers a possible framework, in which human remains are used to understand not only the embodied experience during life but also seeing people as playing diverse social roles (e.g. patient, healer, doctor, carer) at different times during life. Considering the meaning of disease, methods of treatment and, quite possibly, caregiving customs, Medieval times is an ideal period given the amount of written documentation available. B-CARED has two aims: (1) to use the osteobiographical approach to explore a life narrative of a person in need of care, and (2) to contextualize the impact of disability on individuals and the people around them through the theoretical lens. To identify aspects of an osteobiographical life narrative B-CARED will focus on contexts, genetics, health status via palaeopathological assessment (gross morphology and where possible aDNA of pathogens), diet and mobility via isotopic analyses, biomechanical stress related to occupational activities and death ways. The steps to obtain information for the first aim will permit reconstruction of a life narrative. Then, the contextualization of the results at community level will broaden the interpretation, counteracting the invisibility of disabled persons by drawing on the abundance of skeletal information available.

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AUTEUR

ILEANA MICARELLI

McDonald Institute of Archaeological Research, Cambridge University, United Kingdom  
im452[at]cam.ac.uk