

Enviro-Ethnoarchaeology and Archaeology: Scientific approaches in archaeology utilising an ethnoarchaeological approach

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This seminar presents the application of a new and innovative multi-methodological approach which incorporates ethnoarchaeology to answer questions about Neolithic farming villages in the Middle East. Common methods to investigate the development of these early villages rely on the identification and interpretation of archaeological contexts and their associated material culture. However, we can go one step further and incorporate scientific microscopic techniques in combination with modern ethnoarchaeology to gain further insights. This research illustrates how phytoliths and geochemistry can be used from modern traditionally built villages to provide insights into activity areas and construction practices, and how micro-components examined in animal dung can be used to help determine animal management, secondary product use and animal diet.

Dr Sarah Elliott is an environmental archaeologist and a previous CBRL Visiting Fellow at the British Institute in Amman (2015-16 & 2018). She will start a 3-year British Academy fellowship in January 2019 which will be hosted at Bournemouth University in partnership with the Council for British Research in the Levant. She completed her PhD at the University of Reading investigating early animal management in Iraq and Iran through the identification of animal penning and microscopic signatures of dung in Neolithic villages. She holds an MSc in Geoarchaeology and a BA in Ancient History and Archaeology, also from the University of Reading. In 2014-15 she worked as a Research Assistant on the INEA Project (Identifying activity areas in Neolithic sites through Ethnographic Analysis of phytoliths and geochemical residues) co-directed by Bournemouth University and CBRL Amman. Sarah has also worked on research in South America in the Bolivian Amazon examining pre-Columbian agriculture (University of Exeter) and also held a teaching fellowship at the University of Aberdeen.