Farming under the Crescent moon: archaeological insights into the medieval ‘Islamic Green Revolution’

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The impact of the medieval Arab expansion on agriculture was famously coined as a ‘revolution’ by Watson in 1974, although the use of this term and the nature of the impact are debated. Previous research in this area has targeted specific aspects of this topic, but studies focusing on agricultural practices themselves remain scarce. Archaeological approaches to understanding medieval agriculture have undergone development over the last decades, due in part to the increasing importance of the role played by techniques such as bioarchaeology (archaeobotany, zooarchaeology, biomolecular analysis) and geoarchaeology.

This session aims to bring together researchers who have an interest in the consequences of the medieval Islamic conquests on farming systems in the Middle East, North Africa, Sicily or Iberia from bioarchaeological, geoarchaeological and other related perspectives, in order to discuss the contribution of archaeological data to the understanding of the agrarian regime(s) in the medieval Dar al-Islam.

Topics that might be addressed include:

- The characterisation of diachronic breaks with the agricultural past driven by new farming techniques (e.g. irrigation, lack of integration of crop and animal production) and the introduction of new species or, on the contrary, the evidence of continuities with previous agrarian situations following the Islamic conquest.

- The integration of different lines of evidence to define the relationship established between the two main agrarian subsectors (i.e. agriculture and animal husbandry).

- The quantification and measuring of agrarian production and specific farming techniques (irrigation, manuring, etc.).

- The detection of trends of intensification and/or diversification in agriculture or livestock production.

Please submit paper abstracts to Session #726 by February 15th 2018 (https://www.e-a-a.org/eaa2018)