

Palaeoproteomes: What can proteins do for archaeology?

Will the analysis of ancient proteins revolutionise archaeology in the way that the study of ancient DNA appears to be doing?

I will review the surprisingly long history of the study of ancient proteins, the ways in which technology is transforming our ability to recover information, and future prospects for archaeological research.

I will discuss the potential for amino acid racemization to date remains, ZooMS to rapidly screen bone fragments and the analysis of proteomes to explore the components of complex mixtures. Proteins can be tissue specific and modifications may reveal the history of processing. Therefore a future role for ancient protein research could be to examine traces of production and processing of plant and animal remains.