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Unreviewed Mixed Matters Article:

Book Review: Experimentelle Archäologie in Europa, Jahrbuch 2019

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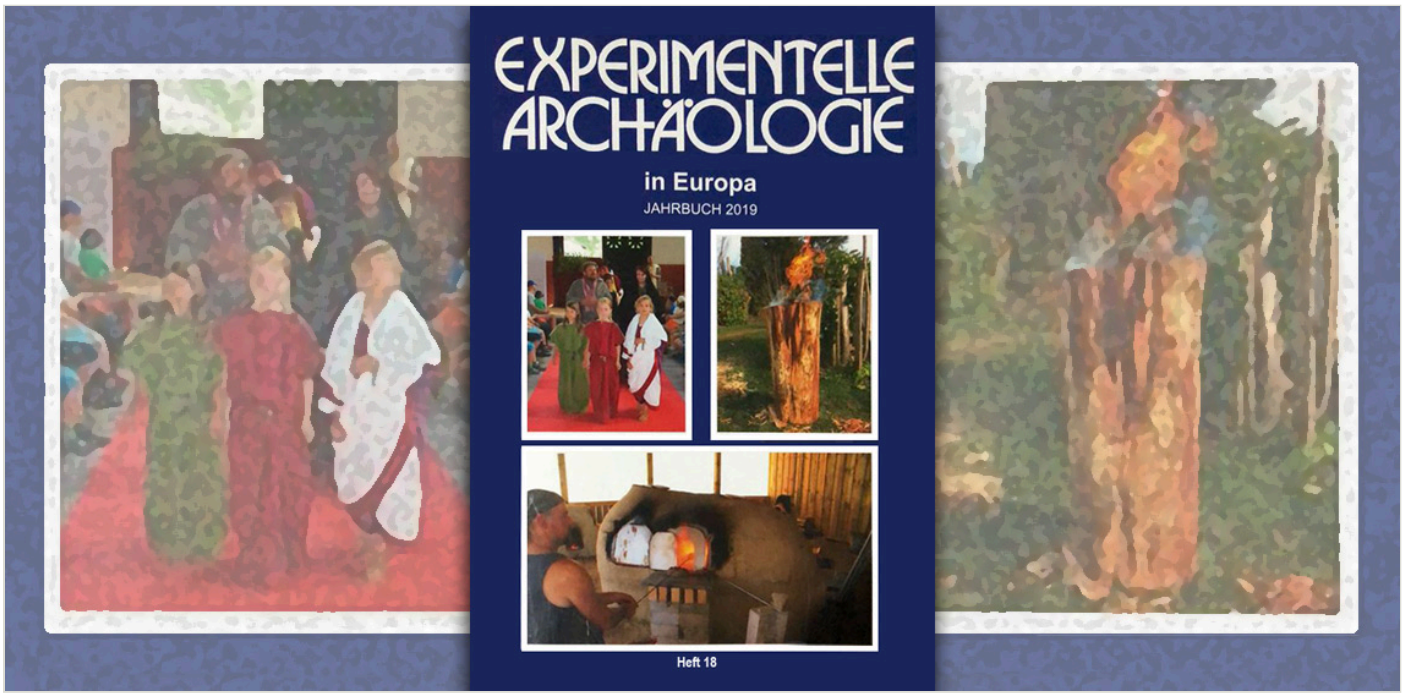

This periodical (Jahrbuch) is published by Gunter Schöbel and the *European Association for the advancement of archaeology by experiment e. V.* (Europäische Vereinigung zur Förderung der Experimentellen Archäologie) in collaboration with the Pfahlbaumuseum Unteruhldingen. It is the 18th issue of the periodical and includes 27 essays on experimental archaeology as well as an annual report (Jahresbericht, p. 321), an obituary for Sylvia

Crumbach (p.325) and instructions for authors (Autorenrichtlinien, p. 326) of Experimentelle Archäologie in Europa on 328 pages.

> It presents studies and experiments that were carried out with passion and bring the reader one step closer to understanding the lives of past cultures and people.

The essays are divided into three categories: the first part deals with the experimental side of archaeology, the second with reconstruction and the third addresses theory. The articles themselves are concise and most are, even for non-specialists in the various fields, easy to follow and comprehend. At the beginning of each article is a short summary in English which helps to present the periodical to a non-German speaking audience and for the three articles in English, a German summary is given. For further questions, the contact details of the authors, as well as a selected bibliography, are provided. The articles are completed with coloured pictures and a description in both German and English.

PART 1: Experiment and Testing (*Experiment und Versuch*), p.9 - 126

There are ten essays in the first part, dealing with a broad spectrum of topics within experimental archaeology. The articles deal with splitting timber with Neolithic tools (*Spalten mit neolithischem Werkzeug*, Sebastian Böhm, Anja Probst-Böhm, Rengert Elburg, Wulf Hein, p. 10); experimental reconstruction of storage pits (*Experimenteller Nachbau von Speichergruben*, Benedikt Biederer, p.21); stone age glue (*Stiftung Steinzeittest > Kleber*, Mirko Runzheimer, p.35); smelting experiments with chalcopyrite ore (*Verhüttungsexperimente mit Chalkopyrit-Erz nach Vorbildern aus dem bronzezeitlichen Ostalpenraum und Nepal*, Thomas Rose, Erica Hanning, Sabine Klein, p.47); Early Bronze Age metal technique reconstruction (*Gold in Kupfer in Bronze – frühbronzeszeitliche Metalltechnik rekonstruiert*, Markus Binggeli, p.61); prehistoric beekeeping in Central Europe (*Prähistorische Bienenhaltung in Mitteleuropa – Rekonstruktion und Betrieb eines Rutenstülpers*, Sonja Gruber, p.75); prehistoric beekeeping in log-hives (*Präistorische Bienenhaltung in hohlen Baumstämmen*, Herbert Gieß, Christoph Zorn, Kathrin Zorn, p.82); developing a recipe of opus caementitium (*Rezepturentwicklung von Opus Caementitium zur Verwendung in Hypokaustheizungen*, Klemens Maier, Alexander Hanser, Oskar Hörtner, Christian Hörtnagl, Daniel Draxl, Matthias Leismüller, Manuel Muigg, p.95); niche furnaces (*Der „Norische Nischenofen": studiert – probiert*, Hannes Lehar, p.105); and reconstruction of an early modern wood-fired chemist's furnace (Erica Hanning, Anna Axtmann, p. 117).

The two most interesting articles were the ones by Sonja Guber (p.75) and Herbert Gieß, Christoph Zorn and Kathrin Zorn (p.82) about beekeeping in prehistoric times. The first essay is the sequel to one published in the previous volume. This time wicker skeps (*Rutenstülper*) were made and used as the home for the bees. They were covered in clay with a small hole

for the bees to enter and leave and after two weeks the bees had already started their work. A harvest of the honey was planned for 2019.

The use of hollow tree trunks as homes for bees, as presented in the second article about beekeeping, shows that simplicity can work. They based their experiment on regional finds and tried to locate local tree trunks or log hives to use as the lodges for the bees. The good weather conditions in the summer 2018 helped the bees to flourish in the logs that they had been provided with and a honey harvest was planned for 2019 as well.

The most technical article is the one by Klemens Maier etc. (p. 95) about the development of a recipe of *opus caementitium* for a hypocaust system. It starts very abruptly without a proper introduction to the topic but then becomes very detailed with information about the different compositions of the mixtures and technical. Details. This is difficult to follow without sufficient background in the field, especially chemistry.

PART 2: Reconstructive Archaeology (*Rekonstruierende Archäologie*), p.127 - 199

There are six essays in the second part of the periodical, dealing with the possibility of making replicas of prehistoric pottery (*Eine Möglichkeit zur Herstellung prähistorischer Keramikrepliken*, Erika Berdelis, unter Mitwirkung von Gisela Nagy, p.128); 3D scans and 3D printing in the archaeology of music (*3D-Scans und 3D-Drucke in der Musikarchäologie – Möglichkeiten und experimentalarchäologische Praxisbeispiele*, Elias Flatscher, Michael Praxmarer, Wolfgang Recheis, Michael Schick, p. 140); reconstruction of a Bronze Age log boat (*Zur experimentalarchäologischen Herstellung eines Einbaums aus Eichenholz mit Werkzeugen, Methoden und Techniken der Bronzezeit*, Wolfgang F. A. Lobisser, p.153); prehistoric bronze casting and integrity (*Prähistorischer Bronzeguss und die Lauterkeit: Was kann ich wissen? Was soll ich tun?* Thorsten Helmerking, p. 171); ancient marine paint (*Der Schutz des Wachses – Versuche zur Nachschöpfung einer antiken Schiffsfarbe*, Jan Hochbruck, p. 181) and the reconstruction of a Roman provincial woman's costume (*Zur Rekonstruktion einer provinzialrömischen Frauentracht nach einer bemalten Platte einer Dromos-Verkleidung aus Brunn am Gebirge*, Helga Rösel-Mautendorfer, p.190).

The first essay in this group by Erika Berdelis and Gisela Nagy about the making of prehistoric replicas (p.128) is very detailed and well written. As the replicas are very close to the originals that inspire them, both authors are making sure that the results are not sold into private hands or the art market. Every step in the process of how to make a replica is easy to follow, and the reader gets the feeling that this is done with a passion for the craft.

The other article that stood out was the one by Jan Hochbruck (p. 181) about the wax-based ship paint that is used to seal the gaps in wood. He refers to ancient texts that mention ship paint as the basis for his idea but had to discover the right mixture through experimentation.

The ship they painted for the project was part of project FAN ("Fridericiana Alexandrina Navis") and called Victoria 2018. It was unfortunate that the temperature influenced the experiment so that the paint became useless for its purpose.

PART 3: Communicating and Theory (*Vermittlung und Theorie*), p.200 - 319

The last part is the longest of the three, containing eleven articles. The essays discuss experimental archaeology in Europe (*Experimentelle Archäologie in Europa – State of the art 2019*, Gunther Schöbel, p. 201); mediation and reception of experimental archaeology (*Vermittlung und Rezeption von Experimenteller Archäologie am Beispiel der Veranstaltungsreihe „Experimentelle Archäologie aus Europa – Wissen erlebbar gemacht" im Pfahlbaumuseum Unteruhldingen am Bodensee*, Vera Edelstein, Gunter Schöbel, p.215); archaeological open air centres and solitary archaeological constructions in the Netherlands (Jeroen Flamman, p. 225); archaeology of the future (*"Archäologie der Zukunft – Direktvermittlung Wissen" – Ein Kooperationsprojekt von Museum und Universität*, Katja Thode, p. 239); an experimental archaeological working area in Borg (*Der experimentalarchäologische Werkstattbereich im Archäologiepark Römische Villa Borg*, Bettina Birkenhagen, Frank Wiesenberg, p. 245); the limits of respresention in Living History (*Zu den Grenzen der Darstellbarkeit in der Living History*, Rüdiger Schwarz, p. 257); reproduction of bloomeries (*„Schüler heizen ein!" – Nachbau von Rennöfen in den Schülerpraktika des Alamannen-Freilichtmuseums Vörstetten*, Kai Bölstler, p.273); a journey to the Stone Age people in the highlands of New Guinea (Claudia S. Riedt, S.284); the usage of beeswax (*Zur Nutzung von Bienenwachs von der Urgeschichte bis in die Neuzeit – eine Vorstudie*, Peter Walter, p. 293); knots in the Stone and Bronze Age (*Knoten in der Stein- und Bronzezeit*, Matthias Baumhauer, p. 308); the transport of the Stonehenge stones (*Der Transport der Stonehenge-Steine*, Arnulf Braune, p. 314).

As the title of part three suggests, it is the most theory based of all three parts in the book, presenting theory behind the experiments and reconstruction. The main focus in this part is the education, mediation and re-enactment of history and archaeology. The last four articles seem misplaced as they do not follow the main theme of education and mediation of experimental archaeology. However, they present interesting points within their fields, nevertheless.

All in all, the periodical with its 27 essays, gives a broad overview of experimental archaeology and offers a nice overview of various subjects within, for instance niche-furnaces that have currently only been found in that part of Austria (p.105). It presents studies and experiments that were carried out with passion and bring the reader one step closer to understanding the lives of past cultures and people.

Book information:

Schöbel, Gunter (ed.), 2018. *Experimentelle Archäologie in Europa, Jahrbuch 2019, Heft 18*, Unteruhldingen: Gunter Schöbel & Europäische Vereinigung zur Förderung der Experimentellen Archäologie e.V. European Association for the advancement of archaeology by experiment, ISBN: 978-3-944255 – 15 - 6.

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