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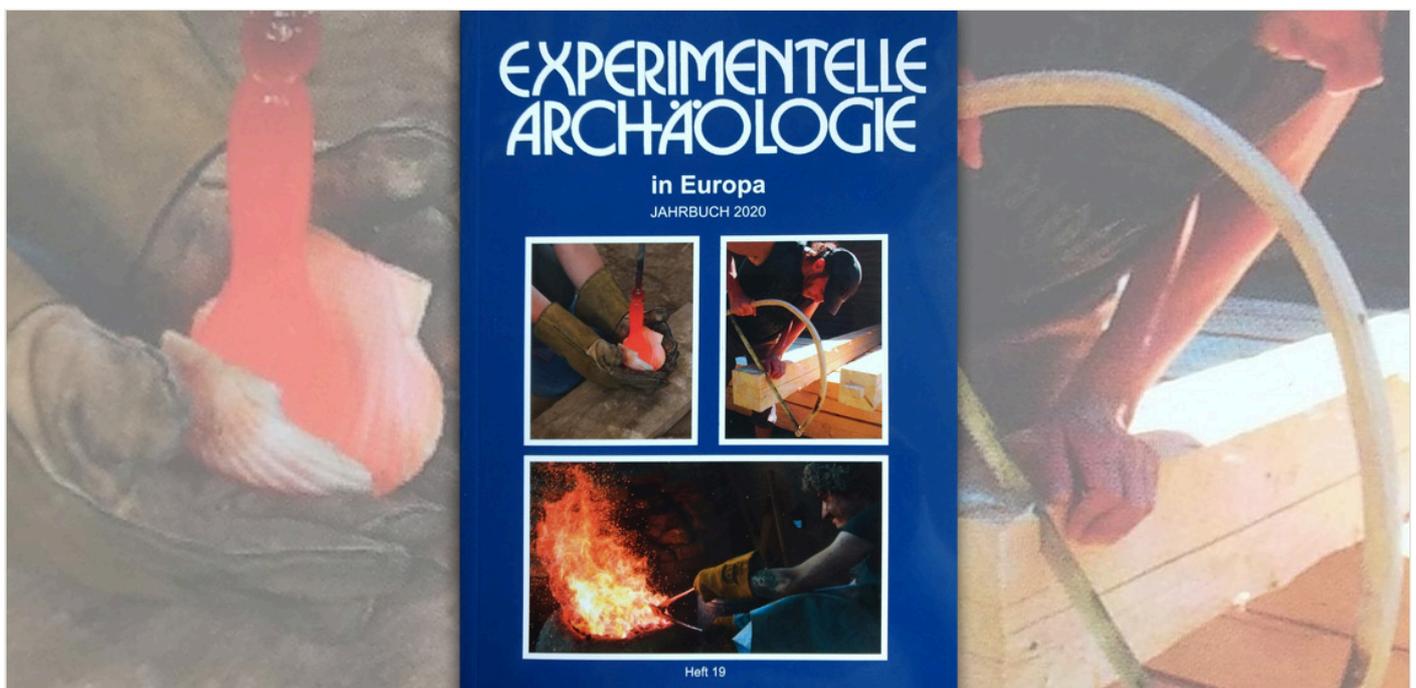
Book Review: Experimentelle Archäologie in Europa, Jahrbuch 2020

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The periodical (Jahrbuch) was 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 Unterhuldigen*. The 19th issue of the periodical includes 19 essays over 231 pages which present the contributions of the EXAR conference held in 2019. The annual report

(Jahresbericht, p.225) and the instructions for authors (Autorenrichtlinien, p.229) of *Experimentelle Archäologie in Europa* can be found at the end.



All in all, the periodical provides a broad overview of experimental archaeology and offers a nice overview of various subjects within the field.

As in the previous issues, the essays are divided into three categories: the first addresses the experimental side of archaeology; the second focuses on reconstruction; and the third deals with theory. The concise articles are well written and comprehensible, even for non-specialists of the various fields. The periodical is another collection of fascinating experiments to discover the past and all contributors show a passion for their field and know how to captivate the reader. All articles have an English summary; contact details of the authors, as well as a selected bibliography are included at the end of the article, in case readers have further questions or

are interested in the topic. The articles are fully illustrated with coloured plates and a description provided in both German and English.

PART 1: Experiment and Attempt (Experiment und Versuch), pp.10-123.

The first part contains nine essays dealing with a broad spectrum of topics within experimental archaeology; from prehistoric casting processes via Roman glass to Byzantine recipes for glue. The articles include:

- hourglass casting process (*Der Sanduhrguss – ein mögliches prähistorisches Gussverfahren?*, Marcel Lorenz and Stefan Stadler, p.10);
- archaeometallurgical experiments (*Archäometallurgische Experimente zur Herstellung von kupferzeitlichen Schaflochäxten*, Ralf Laschimke and Maria Burger, p.26);
- Eastern Alpine upper grandstones and prehistoric copper mining (*Geschäftete Ostalpine Läufersteine als Besonderheit des prähistorischen Kupferbergbaus*, Roman Lamprecht, p.35);
- rituals (*Die Materie von Ritualen*, Michaela Fritzl and Michael Konrad, p.48);
- textile material after a cremation (*Wieviel Textil bleibt übrig bei einer Brandbestattung?* Karina Grömer, p.68);
- wood fired bead furnances (*Ein holzbefeuertes Perlenofen nach antikem(?) Vorbild in Călugăreni/Mikháza, Reis Mureş(RO) – eine Weiterentwicklung des mittlerweile gängigen Schemas*, Constanze Höpken, Karl Oberhofer, Szilamér-Péter Pánczél and Manuel Fiedler, p.82);
- Roman beauty rituals (*Blick in eine verborgene Welt*, Andrea Koppel, p.96);
- Roman shell-shaped bottles (*Römische Muschelgefäße – Form oder nicht Form?* Bettina Birkenhagen, p.106); and

- Byzantine glue recipe (*Byzantinisches Rezept "über die Verfertigung einer Verleimung für Töpfe und Röhren für ein Bad"*, Sayuri de Silva and Josef Engelmann, p.113).

Two articles in the first part deal with a topic that at first glance does not seem to offer much evidence or material to work with: *Die Materie von Ritualen* by M Fritzl and M Konrad and *Wieviel Textil bleibt übrig bei einer Brandbestattung?* By K Grömer. Both articles need to be read together as they mention two different parts of the same experiment. The first article focuses on the rituals and grave good within a cremation burial which only recently have become part of the scientific research (p.51). The authors analysed the direct influence of the fire on metal objects, ceramics and their content and provide a detailed setup with coloured plates. They conclude that these kinds of experiments can be used as a way to differentiate between a cremation ritual and a burial ritual. The second article focuses on the textiles with the cremation burial contexts: are there any textile traces left and if, which material? For this experiment, a pig, the flesh and bones of which are the closest to a human body, was dressed in era appropriate clothing with different materials e. g. linen shirt, leather belt and woollen cloak. The setup of the experiment is completed with detailed drawings and close up images of the textiles used. The author concludes that traces of textiles can survive the fire and can be found in the burial when they are picked up all together. However, the soil condition and context of the grave they are based in is important for the survival of the textiles.

PART 2: Reconstructive Archaeology (Rekonstruierende Archäologie), p.124-158.

There are only four articles in the second part of the issue dealing with prehistoric topics including:

- the open air museum in Schwarzenbach (*Das keltische Freilichtmuseum von Schwarzenbach in der Buckligen Welt in Niederösterreich und die experimentalarchäologische Errichtung von zwei neuen eisenzeitlichen Hausmodellen*, Wolfgang F. A. Lobisser, p.125);
- the cattail and its importance in prehistoric diet (*Der Rohrkolben und seine Bedeutung in der prähistorischen Ernährung – ein Experiment zur Verarbeitung*, Sandra Umgeher-Mayer, p.142);
- half braiding from lime bast (*Halbgeflecht aus Lindenbast*, Anne Reichert, p.146); and
- the reconstruction of a Neolithic hat (*Rekonstruktion eines jungsteinzeitlichen Hutes*, Anne Reichert, p.154).

The most interesting article in the second part was the one by S Umgeher-Meyer *Der Rohrkolben und seine Bedeutung in der prähistorischen Ernährung*. At a time when many people are going back to basics, wanting to live more organic and sustainable, looking at our prehistoric predecessor for recommendations seems like a plausible option. The author

explains the problem when working with archaeological plant material as survival depends highly on the soil conditions. Never having heard of cattail as an edible before, I was surprised by the variety of usage it offers: the roots contain starch, sugar, fat and minerals; the leaves have a disinfectant effect (p.143) and when dried and ground, the flour can be used for breadmaking (p.144).

PART 3: Communicating and Theory (Vermittlung und Theorie), p. 159-223.

The last part contains six articles, consisting of:

- the issue of living history (*Richtig falsch?! Tobias Schubert, p. 160*);
- the statistical analysis of experimental data in regard to woollen garments (*Erfahrungsbericht: statistische Auswertung experimenteller Daten, Kathrin Krüger, p.168*);
- encyclopedias (*Erfahrungswissen ZweiPunktNull. Maren Siegmann, p.177*);
- the methodical considerations for the reconstruction of (pre-)historical garments (*Vom Fragment zum Modell – methodische Überlegungen zur Rekonstruktion (prä-)historischer Kleidung, Helga Rösel-Mautendorfer, p.190*);
- citizen science and ancient textiles (*Ancient Textiles – Modern Hands, Ines Bogensperger, p.202*); and
- the connection between experimental archaeology and modern art (*Experimentelle Archäologie meets Modern Art, Leona Kohl, Clara Palmisano, Manuel Wandl and Karina Grömer, p.212*).

The last part starts with an article, *Richtig falsch?! by T Schubert*, looking into living history, reenactment and pictures. The paper points out that by using Living History and Living Museum to replicate the past and archaeological goods, there is always the “danger” of presenting a wrong impression of the past and the period (p.160). The author points out that these are moments in time that we select, based on the information we have and that the unpleasant side of the past, e. g. malnutrition, sexual violence or diseases are usually not portrayed in these reconstructions (p. 165). The article provides food for thought and researchers need to consider what key elements Living History and Living Museum want to show.

All in all, the periodical provides a broad overview of experimental archaeology and offers a nice overview of various subjects within the field. It presents studies and experiments that were carried out with a passion for archaeology and history and at the same time, 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 2020, Heft 19, 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 – 17-0.

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