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Unreviewed Mixed Matters Article:

Conference Review: EAStS 2018 – 1st Experimental Archaeology Student Symposium, Newcastle Upon Tyne

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On the 27th and 28th October 2018, the 1st Annual "Experimental Archaeology Student Symposium" (EAStS) took place in Newcastle Upon Tyne, United Kingdom (UK). This was founded and organised in 2018 by Experimental Archaeology Newcastle (EXARN) and hosted by Newcastle University, Jarrow Hall: Anglo-Saxon Farm, Village and Bede Museum, the latter both members of EXARC. EXARN is a recently established experimental archaeology (EA) research group at Newcastle University. Its aim is to bring together researchers employing EA

and to encourage, aid and inform those interested in this research method, including students and academics alike.

> We are delighted that the conference was so well received by all who participated and with its continuation on into 2019!

On the first day of the Symposium, after a brief introduction to the conference by Marco Romeo Pitone (EXARN), a series of interesting talks were presented by post graduate students from universities across the UK and beyond.

John Piprani (University of Manchester) opened the first session with "Learning Through Making: an active research framework". John explained his own approach to the study of lithics, and how he could unlock this knowledge from an educational point of view, creating an effective learning model based on the use of a substitute material: glass. His educational approach to this area of study, which has been most studied by experimental archaeology, "provides an active research framework for a self-directed exploration of stone tool technologies".

The second speaker of the day was Cvetelina Dimitrova (University of Milan; Centro Studi di Preistoria e Archeologia, Milano), paper on "Domestic ovens in Late Bronze Age Central Italy: the case study of Sorgenti della Nova". Analysing data collected from a multiannual site located in ancient Etruria, Cvetelina was able to build a research protocol to carry out a preliminary pilot experiment, testing the building techniques of a Late Bronze Age dome-shaped oven and its thermic properties.

The final paper of the morning was presented by Izzy Wisher (Durham University), with "Grounding the Theoretical: The Contribution of Experimental Archaeology to Understanding the Role of Palaeolithic Personal Ornaments". Izzy's paper presented the reproduction of personal ornaments from the Magdalenian sites of Saint-Germain-La-Rivière and El Mirón. She focused on the use of experimental archaeology and its potential in providing crucial insights into the process of becoming involved in an object's biography, something which is absent from the material record.

The second session was opened by Yvette Marks (The University of Sheffield) whose presentation on "Reforging past practice: The experimental reconstruction of the Iron Bloomery process" was dedicated on ancient metallurgy. She reviewed an extended series of experimental iron bloomery smelts (over 70!) which took place over the last 15 years as part of the teaching and outreach agendas of the department of Archaeology at Sheffield. Her study also considered strategies for repair and maintenance alongside processes associated with the abandonment of a smelting site.

Following this, Victoria Lucas (Newcastle University; EXARN) gave her paper titled "Once is not enough: Experimental glass recycling in a wood-fired glass working furnace", presenting her

future project of building a replica Roman/Anglo-Saxon wood fired glass working furnace, at Jarrow Hall: Anglo-Saxon Farm, with the help of expert glassworkers. Her aim is to performing repeated recycling, which will enable her to collect, alongside quantitative data on changes in chemical composition, information difficult to obtain from the archaeological record, such as the changes in glass working properties after recycling and the possible ways in which these changes can be adapted to.

Andy Needham (University of York) and his team[1] closed the second session with a presentation on "Exploring the life history of shale beads and pendants at the Mesolithic site of Star Carr". Through a series of actualistic experiments, he considered: sourcing of the raw materials; method of shaping-perforating-engraving; the presence/absence of colourants; how the beads and pendants were worn; and the significance of their deposition. In his study Andy combined scientific analyses, digital techniques and experimental archaeology to describe object biographies.

After lunch, the third session of the day was opened by **Marco Romeo Pitone** (Newcastle University; EXARN) who presented his experimental work on "Crucible copper smelting in Early-Middle Bronze Age Cyprus", considering the data collected from the site of Pyrgos-Mavroraki (Limassol, CY). His preliminary pilot experiments were carried out in a bowl-shaped furnace using crucibles and blow-pipes.

Next, **Marta Innes** (University of Glasgow) introduced her paper "Making Prehistoric Pottery – A New Materialistic Perspective" focusing on the Scottish Bronze Age pottery class of Food Vessels (2140-1620 BC). Through a very interesting approach, which involved hands-on engagement with raw materials, Marta enlightened the importance of shifting the attention "from the finished product of the static pot to the active experience of making".

Hywel Lewis (University of Bradford) closed the third session with "Using experimental methods to understand waste assemblages at charcoal production sites". Through the comparison of the anthracological data collected from charcoal production sites and pseudo-archaeological assemblages from two experimental traditional charcoal production events, Hywel described a new methodology applicable to the interpretation of archaeological remains from charcoal burning platforms.

After a much-deserved tea break, the final paper of the day was delivered by **Amber Roy** (Newcastle University; EXARN). Amber's paper was entitled "The functionality of battle axes: using experimental tests and wear analysis to test stereotypical and dated assumptions of use." Amber discussed her experiments using replica prehistoric (c. 2200 - 1500 BC) battle axes, combined with comparative use wear analysis of both replica and archaeological specimens to challenge the conventional interpretations of such implements as non-functional symbols of power.

The first day of the conference ended with some closing remarks by **Victoria Lucas** and with the selection, by vote, of the University of Sheffield as host institution of EAStS in 2019.

On the second day of the Symposium, a delegation from the conference visited Jarrow Hall: Anglo-Saxon Farm, Village and Bede Museum, where the speakers had the chance to participate in a "glass-knapping" workshop led by **John Piprani**, exploring the methods used for flint-knapping applied to a more readily available material, such as glass. After the workshop, the first official public screening of EXARN's documentary "Experimental Archaeology at Newcastle University" took place in the Main Suite room at Jarrow Hall.

We are delighted that the conference was so well received by all who participated and with its continuation on into 2019, hopefully EAStS will be able to establish itself as a real highlight of the conference year for students of experimental archaeology for years to come!

1 Michael Bamforth (University of York), Garth Beale (University of Glasgow), Konstantinos Chatzipanagis (University of York), Shannon Croft (University of York), Chantal Conneller (Newcastle University), Ben Elliott (University College Dublin), Laura Fitton (University of York), Becky Knight (University of York), Roland Kröger (University of York), Aimée Little (University of York), Nicky Milner University of York), Diederik Pomstra (University of Leiden), Harry Robson (University of York), Charlotte Rowley (University of York), Barry Taylor (University of Chester).

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