EXARC JOURNAL 2023/3
12 Articles | Open Access

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Unreviewed Mixed Matters Article:

Conference Review: EAC13, Torun, Poland, May 2023

Persistent Identifier: https://exarc.net/ark:/88735/10695

EXARC Journal Issue 2023/3 | **Publication Date:** 2023-08-25

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This year EXARC/EAC held its first fully hybrid conference at Nikolaus Copernicus University in Toruń, Poland on 1-3 May. Using the experience and technology from the EAC World Tour, the previous conference in 2021, EXARC was able to include international speakers who would otherwise be unable to participate in the conference. Unlike other hybrid conferences that

have remote speakers present their work via Zoom or other service, participants at EAC13 provided videos of their presentations that were loaded onto EXARC's YouTube channel and broadcast during the conference.

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Speakers were able to join in the question and answer sessions, either in person at the conference or through the remote feed. Since the presentations were pre-recorded, and thanks to the behind the scenes tech team, the sessions ran smoothly and on time. In addition, the presentations continue to be available on EXARC's Youtube channel https://www.youtube.com/@exarc.

The conference opened on 1 May with welcoming videos from Stanislaw Roszak, the Dean of the Faculty of History; conference organisers, Grzegorz Osipowicz and Dr Justyna Orłowska; Peter Inker, President of EXARC. This was followed by a keynote speech presented in a video about the history, science, and education of experimental archaeology of Poland by Grzegorz Osipowicz, Justyna Orłowska, and Justyna Kuriga.

Each session began with an introductory video made by the session sponsor with the theme "I Like to be Here". For the most part the presentations were in two parallel sessions.

Session 1A began with a presentation on Plaquette engravings, which cleverly used different colours to denote art carved into the plaquettes over time by different artists (Jérôme Robitaille, Lisa-Elen Meyering). The presentations on experimental reproduction of bone retouchers (Piotr Werens) and Palaeolithic ornamentation in experiments (Tomasz Plonka) used short videos/gifs to effectively show the different actions used to shape the objects. Often physical experiments can be hard to translate into an engaging presentation, but they succeeded. Phoebe Baker's presentation on Neanderthal footwear was an excellent prompt to reconsider preconceptions of Neanderthals.

Session 1B featured pyrotechnics, with presentations comparing different types of Iron Age combustion structures (Maria-Carme Belarte), experiments in cremation (Yannis Chatzikonstantinou), and a survey of pyrotechnological development in Harappa (Garima Singh). The session began with an introduction to the Kujawsko-Pomorskie Voivodeship, highlighting its natural beauty and events and continued with presentations on the various ways in which high temperature work is manifested in the archaeological record and how experimental archaeology can bring to light choices made in antiquity. Recreating different types of hearths and cremation environments showed how the structure affected the results, making clear that people in the past made decisions based on how they knew the structure would function. Dominika Tokarz's poster presentation about bone tube whistles was

entertaining and informative, showing that they could be used for long range signalling, and also for music.

During Session 2A Nicolas Revert's paper on turning Roman columns on a lathe showed how reenactment groups can help contribute to experimental archaeology, and has opened up interesting questions regarding using a lathe for stone. Jim Glizzard's striking presentation gave insight into a structure built with the materials available, rather than materials specifically picked for the job. A good reminder that not all things found in archaeology are shining examples of their form. In contrast, Caroline Nicolay's presentation helped to reframe how we should present the ancient world to modern audiences, and consider what can be applied today from past building practices. Wattle and daub walls can be beautifully crafted and painted, therefore making them a viable building material now. Audience members were particularly curious to learn Caroline's recipe for the perfect daub. Maria Pastor Quiles also extolled the virtues of using mud as a building material. Her presentation described creating a reference collection for plant remains incorporated in mud buildings, a fantastic resource for researchers. Gabriela Mingatos clearly demonstrated how experimental archaeology is integral to understanding the *chaine operatoire* behind bone tool technologies used in Brazil's past. Diana Ayapova's presentation furthered a previous presentation to EXARC about archaeology in Kazakhstan, further detailing moving turf and logs to create a barrow.

Session 2B opened with a presentation about medieval open air museums in the Kujawsko-Pomorskie region of Poland, followed by presentations about organic materials (wood, leather, and plant remains). The session began with a paper by Aleksandra Gawron-Szymczyk about the creation of a phytolith reference collection. Phytoliths are durable remains of plants that can be recovered from various contexts, including house daub. The reference collection will be valuable for researchers to gain a more complete understanding of the local landscape. Sally Herriett's paper explored tanning processes and whether some objects that we take for granted as leather, may not have been tanned at all. The following two papers explored wood in the archaeological record. Grzegorz Osipowicz discussed whether it is possible to connect the cuts and marks on wood with specific tools, and Paloma Vidal-Matutano spoke about pre-Hispanic woodwork in the Canary islands. The final paper explored the idea of examining apple seeds to find out how the fruits were processed.

Session 3A was sponsored by University College Dublin. The first presentation by Martin Dael and Tríona Sørensen laid out plans for a reconstruction of Skuldelev 5, a late Viking Age Warship. It was interesting to see how they will approach the construction compared to a previous reconstruction of the same ship. A presentation about the International Camp of Experimental Archaeology detailed making a dugout boat and a hide boat, which provided a fantastic learning opportunity for students. Those who physically attended the conference were able to see the marvellous hide boat displayed in the main foyer. Tríona Sørensen's presentation reported on the incredible effect of the Gislinge boat open source project – a

resource allowing people to try building the Gislinge boat themselves. This provided an opportunity for communities around the globe to actively engage in building a boat and share their findings. Igor Chechushkov and Ivan Semyan's presentation detailed testing a Bronze Age Chariot, in particular focusing on testing different bits (for horses) and proving how efficient shield type cheek pieces are. They theorised the chariot was used for combat. The session concluded with an interesting presentation (Bangcheng Tang) on Xiao flute playing, based on a chinese terracotta figurine.

Session 3B was sponsored by University College Dublin and featured the UCD Centre for Experimental Archaeology and Material Culture in their video. This session's focus was on textiles and weaving. Magdalena Przymorska-Sztuczka explored the functionality of textile tools found in Wielbank Culture burials, and Anita Radini looked at how textile work might have affected skeletal remains. Kat Stasinka looked at how the direction used for spinning yarn affected woven textiles and Jo Duke experimented with weaving textiles to see if they could reveal the type of loom used to produce them. In the final paper of the session Richard Joseph Palmer recreated Etruscan tablet weaving patterns.

Session 4 was sponsored by John Kiernan, who sponsors the EXARC Experimental Archaeology Award. The session featured an introduction to Archaeological Open-Air museums in Ukraine, followed by a round table, exploring the struggles our Ukrainian colleagues face in preserving their past and growing open-air museums, a key resource in providing people with pride in their culture.

The first day closed with Session 5, one of two online only sessions. Having every presentation pre-recorded and accessed via YouTube meant that whilst these online sessions involved no live audience in Poland, they fitted seamlessly with the other sessions. To those accessing the conference remotely, there was no difference between these sessions and the other hybrid sessions.

Session 5 featured a number of presentations focussing on painting and decoration. The first of these presentations was by Felix-Adrian Tencariu and focussed on using experimental archaeology to identify pigment mixes used in Chalcolithic painted pottery. The paper nicely summarised the variety of difficulties that their team had in getting a pigment recipe that survived firing and ended with a successful recipe that included purified clay. This was then followed by several papers on jewellery making, including Monica Mărgărit's paper on processing Unio sp. shells as beads, Sue Heasers' paper on recreating Anglo-Saxon glass beads and Gerald Livings' presentation on making aiglets. Complementing these papers on jewellery, Aaron Deter-Wolf then explored more permanent body decoration in his paper on recreating and identifying techniques used in archaeological tattooing. This paper involved an impressive archaeological and geographical scope, and as such explored a wide range of potential techniques with a selection of interesting images and videos to complement this.

The session concluded by returning to pigments and painting with a presentation by Matías Landino exploring rock art application techniques that may have been used in paintings from La Candaleria in Argentina.

On Tuesday Session 6 began with a sponsored presentation about the natural beauty of Kujawsko-Pomorskieand events such as the Tournament of Knights in Golub - Dobrzyn, that are held there. This was followed by Annalou van Gijn's paper on Maasamuda (NL) , an open-air archaeological educational centre where students and researchers can explore the daily life of Neolithic people. This was followed by Joao Marreiros' discussion about how experiments can be divided into different generations that provide varying degrees of control that can help quantify results. This was complemented by Lisa Shrunk's paper that examined how variability in experiments, especially in use-wear, can be better controlled through the use of robotics and compared to use-wear caused by humans. Vibeke Bischoff then presented a paper on her work with recreating Viking ships and how experiments in design can be severely affected by preconceived ideas. The session ended with three posters that provide tools for researchers. Concepción Torres Navas' poster describes a project where collections of experimental lithic technotypes can be used to identify various features such as skill levels and decision processes in ancient lithics. Ivan Calandra's team has developed a prototype for a visual workflow tool that can be used for recording experiment design that will develop ways of reporting, documenting and sharing experimental designs and results. Their second poster proposes a platform where experimenters can submit project designs before running the experiments. It would function in the same way as a peer review, but before the work is done, thereby eliminating flaws in methodology.

Session 7A was sponsored by the Faculty of History NCU in Torun and the NCU Center of Underwater Archaeology. This session was primarily focused on lithics. Kiefer Duffy spoke about the importance of sound in toolmaking, an often underrepresented area of research. Martín Julio García Natale and Samuel Castillo Jiménez discussed the weight to thickness ratio regarding breakage patterns of Solutrean points. Likewise, Andy Needham and Jessica Bates also looked at breakage patterns in flint awls, in order to determine if snapped awls found in archaeological contexts are a result of taphonomy, use, or something else. The paper 'Is it worth curating?' looked at the prolonged use life of repaired and recycled tools - an incredibly human behaviour that extends past functionality. Kamil Nowak, Albin Sokół, and Dawid Sych discussed the Lusatian Socketed Axes, cataloguing use-wear resulting from different materials. The session closed with a poster displaying a range of experimental projects undertaken by students from NCU, including cooking in a hide, using natural dyes, and hand stencils.

Session 7B had two sponsors: The Nicolaus Copernicus University and the NCU Center of Underwater Archaeology. The session featured educational events and museum experiences. The session began with Giovanna Fregni's overview of the Vounous Symposium

in Northern Cyprus and discussed its plans to develop an open-air museum there. Arturs Tomsons spoke about the Experimental Archaeology and Ancient Technology Summer School, which is celebrating its tenth anniversary. Jan Ledwoń spoke about how high temperatures transform the components such as minerals used for temper in prehistoric pottery, and how examination can determine if pottery was used in high temperature activities. The reproduction of Gallo-Roman clothing was the subject of Gaëlle Desgouttes's talk. She and her team at Musée et sites gallo-romains de Saint-Romain-en-Gal compared depictions and descriptions of women's clothing to determine how they could have been worn. The session ended with Nathalie Roy speaking about incorporating experimental archaeology in elementary schools in the US.

Session 8A was sponsored by EXARC, detailing the fantastic opportunities such as fellowships and microfunding. This session was focused on lithics, opening with Ana Tetrushvili's presentation on experimenting with querns fixed in raised platforms in Georgia. Lasse van den Dikkenberg introduced 'putting life into late neolithic houses', a project his work is part of. The presentation focused on grinding and polishing experiments, in particular resharpening and reshaping axes. Görkem Cenk Yeşilova presented on the Physics of Bipolar Reduction, challenging the view that the technique is overly simple/unskilled. The presentation on the 'slugs' of the Itaparica Tradition was warmly presented by José Lucas Otero Couto with a good dose of humour, presenting the 'life cycle' of a slug as it is reshaped throughout its use. Wojciech Bronowicki, Tomasz Płonka, Marcin Chłoń presented on the ornamentation of stone battle-axes from Poland, focusing on the process of ornamentation and creating a reference collection. In a similar vein, Anđa Petrović discussed creating a reference collection of polished stones used for grinding ochre, testing the pigments on stone, wood, hide, and human skin. This was followed by a presentation on the importance of flintknapping demonstrations and workshops, thus further developing experimental archaeology in Brazil. It is fantastic to see this field of study growing in Brazil. The session finished with a poster about the use of charcoal in rock art from Patagonia, exploring if charcoal changed the consistency or hue of pigment, and determining if it was intentional or merely a by-product of heat treatment.

Session 8B was sponsored by EXARC. This session focussed on food and drink beginning with Laura Angotti's presentation on yeasts and the fermentation processes of mead. This was followed by Tetsuya Shiroboshi's paper on cooking experiments using reconstructed Neolithic pottery. Scott Stull presented the results of his work making cheese using replicas of Roman and Neolithic ceramic cheese strainers and moulds, and the different types of cheeses that could be made with them. Katazyna Gromek's presentation covered the production of scented oils and the significance of resins and other components. Katarzyna Pyżewicz explored the use of lithic tools to create shell beads and concluded with microscopic analyses to examine wear traces on the tools that were used. The session ended with a poster by Aleksandra Gawron-Szymczyk who explored use-wear traces on Late Bronze Age pottery from

the Wrocław-Widawa area. These were used to identify whether pottery was used for cooking, serving food or storage.

Session 9A was sponsored by the University of Wroclaw. The session began with a presentation (Maria Eduarda Vilela e Donegá, João Carlos Moreno) further demonstrating the growth of flintknapping research in Brazil, using these skills to research cultural transmission in hominins. Idaira Brito-Abrante discussed working vegetal materials with obsidian and volcanic rocks, conducting use-wear analysis and concluding it is easier to identify the use-wear of raw materials that have been processed using obsidian. Branka Franicevic presented on the factors affecting the types of necrobiome in a wrapped microenvironment, providing a fascinating glimpse into forensic archaeology. This was followed by an experiment testing bone tools to determine if they were used for mining or ore processing, presented by Olga Zagorodnia. The closing poster was presented by Jérôme Robitaille, discussing how handedness can be identified on the Gönnersdorf Plaquettes

The Dark Ages Re-Creation Company sponsored session 9B. The session's theme was metalworking in both ferrous and non-ferrous metals. The session began with Darrell Markewitz questioning the validity of adding bones to iron smelts. It was followed by Yoddanai Sukkasam's overview of iron smelting sites in Li District, Lamphun Province, Thailand and his experiments based on excavated evidence. Inbar Meyerson discussed the value of beneficiation in smelting chalcolithic copper ore. The final paper explored how experiments with forced patination and corrosion can affect evidence of use-wear on copper objects.

The final session of the conference was Session 10, the second of the online only sessions. This session featured a slightly more eclectic mix of papers, ranging from reproducing opaque red glass to analysing the movements of experimentalists through the lens of dance. The session opened with Laura-Marie Miucci's paper on Trevisker Ware, a type of pottery unique to Cornwall in the UK. Miucci suggests that this pottery may have had cultural significance that transcended food or storage requirements, and may have been associated with funerary practices in the area. This was followed by an interesting investigation on how techniques such as X-Ray Fluorescence Spectroscopy could contribute to conversations on the ethics of historic conservation practices used on a collection of Greek Lekythoi. Rachel Wood then explored some of the difficulties in reproducing Iron Age opaque red glass, and Line van Wersch provided an experimental comparison of two Merovingian pottery kilns found in Belgium. The penultimate presentation of the conference was by Michael Roberts, who looked at steam and belt power during the industrialisation of the USA. He highlighted how easily knowledge can be lost when it's not explicitly written down, which is a feeling I think a lot of the presenters at the conference can relate to. Finally, Thaisa Martins concluded the session with her presentation on how dance can be used to examine how experimenters act through their experiments.

Following on from this session, Roeland Paardekooper provided a few live last closing words about the conference. These words were a lovely way of closing the conference, and highlighted the breadth of presentations and presenters, as well as the number of people the conference had already reached.

One of the important features of the conference was the launch of the Support Ukraine Network (SUN). On Wednesday a round table was held to discuss how best to support museums and their staff, and the cultural heritage of Ukraine during the war there. The delegation from Ukraine showed videos of the ongoing work in the open-air museum where displaced children learn crafts and about their cultural heritage in a safe and peaceful environment. Meanwhile students, researchers, and others are fighting on the front lines knowing that the future of their cultural heritage depends on their actions. The mission of SUN is to set up a network that will connect others who are concerned about the survival of Ukraine's cultural heritage. Medium term plans include identifying specific needs and how individuals and organisations make a real difference. Longer term goals include how to support museums in the current situation and later in a post-war environment. "No one should be excluded from electricity, water, life, but also culture" - Roeland Paardekooper. The round table helped to illustrate how integral culture is to a sense of self. The later excursion to *Muzeum Archeologiczne w Biskupinie* further showed this, as conference participants learned of the ideological clash that occurred during WWII.

Overall the hybrid conference was a great success. Having the pre-recorded papers made for a much more relaxed event for the presenters. A great technical team made sure that technological problems were taken care of immediately. Few people realised that any problems arose at all. Having all the presentations available on EXARC's YouTube channel means that the information is available to everyone and is easily shared. EXARC has made the conference a true Open Access event that benefits not only the conference attendees, but also the general public. EXARC is truly unique in its ability to support a range of experimental archaeologists spanning the globe. Many colleagues do not have the same access to resources, but have creatively overcome the challenges. The EXARC community can further help by providing and sharing knowledge to continue developing good practice and standardised methods. Truly a unique conference in its scope and variety.

Keywords conference
review
EAC
experimental archaeology

Country Poland

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