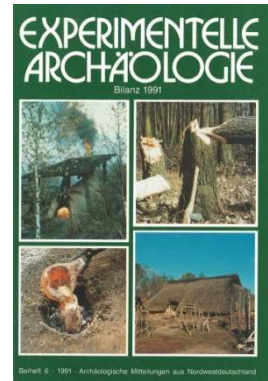


Experimentelle Archäologie in Deutschland Bilanz 1991

R. P. Paardekooper, February 2002

The so called 'Bilanz 1991' appeared 1,5 years after the opening of the exhibition 'Experimentelle Archäologie in Deutschland' and contains 40 papers partly delivered at the 1st 'Tagung' which took place in 1990 in Oldenburg.

Dr. Fansa takes the opportunity to look back on how the exhibition was accepted and on which points adjustments have been made.



The division in 10 chapters only fitted one single issue. This time, the subjects of papers are sometimes very different from those of the first book (like ethno archaeology, bone and antler working). In other cases, there are no or just little contributions delivered to subjects, mentioned as chapters in the 1990 book (agriculture, transport, construction of graves, stone tools).

The articles from *Lüning*, *Richter* and *Weiner* are all three very important for understanding experimental archaeology in general and - in the case of *Weiner* - the typical German situation. *Lüning* describes in his four pages long speech what experimental archaeology is and what not. There are two major points he wants to raise:

1. The archaeological experiment is not a reconstruction but it is meant to make observations to enlarge knowledge, not to share knowledge with the public.
2. An experiment is expensive and because of that a serious matter.

Richter offers a very well thought through article on "experimental archaeology: goals, methods and limits to conclusions". She gets 30 pages room, but it is very well worth it.

The article by *Weiner* offers a description and interpretation of archaeological experiments as activity in Germany from the very beginning up to 1989.

In this volume, a series of museums offer a presentation, sometimes on what they have constructed, in other cases on their activities. After having read the first mentioned three articles it is somewhat painful to see how little of this acquired knowledge on methods, techniques and theory has found its way towards those archaeological open air museums. In some cases, the link between science and educational activities is very strong, in other cases the presented projects are too much focussed on education, telling a story instead of on the quality they are responsible to keep up high.

Seven of the 40 articles are about activities taking place in open air centres involving public. A few years later, a spinoff of these proceedings formed the book "experimental archaeology and museum education" which was as well the theme of the 2000 Tagung in Mettmann. There is a large input from the Düppel project in Berlin. Volunteers of that successful centre have added 6 articles to this volume. This is less than in the first book - the exhibition guide with 12 contributions from Berlin - but still a good sign of how successful Düppel is in the beginning of the 1990s. Many of their articles, they collected in a separate volume, which is available directly from the project at <http://www.dueppel.de>

Fansa, M. (editor) (1991): Experimentelle Archäologie: Bilanz 1991, Oldenburg: Isensee, Archäologische Mitteilungen aus Nordwestdeutschland: Beiheft 6, (Oldenburg: Isensee), 405 pp, ISBN 3-89442-114-2 ISSN 0170-5776, (sold out).