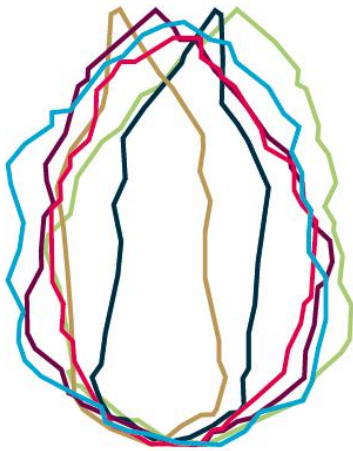


MONREPOS – THE MUSEUM IS OPEN!

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Monrepos

Archaeological Research Centre and Museum
for Human Behavioural Evolution

Since the Day of Archaeology on Friday and my last post, a lot has happened – in particular, a lot of work! During the whole weekend, many of us continued being busy with final preparations such as arranging exhibits, painting texts on the walls, labelling artefacts, glueing QR codes to the show cases and supplementary booklets, and an awful lot of cleaning!





The funny thing is that even though prehistory is often covered with dirt – well, at least the artefacts... and, occasionally, our field plans and equipments... and most of the time our clothes –, exhibits need to be perfectly clean.

Yet, cleaning is one of these works most people don't expect when thinking of prehistoric archaeology but actually it's a huge part of our job: On excavation we constantly clean profiles, the planum, the camera lenses and other equipment such as our glasses, afterwards the finds are cleaned, the data is cleaned from errors, outliers, false recordings, then we clear our minds to look at the result in a least biased way, well, and then we make everything extra clean and clear to exhibit the lessons we have learned... Hence, archaeologists are basically born cleaners!

For example, Dr. Elaine Turner usually studies hominid subsistence patterns based on faunal assemblages from Middle Pleistocene sites such as Schöningen or the Czech Kůlna Cave to Late Pleistocene Moroccan cave Taforalt but on this weekend she wiped the floors.



Dr. Alejandro Garcia Moreno, the GIS-specialist of the Schöningen and Neumark-Nord projects, polished the vitrines together with our trainee Nicola Scheyhing M.A. and also tidied the entrance together with Dr. Radu Ioviță. So by mid-day Monday, Monrepos was spick and span!



However, besides the exhibition, the official opening ceremony had to be prepared:

Tables and chairs had to be put up, huge umbrellas had to be opened outside the main entrance of the museum due to the disappointing weather forecast, decoration had to be made and spread, the buffet arranged, concession stands equipped, glasses filled, bottles with more wine, sparkling wine, water, rose syrup, birch syrup, and elder syrup, that Juliane Weiß M.A. had made, had to be spread on the stands, a

speaker's desk had to be set up, microphone and speakers had to be synchronised for the hall and so on and so on...



But it was not just our staff and our colleagues from Mainz or the supporting actors who are going to be the guides – family members and friends were also helping such as Aritza's wife Dr. Pauline Buthaud and our future fellow, [Dr. Karen Rubens](#) (currently at Max-Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology, Leipzig).



We are still not sure how we did it. For sure, there were moments of pure exhaustion.



Nevertheless, with joined forces we prepared the exhibition for visitors on Monday 1 pm!

When the “event” began at 1:30 pm, the house became filled up with people! With 100-200 expected guest and almost as many cars to come up the long way above the Rhine valley, Wolfgang Heuschen M.A. and Sascha Sieber had to organise the car park and saw nothing of the official speeches. However, lucky them because due to the packed hall the air really became thin during the official speeches of Prof. Dr. Falko Daim, head of our parent institute, the [RGZM](#), of the minister of education, science, and culture of Rhineland-Palatinate, Mrs. Doris Ahnen, of the vice-president of the [Leibniz society](#), Prof. Dr. Dr. Friedrich W. Hesse, and the head of our institute, Prof. Dr. Sabine Gaudzinski-Windheuser. She introduced the actor guides who instantly relieved the audience from the ceremonial atmosphere when asking them to participate in a little experiment about human behaviour... the results surprised quite a few of our guests. After this cheerful end to the official part, the storm on the buffet began and the first visitors were guided through the museum. Dr. Olaf Jöris invited people to follow him through the exhibition with an in-depth scientific view on the concept and the content.



Some actors remained at special places within the exhibition to offer visitors insights into their programme. Outside the house trainee, undergraduate and graduate students were serving drinks while post-docs kept the bottles coming from the fridge – and finally, the sun also came out!



However, if you think: “That’s it!” – well, no! Since the museum opened for the public on Tuesday, of course, someone had to clean up after the party...

Dishes, tables, and floors had to be cleaned, chairs and tables put away, decoration spread through the house, and everything put back to its right place...



The opening for the public on Tuesday went quite smoothly then: Even though it was Tuesday and holidays haven’t begin yet, we had several visitors and Frank Moseler M.A. also had to give his first guided tours. Today, it continues quite nicely with the first children’s birthdays.

However, after the final cleaning up on Monday, we could finally begin relaxing after a very long day and a very, very long precedence... So we say: “Cheers! And we hope to see you soon in our new exhibition!”



P.S.: You should definitely use our wishing tree – wishes made to the tree do come true: Germany became World Champion! Hooray!!!