

You're listening to the EXARC Show run by EXARC, the International Society for Experimental Archaeology, Open-Air Museums, Ancient and Traditional Technology and Heritage Interpretation. Listen in to hear '**Encounters**' with experts within the field, '**Showcases**' of the work and projects of our members, and '**Extracts**' from our quarterly EXARC Journal.

Phoebe: Hello and welcome to EXARC Encounters, my name is Phoebe Baker, and today I'm joined by João Carlos Moreno de Sousa, a member of our EXARC community, to talk about the upcoming EAC14 Conference in Brazil and archaeology in Brazil as a whole. João - also known as Juca - is an associate professor of archaeology at the Federal University of Rio Grande and at the Federal University of Paraná, both in Brazil. He is also head of the Laboratory for Evolutionary and Experimental Archaeology and Prehistory. Juca's main research is on lithic technology, experimental archaeology, hunter-gatherers and evolutionary archaeology with a particular focus on Paleo-American and Paleo-Indian cultures, as well as the early occupation of the Americas. Juca is also one of the primary organizers of the upcoming EAC14 Conference, which will be held later this month at the Federal University of Paraná, from the 12th to the 16th of May.

Obviously, experimental archaeology in South America plays a big role in this 14th EAC but participants come from many parts of the world. We have an exciting hybrid programme with sessions on lithics, rock art, bone, wood, textiles, and ceramics. For participants in Brazil there are workshops on ceramics, lithics, bone and antler work and a very special one addressing the shapes, colours and meanings of indigenous paintings. Two excursions are also available for local participants: the first is to an ecological park where there is a rock shelter with rock art, while the second day a visit is planned to the Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology in Paranaguá city and also seeing some shellmounds associated with the Sambaqui Culture from the Middle and Late Holocene. Keynote speakers are Prof. Dr. Hugo Nami from the University of Buenos Aires in Argentina and Prof. Dr. Alex Martire from the Federal University of Rio Grande in Brazil. So now, let's hear more from Juca.

Welcome Juca, thank you so much for joining me. I'd love to start by hearing a little bit more about you. What got you into archaeology, and how did you get to where you are today?

Juca: What got me into archaeology was probably like those dreams that kids have of becoming an archaeologist to know more about the past or having adventures or just liking dinosaurs, because we don't know the difference between archaeology and paleontology when you're kids. When I was ending school, I was looking to study archaeology in university. I found one, which was the Pontifical Catholic University of the State of Goiás in Brazil. After that, I did my master's degree in the Museum of Archaeology and Technology in São Paulo, University of São Paulo. My PhD after that was in the National Museum of Rio de Janeiro, the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, but part of my PhD was in the University of Exeter in the Experimental Archaeology Program, with Professor Bruce Bradley, who's now retired. And since I was in my undergraduation, I was really, really a fan of human evolution and all my experience from undergraduation to masters, PhD, post-doctorate, all that I did was specialize in lithic technology, lithic tools, but with an evolutionary approach. That being applied for the Brazilian context of hunter gatherers here, but also doing some parallel

studies with other contexts in South Wales, for example. Although I specialize in lithic tools and evolutionary archaeology, I still am one of these generic archaeologists who are looking for a lot of stuff at the same time. So I'm doing and supervising students with archaeology, bio-archaeology, geo-archaeology, in all different areas of archaeology because I just love everything I do and I think, well, every archaeologist should know a little bit of all of these areas or else we are not doing archaeology at all.

Phoebe: Yeah, no, that sounds absolutely great. I can definitely feel the similarities of archaeology being something you've been interested in since you were a kid. It's certainly been the same for me. It's great to hear that interest has sustained you for so long. It sounds like your research focuses on a number of different areas. Is there anything particular that you're working on at the moment?

Juca: Well, at the moment I have a big project here in Brazil, which is called 'Early occupation, evolution and cultural diversity of the native Americans in Southern Brazil'. We are looking to the earliest occupations in South America, but in the Brazilian parts, looking to get new dates, study all lithic technology, but we are also focusing in excavate some of the oldest archaeological sites in some areas that have never been studied before, and some others that have been studied, but it was so long ago that maybe we need to apply new models, new techniques and redatate the sites which we are already doing. So for example, we're studying a rock shelter in the north coast of Rio Grande do Sul State, which was known to have many, many, for example, stem and lithic points with dates, early dates of maybe 6,000 years old. But remember that at that time, precision of dating was not that good. Although it was accurate, the precision, the range of error could be very big. But still, we could get new dates that are actually way older than that. I cannot speak a lot about that because we still have to publish that. We are also looking to some early sites in the central coast, which we call cerritos, which are artificial mounds of black earth and shell mounds as well. This early occupation is not as old as we have like in rock shelters and in the countryside of Brazil and South America. These early occupations are actually later than the ones in the countryside, but still they're the earliest ones. So we are trying to investigate and understand what was happening in the central coast between 5,000 and 1,000 years ago. While we are doing that, although I told you lithic technology, experimental archaeology, evolutionary ecology, these are my areas of expertise, as an archaeologist, we have to be open to study whatever we find. And because in the central coast, we do not have, for example, rock shelters or rock outcrops... this is in terms of geological formation, just sand dunes. So we have no rock at all or lithics to study. And we have these shell mounds and these cerritos and we're looking to people who have very different contexts. So we are doing a lot of bone tool studies, a lot of zoo-archaeology because a lot of these shell mounds are more shell than sediment, for example, in the archaeological layers that we're studying. So we need to understand what shells are those, where they're coming from, if they are choosing different ones in every layer. And because some of these sites are within the areas of quilombo - quilombos in Brazil is the word we use for those places where enslaved people from African ancestry but sometimes we also have native people who were enslaved and ran away to these places. So quilombos are the place where people ran to be free, they were hiding and some of the sites we're studying are within the area of the quilombo of Casca. Because the sites are within the quilombo, and these are people who are always a little bit concerned about who is going

there because they have a bad history of - especially anthropologists - who use them as a study object and they go away and they never heard about anything before. They don't have any return to themselves. But with us archaeologists and maybe because I am not, well, white as most of researchers that go there - my ancestry is from native people from the Andes of Colombia - they were more open but still they asked for a return for them. And now knowing what archaeology is, because they didn't know what exactly archaeology was before we started to visit there, they asked us to excavate some other places that were not originally my interest, but who are very interesting and very important places to study, like the oldest houses of the quilombos. So when the first people there were free, where the quilombos started 200 years ago. They also wanted us to find an ancient cemetery of enslaved people, which we did. And now we are looking into starting another project of local ancestry, because these are people who, just like native people in South America, were also enslaved, killed. A lot of injustice happened with their ancestors. What they want to do is more about their past because just as native people, their culture and history were erased and they want to know more about themselves. So now we're looking into developing a project into knowing more about their ancestry. This is not my specialty, but somehow I parachuted into historical archaeology of enslaved people in the central coast of Brazil.

Phoebe: Your project sounds absolutely fascinating on so many levels and also so important on so many levels as well. Both for understanding the early inhabitants of Brazil and also the current inhabitants of Brazil and, yeah, historical archaeology. Another question that I wanted to ask which I think links on really nicely to this: would you like to talk a little bit more about how archaeology can help to forge better connections between communities within Brazil, particularly with the quilombo communities that you've just talked about and also indigenous communities. Can archaeology be used in other positive ways like this?

Juca: Most of Brazilian population is a mix of people of African descendants, native people. When we are talking about all these people, as I said before, we're looking at people who have their cultural history erased. We know a lot of people here that - especially white people who are richer - they know a lot about their past, their families, where they came from. But when you're looking to these people who have their erased history, they don't know exactly what happened and why they're in the situation they're today. When we're doing archaeology in a community like that we have the power, I think, to try to write a little bit more of their history, find out more about themselves and sometimes about ourselves. One of the most important things is like to recover something that was lost or that was thought to be lost forever. When we do archaeology, we are looking to things that were not documented. When we think about archaeology in Europe, for example, we can look to history. And historians, because their objects of study are documents, things that were intentionally made as a document. That being said a written document, a photography, a painting or whatever, historians can look to that through thousands of years ago. That's not the same for the South American context. That's not the same for Brazil, because here this type of documentation may be - with exception of rock art - what we have here is 500 years of Europeans coming here and erasing all of native people's history and bringing some people who actually were not really invited to come here. They were forced to come here and to be enslaved.

So it's very cool when we are working along with these communities and not just going there and do our archaeology with the goal of doing a nice work and publish this research and to become known because you're good in what you do, but to do something that we're currently calling 'collaborative archaeology', which is the goal to contribute with this community and not just talk about something that we..., it's starting to be very, very common now people saying that oh, we're doing like this collaborative archaeology, we need to do that. We need to be more decolonial, or we need to deconstruct all of these concepts. And usually the people who are focusing a lot in just talking, talking, talking, all of that, aren't actually looking to do something about it. That's something I just notice now. The important thing is that we do this collaboration with these communities and when I say these communities, I'm talking not just about the quilombos communities, but also when we're working within indigenous territories. Because sometimes the goals of the archaeologists and the goals of the communities are not aligned. And if you want to work along with these communities, you need to be aligned in your goals. So for example, if you have an indigenous community that want to know more about their past, or know more about their territories because... not sure if you know about this, but we have farmers in Brazil who just steal land to make their agriculture. We have issues of... was this land already demarcated for the indigenous people or not? And if it was not, we're really native people living there because we don't have evidence for that. And what is said that... but these indigenous people, they are not using this land so let us farmers use this land. Even, they're not doing agriculture in these lands. This is native forests that are being cut off and indigenous people are taking care of these lands. Sometimes because they need some evidence to show that that was always their land, that's where archaeology joins to see, well, look, there are archaeological sites and we can see from material culture or with human remains, that these are the ancestors of these people.

So this is one of the ways, of many ways that we can find to collaborate and align our goals with traditional communities. It's really, really important that archaeologists are aligned with traditional communities, so we can do not just a good job as archaeologists and researchers, but also to provide something to these communities.

Phoebe: Yeah, so it can be quite an important tool. That was a fascinating answer, thanks. You mentioned sometimes explaining to communities about what archaeology is. Would you like to tell us a little bit of a very brief history of archaeology within Brazil?

Juca: Archaeology in Brazil is quite recent if compared to what people have been doing in other places of the world. If we consider archaeology in the academic terms, the first studies looking into know more about native people here - with exception of ethnographic recordings but looking into ancient stuff - it dates back from the colonial period because during the colonial period we have like the naturalists, especially from Germany for some reason, I don't why, but a lot of German people came to Brazil - especially ethnographers - recording native people. They also actually found some archaeological sites that were not known as archaeological sites, but some of these places became recorded, but unfortunately, most of these places we don't know exactly where they are today.

But in academic terms, still during the colonial period when the Portuguese Royal family came to Brazil, because the king and queen of Portugal were running away from Napoleon.

They came to Brazil, so they started to live here instead of Portugal. Some of the members of this family, they were very interested in what we call today archaeology. For example, what is today the National Museum in Rio de Janeiro was actually the home of the royal family. We used to have, before the fire that ended with the museum in 2018, a lot of, for example, Egyptian mummies that were donated for the emperor at those times. The National Museum is one of the places where archaeology was born in Brazil and I'm very proud to have done my PhD there. After the colonial period, when Brazil became a republic, archaeology was still an area of interest, but we didn't have means how to do archaeology, because all of this scientific development was happening, for example, in North America and Europe. Here in Brazil, it took some time to start, to develop. If we think about the origins of academic archaeology in the school of cultural history, that started over in the UK for example, it went to the United States and there they developed more of cultural history along with cultural ecology. And when some US archaeologists came to Brazil and South America to do some studies here, they also started to provide some courses in Brazil. At the same time, some French archaeologists started to come to Brazil to carry out research, and they also started to provide courses in Brazil. And this was all happening in the sixties. So in the sixties, we were having the first generation of archaeologists actually learning with other archaeologists that came from France and from the United States. During this period along with some of the archaeologists from the United States, specifically Betty Meggers and Clifford Evans, they created a very famous project known as PRONAPA, the Program for National Archaeological Investigation, and this was nationwide because we had archaeologists from this first generation coordinating studies in the whole country.

After the end of PRONAPA, five years after that, we started to have more archaeologists that were studying with the archaeologists from the first generation. We only started to have archaeology as an academic program during the eighties. And since the eighties we start to have a lot of post-graduate programs with only one undergraduation of archaeology from the seventies to the nineties and it was extinct, but actually archaeology just started to become more popular a little bit. Because in the end of the eighties, by law, every time we have to build something here, we need a license and to obtain this license, part of this that has to be done is with archaeologists looking into, do we have archaeological sites in here? It actually become even more popular when we have president Lula in 2002 because he started with a project of development in Brazil. So we had a lot of things starting to be done, a lot of projects of building, for example, roads or electric stuff around all the country. Infrastructure started to double in Brazil and we had to have archaeological studies. He provided a lot of funding for universities in Brazil and we started to have a lot of universities in Brazil that we didn't have before.

We also started to have a lot of more undergraduations of all types and archaeology was one of them. So from 2006 to today, we started with zero and today we have almost 20 universities with undergraduate programs and now a lot of archaeologists that are professionals in Brazil. It got late to start as an academic thing. And when it started to become more popular, it was very fast to become what we are today, in 20 years. A lot of stuff came to Brazil very late. For example, the school of cultural history, or the school of what we call Processualism. It started in Brazil in the nineties, for example, or the Postmodern thought in archaeology. It's something that has just fifteen years. Our

evolutionary archaeology, which started during the seventies/eighties in Brazil, it's now finally happening. So that's the good stuff.

Phoebe: It sounds like, yeah, you're in an interesting position going into the next few years, growing so rapidly.

Juca: Including experimental archaeology, which we're still crawling with in Brazil, but it's something that exists outside here for half of a century.

Phoebe: That was a really good rundown, thank you. With the increase in courses and things, do you think that archaeology as a profession has become more desirable for people or is there an increase in people that actually want to do it? I know that in the UK the amount of people doing courses are much bigger now than they were.

Juca: From my perspective, I think that archaeology start to become more popular because you see a lot of courses starting at different universities. The number of people studying these courses was getting bigger, but in Brazil as well as in other countries in South America and Central America, some of these things, they are very, very related to the current political context. It's very notable that from between 2016 and 2018 especially, because the extreme right wing became the central government in Brazil, we started having less funding in science at all. Less support to archaeology, especially because we had a president that attacked archaeologists directly. It started to become less popular and a lot of people in Brazil still think a lot about a job that get them a social status like law or to become a medical doctor or this kind of stuff. And archaeology, it's most of the time seen to people who are aligned with the extreme right wing as something that get the development to be late because instead of what we need to do, there are archaeologists there who are not allowing us to do our jobs or something like that. Although we got, for example, president Lula back as a president, a lot of damage was done and it's really been hard to get back to where we started to get bad in this kind of stuff. So archaeology is still not popular as it was 10 years ago, but I think we are slowly getting back to the track.

Phoebe: That's really interesting. Yeah, I hope it does get back. I'd like to know, do you have a favorite archaeological site within Brazil and could you tell us a little bit about it?

Juca: That's a very, very difficult question. Personally, I have my favorite ones, but mostly because I have some affection... not specifically because of the site, but an affection because the team I was working with... the people that were there with me or things that happened there. I do have some favorites in terms of data, for example, in Brazil. But some of them, they're my favorite, although I do not know them, I have never been there. For example, there's a very famous site, not just a site, but a region in Northeastern Brazil that's called Serra da Capivara. It is one of the few places in Brazil with very strong evidence that we have people here from about 40,000 years ago. Because the Americas are known for being occupied by humans around 14,000-13,000 years ago is where it has been massively occupied with people coming from Beringia [Bering strait], for example. But we do have in South America as well as in North America, some very rare, early sites that we don't know much about the people who were there because, we do not have human remains, but we have artefacts and some of these art artefacts they're quite simple, but because we do have

these strong data that we have very early occupations, human occupation in Brazil, I just love these places. There are a few sites in this region of Serra da Capivara with one of the most famous sites the Toca do Boqueirão da Pedra Furada, but we also have in Midwest Brazil, in the state of Mato Grosso, a site called Santa Elina, which is a rock shelter where we do not have just the lithics, but we also have bone artefacts, like little pendants made of osteoderms of giant sloths. And these are fantastic finds, this is very strong evidence that people were there more than 20,000 years ago. I have never had the opportunity to work in sites that are that old, but I do have some of these places that I have more affection, like a lot of rock shelters that I excavated. I do have some affection for shell mounds in the coast of Brazil and I need to say I'm very in love now with the sites that I'm working in the quilombo of Casca for more emotional particular reasons, because of the type of work we're doing there. Although it's not the type of site that I'm usually interested in, the local people make it very interesting for us to work there.

Phoebe: Yeah, it sounds absolutely amazing. That was a great answer, thanks. I think we will start to wrap up. We've got two last questions and my first will be about the conference. I believe that this is the first EXARC conference outside of Europe, which is extremely exciting. How have you found it being on the organizing team?

Juca: Before Matilda became the director of EXARC, during the time that Roeland was in that place, we had been talking already about the possibility of doing a conference like that in Brazil. I remember that the first time I talked about it I was talking about doing an experimental archaeology conference, but something that was more local, like a Brazilian conference, but something that was supported by EXARC, an event by EXARC. And suddenly it started to grow up as, no, we are doing the Experimental Archaeology conference, the main conference in Brazil. And I was like, oh, okay, let's do that. It's interesting because, although I had that interest, it was very fun to see that some people involved in EXARC was actually also suggesting that it could happen in Brazil. Because it's a very different context that European people are used to. We started to talk about that during the pandemic in 2021 when we had the hybrid worldwide conference. That was just online because, of course, the pandemics. So we started to talk about that during those periods, helping organize one of the sessions with people from South America.

Then that started to become a reality last year... after the last conference that was in Poland. It started to become a reality that we will do that in Brazil and I became so happy with that because I'm very, very anxious to receive all these people from all places of the world coming to Brazil to an Experimental Archaeology conference. This is something very, very positive for Brazilian archaeology because as I said, experimental archaeology in Brazil is still crawling. We have so few people who have some experience, that actually studied in doing their post-graduation, so as a master degree or PhD, they did something experimental archaeology, there are so few people in Brazil. We have other people, other researchers and professors in Brazil that are interested in experimental archaeology, but they do not have that same background. They do want to have this background and they want to provide students the opportunities to have this background. So an Experimental Archaeology conference in Brazil will be a very big step to that development in Brazil and South America, because we are waiting to receive our neighbors here as well.

And also it's a positive point for EXARC because although it's an international society and international conference, all of the conferences so far have been in Europe. And to become actually worldwide, we have to do these things more while outside of Europe. So I still expect that, after the Brazilian conference, we have a conference in Asia, in North America, in Africa, in Oceania. Let's see what will happen. I hope that this conference also will start to happen in other places, and that more people from all the world also start to become more involved both in experimental archaeology, but also in EXARC, which is a fun society to be involved with and they have so much positive things. I'm very suspicious to say, but EXARC is one of the best, if not the best scientific society I know so far.

Phoebe: Yeah, I agree with you, not that I'm biased at all. No, that's really positive to hear. And also, I think that would be an absolutely fantastic direction for EXARC to continue to go in. That was a fab answer to the question and really interesting to hear how it kind of came to be. So thank you Juca, for joining us. It's been really fascinating listening to you talk. I've really enjoyed it and I feel like I've learned a lot. As a very final point before we wrap up, would you like to tell people at home if they are not able to come to Brazil how they might be able to tune it into the conference from elsewhere?

Juca: Yeah, so because we know that for a lot of people it's very hard to come to Brazil because of especially the cost of coming to some places which are so far. The Experimental Archaeology Conference, the fourteenth edition that will happen in Brazil, it's a hybrid event, so we will have online presentations as well. And if you want to watch these presentations you are welcome to register in the website as an online participant. Unfortunately for the ones that are not coming to Brazil, you are not able to participate in the workshops. But you are welcome to participate online, watching the presentations and we'll be happy to have you there.

Phoebe: Definitely, everything is available online on the EXARC website with the links to the relevant places. So thank you again and thank you to everyone else for listening in to this episode of the EXARC Show by EXARC.

You've been listening to the EXARC Show run by EXARC, the International Society for Experimental Archaeology, Open-Air Museums, Ancient and Traditional Technologies and Heritage Interpretation. For more encounters with the world of experimental archaeology and open-air museums, check out our free open access **EXARC Journal**. To find out more about the different research projects of our EXARC members, you can check out our **EXARC blog**, or join our **Discord server**, completely free of charge. If you're interested in becoming more involved with EXARC, you can also become a member. For full details and to find out more about what we do as a society, check out our website at **exarc.org**.