

Analysis of caulking and luting materials

Organizer

Name: Kristof Haneca
Affiliation: Flanders Heritage Agency
E-mail: Kristof.Haneca@vlaanderen.be

Co-organizers

Name: Koen Deforce
Affiliation: Ghent University - Department of Archaeology

Session Description

Ensuring the waterproofing of ships was a critical task for shipwrights, both during construction and throughout a vessel's operational life. Regular maintenance and repairs were essential to maintain this waterproofing.

This session focusses on analysis of caulking and luting material (e.g. mosses, plant tissues and fibers, animal hair, tar, ...) preserved on and between timber elements of archaeological ship timbers. Such analysis allow to identify the original tissues and substances used, trace the original source of these materials and to pinpoint their ecological and geographical provenance. By interpreting archaeobotanical analysis and physico-chemical characterization both from an analytical, ecological and archeological angle, such detailed analysis on ship remains provide additional information on shipwright craftsmanship, traditions, supply networks, and trade routes.

The session aims to present an overview of the latest research on caulking and luting material associated with archaeological ship timbers and shipwreck assemblages, highlighting their significance in nautical archaeological research.

Keywords

Caulking; Luting; Archaeobotany; Tar