



Uniting Sea Workshop II - Abstracts

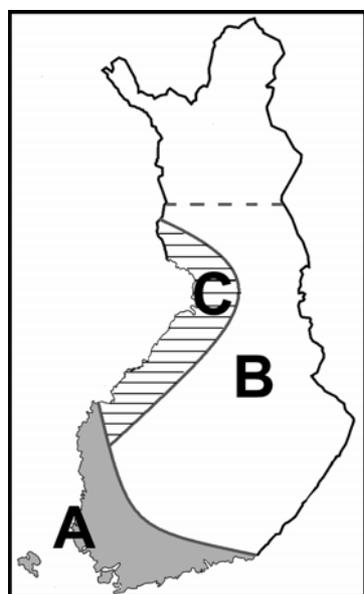
Our place in the World:

Structuring and negotiating reality through the landscape.

First attempts to change Sea giveth the Sea taketh away

Milton Núñez

The 4th millennium cal BC saw major cultural and social changes in Finland. In the 2nd half of this millennium, Southwest Finland (A in map) seems to undergo a decline that allows the



introduction of the East Baltic Corded ware and Swedish Pitted ware elements in hitherto Comb ware territory. Inland (B) there is a clear change in pottery traditions manifested by the spread of local asbestos tempered ware (ATW) a few centuries before the mentioned south- western decline. However, it was on the Ostrobotnian coast (C), where the most profound changes take place. Here the ATW is found associated with an abundance of exotic goods and clusters of semisubterranean houses in village-like pattern by 3500 cal BC, and then with cairns and megastructures by 3000 cal BC. These developments could be seen as indicators of increased social complexity in the area. By around 2000 cal BC, however, there are no new house clusters and megastructures cease to be built. Only the cairn tradition seems to continue. The rise and fall of these complexity signs may well be connected with the availability of maritime resources in the area. But regardless of the causes, this is the first time in Finnish Prehistory that one can observe an attempt

to permanently modify their landscape.

The Mesolithic settlements in Western Latvia

Egita Ziediņa

This overview presents new results from an ongoing research project in Western Latvia. Traces of the Mesolithic habitation are still rare in Western Latvia. The antler and bone stray finds – axes, harpoons, spear-heads and daggers provide evidence of this. In recent years, a number of settlements found in Western Latvia with a flint inventory, belong to the Mesolithic. The main flint artifact forms indicate the influences from Lithuania. This material marked differences between Western and Eastern Latvia. The archaeological evidences shows there to have been extensive habitation in Mesolithic. Three regions can now be distinguished in Western Latvia: 1) the River Ālande valley; 2) the River Užava valley; 3) the Lake Usma. New findings appear to cast new light on this region. It confirm hypothesis that one of the possible routs by which humans may have arrived in territory of Latvia from coastal areas of the Baltic Ice Lake. Investigations will continue during the following years



The Eastern Islands

Mattias Ahlbeck

The Mesolithic of Eastern Middle Sweden makes a brute challenge to hermeneutic archaeology. Not only do we consider the way of the nomadic hunter/gatherer as furthest removed from our own way of Being. To top that, this way of life has to be understood as having been lived amongst the skerries, islettes and islands of an archipelagic world. This puts us in a position where archaeology's ontological obligation to understand "the Other" becomes evident-at-least. A different way of life in a different world, but still human. In the following I will first discuss some features that points at the need to develop a landscape analysis for this area-in-time. Pursuing this theme, I will proceed to propose some concepts crucial to this line of questioning. Finally, some of the consequences of the approach will be presented.

Pots with Interregional Design from Bjästamon, a Middle and Late Neolithic Site in Norrland.

Henrik Runeson & Torbjörn Brorsson

Bjästamon, not far from Örnsköldsvik in Ångermanland, has recently been excavated and studied by several archaeologists with different skills. One of those was Eva Olsson at the National Heritage Board in Stockholm. She scrutinized the pottery shards and tried to identify different cultural traditions in the material. In the summer of 2006 Eva tragically died and a dear friend and colleague is missing among us.

This paper was firstly intended to present the ceramic material and especially the relationship between the Pitted ware, the Battle Axe pottery and the so called Third group. This subject was one of Eva favourites, and she was also one of those persons who identified and gave name to the Third group. We are now intended to give a short paper about the pottery from the last location with the Third group that Eva took part in. We will present how the pottery looks like and how it was made. But we will also give a short introduction to the site itself, the Bjästamon site. It has been dated to the Middle and Late Neolithic and is one of the largest Neolithic sites in Norrland. The place reveals information about how people lived and died at Bjästamon and also which contacts they had with other regions in Northern Europe.

Creation of the cultural landscape by the Neolithic societies in North-western Poland.

Lukasz Pospieszny

The social meaning of tombs in early and middle Neolithic societies of Cuiavia, Greater Poland and Mid-Pomerania is considered. The material remains of early Funnel Beaker Culture are interpreted as the manifestation of a new set of ideas restructuring Lengyel societies and changing social and economic conditions of their existence. The continuity and



change were expressed by the symbolic shift from houses towards tombs. The earthen long barrows did not simply recall the shape of contemporary long houses but were built to question the old order and negotiate the new reality. The landscape was changed and the sacred places of ancestors were created. The next generations have used the old graves for hundreds of years. The memory of those places was probably incorporated into the mythology of later societies and survived till the time of Christianity.

Social space in Western Zealand during the time of the Funnel Beaker Culture.

Almut Schülke

The paper discusses different levels of how to investigate the use of space on the basis of geographical data and material remains from a defined area. What kinds of archaeological traces do we encounter, and how can we interpret these traces? How can we archaeologically investigate social behaviour, its different aspects and its change on the basis of – shifting – spatial structures? Questions like physical and intellectual mobility, social action and reaction and the relationship between individual and group will be touched upon, as well as the topic of (dis)continuity.

The case-study that will be presented is based on the rich material from the Funnel Beaker Culture from the region of North-Western Zealand in Denmark, containing a large amount of megaliths, settlement traces and finds from wetlands. Against the background of the geographically varied region of North-West Zealand, with different types of coastline, with both flat terrain as well as hilly moraine ridges and a large number of bogs, watercourses and lakes inland, the gradual change of the spatial structures and the shifting significance of certain areas, during the time of the Funnel Beaker Culture, will be discussed.

What makes a place? Feature perspectives on site locations.

Kim von Hackwitz

In Sweden a general geographical dichotomy exist between the two middle Neolithic cultures, the Pitted Ware Culture and the local version of the Corded Ware Culture – the Boat-Axe Culture. Pitted Ware sites are found in the coastal area and Boat-Axe sites are found in the interior. This picture has strengthened the theory that the cultures represent two different groups living in different economical zones (marine hunting-fishing opposed to farming). By adding stray-finds from the period the picture becomes more blurred as objects related to the Boat-Axe Culture are found in the coastal zone as well as in the interior. The question I will discuss is: Why are the sites separated in different topographical zones while the stray finds are not?

In this paper I will discuss topographical location of Middle Neolithic sites. It is my theory that different activities took place at the sites and for that reason they are not comparable in an ethnical/cultural discussion. Furthermore I believe that the activities interpreted as different cultures were involved in the location of the sites owing to different needs for different actions. Therefore, I will suggest that the topographical qualities of the Middle Neolithic sites can be helpful for interpreting the causes for their location.



Uniting Boats - Coastal people ride seaworthy boats

Roger Wikell

We have no or few traces of boats from the Stone Age in the Baltic region. But we can be sure that Stone Age man didn't swim around in the Baltic Sea.

The archaeological record -ecofacts and sitelocation - indicate that boats have been an essential part of the material culture. Boats are necessary to make a living on the sea, whether you live along the mainland coast or in archipelagos and islands far-off coast.

Thus we can assume that contact was made over long-distances, and that social identity was expressed with boats when people met on the shores.

Identity through Practice I – Craft Traditions

Cultural Transmission and the *chaîne opératoire*

Jan Apel

Material Culture is reproduced over the generations in different ways which profoundly affect the appearance of the archaeological artefact types over time. In cases where history and tradition is important, significant formal changes are visible as step-wise transitions, guided by marked stylistic changes. Since the 19th century and especially within the cultural historical tradition such essential types have defined cultural traditions and peoples that have played a great role in the definition of the different Neolithic cultures around the Baltic sea. On the other hand, tools and artefacts that seem to be of lesser social and historic significance change gradually and continuously in analogy with biological principles: i.e. in times with relatively stable natural and social environments the rate of change is low, in times with greater stress the rate of change is fast. During the last 30 years such instrumentally defined types have been of great interest to archaeologists

In this paper it is suggested that the archaeological patterns of both of these transmission systems for material culture – one formed primarily by historically rooted traditions and culture, the other primarily by stress emanating from the surrounding social and natural environment – can be explained by reference to Darwinian terms such as variation, selection and drift.

Pomeranian flint in the Stone Age of the East Pomerania

Marcin Was

The northern part of the Polish Lowland is - in comparison to the South part - quiet poor in the occurrence of rocks suitable for knapping. Among the various types of the erratic Baltic flint there is a very characteristic one called Pomeranian flint. Its sources are clay deposits on the Baltic Sea shore near Rozewie cape and neighbouring beaches. In spite of small size, this pebble-shaped flint was the most popular raw-material in the East Pomerania prehistory.



The aim of the presentation is to show how the appearance and quality of local flint raw-material influenced on the settlement in the Stone and Early Bronze Ages on the East Pomerania. The general presentation of the flint industries of several “prehistoric societies” inhabiting Baltic south coast from the Late Palaeolithic till the beginning of the Bronze Age focused on the flint technology. I want to explain how the physical properties of the Pomeranian flint determined the organization of production as well as the typology of “formal-type” tools. The interpretative problems of the Pomeranian flint assemblages (in the terms of chronology and taxonomy) are also discussed.

Shaping an identity. A study of the ceramic craft and its products during the middle Neolithic on the island of Öland in the Baltic Sea.

Ludvig Pappmehl-Dufay

This paper presents some of the results from an extensive study of middle Neolithic pottery from the island of Öland in the Baltic Sea. The study is part of a research program in which the concepts of culture and identity are central. Focus in my study is on the ceramic craft within the Pitted Ware culture, and a number of different analytical methods are used in order to reach a more dynamic and multi-faceted image of the pottery of this culture. The Pitted Ware sites at Köpingsvik and Ottenby Royal Manor on Öland provide the frame for the analysis, and the methods used include recording of large ceramic assemblages, microscopical analysis of a smaller sample of sherds as well as of raw clay samples collected in the area, and lipid residue analysis of smaller samples of sherds targeting aspects of pottery use. The results indicate that, while clearly adhering to the same ceramic tradition, the two analyzed Pitted Ware sites on the island display ceramic assemblages differing in details concerning technological as well as functional and aesthetical aspects. Possible reasons for the observed pattern will be discussed as well.

The Right Way to Make a Beaker: Finland and the origin of the Swedish Battle Axe Culture tradition.

Åsa M. Larsson

Around 2850 BC the regional version of the Corded Ware Culture known as the Battle Axe Culture appears in Southern Sweden. While some artefacts show continuity from earlier period, many are new not just in shape (battle axes), but also in technology (pottery). The prevailing view in Scandinavian archaeology is that innovation goes from south to north, and west to east. Therefore the model of the Battle Axe Culture as being spread from Denmark to South Sweden and then northwards has only rarely been questioned. However, in my opinion the material itself suggests otherwise, since there are few similarities between the Danish Single Grave Culture and the Swedish-Norwegian Battle Axe Culture.

Analysing the material culture not just as *objects* but as *products* of craft practice and learning means we have to try to unravel the social bonds and structures that govern not just who makes what and why, but *how* that person learns the craft and *from who*. The BAC potters seem to have been taught in a strictly regulated social framework, where the



making of a proper beaker depended heavily on technological know-how. I would also propose that the Swedish BAC owes much of its craft practices to Finnish traditions. The introduction of the Corded Ware Complex in Sweden came mainly from the east across the Baltic Sea.

Flint daggers and Bell Beaker pottery: the display of social identities?

Torben Sarauw

This paper treats the relationship between the distribution of material culture and social identities. The case study is on the material culture of the Danish Bell Beaker Culture especially the pottery and the flint daggers – both are distributed over vast areas of Europe. Do such items reflect some kind of social identity in the field of gender, rank, regional groups, ethnicity, religion etc. on a Jutlandic or maybe even European scale? And is it possible to talk about shared cultural identities for these areas on the basis of so few types of artifacts and maybe customs? Thus, is the symbolic meaning the same in the areas of distribution? The paper tries to answer some of these questions.

Identity through Practice II – Ritual and Religion

A Baltic Way of Death? Exploring Mesolithic cemetery practices.

Liv Nilsson Stutz

This paper explores the idea that through the exploration of the ritual practices of the treatment of the dead, we might be able to get at deep structures that underlie a notion of a shared humanity around the Baltic in the Mesolithic. The case studies discussed in this paper are the cemeteries at Skateholm in Sweden, Zvejnieki in Latvia and Vedbaek/Bogebakken in Denmark. Besides the often-discussed variability and complexity, the treatment of the dead in these sites also expresses a number of fundamental shared practices relating to the treatment of the body. In this paper, I propose, that by exploring the taken for granted, the fundamental and often unreflected practices in the treatment of the dead, and how these notions change over time and space, we might be able to get at some of the most fundamental notions of humanity. I believe that these practices could be contrasted and compared to other aspects of practice, such as for example technology, and complement our image of practices and their role in processes of identity around the Baltic in the Mesolithic.

Stone Age Religion down to Earth

Jonathan Lindström

With the Battle Axe mortuary house in Turinge parish, Södermanland, Sweden, as one of several examples I will discuss some aspects of methodology and results of the study of Stone Age Religion in Scandinavia.



Contact & Change: Social Identity and Material Culture

From Social and Economic Territories to Ethnic Groups

Charlotte Damm

Contacts between distinct groups in northern Fennoscandia probably goes back at least 8000 year. At the latest at the transition from the Early to the Late Stone age different groups interacted with each other, as evidenced in the distribution of various raw materials, technological elements and artefact types. At the same time there is regional variation in the material culture. Do these regional groups represent ethnic groups?

It will be argued that ethnicity does not become a major organising factor until the Early Metal Age, some time during the last two millennia BC. The paper will focus on data from Northern Fennoscandia in the period 8000-0 BC.

UNTO A GOOD LAND - Early Mesolithic Colonization of Eastern Middle Sweden

Patrik Gustafsson & Mikael Nordin

Only a handful of sites from the earliest “pioneer” phase of the early Mesolithic period (roughly 9 000 BP) have been excavated in Eastern Middle Sweden. However, interesting finds of micro blades and conical micro blade cores, as well as circular scrapers and a barbed point, have been found on some of these sites. This brings out the question: Where did these pioneers come from? The excavated Early Mesolithic sites in Eastern Middle Sweden are discussed and compared with Maglemose, Hensbacka/Fosna and Sandarna sites in southern and western Scandinavia as well as Finish and Baltic Early Mesolithic cultures. Is the Baltic Sea a dividing or uniting sea during the early Mesolithic? Recently discovered sites in the county of Södermanland and neighboring areas are also discussed.

Keywords: Stone Age, Early Mesolithic, Maglemose, Hensbacka, Fosna, Sandarna, Shore Displacement, Finland, The Baltic, Eastern Middle Sweden.

The Lower Odra enclave of Corded Ware Culture in the light of contacts in the South-western Baltic zone

Agnieszka Matuszewska

In the period of the decadent Neolithic age, the South-western Baltic zone was under the influence of the Corded Ware Culture. This notion – defined in the literature by Polish archaeologists several times – is limited in the west by the lower Łaba River valley, in the south by the strip of Central European Lowland valley, and in the east by the upper Vistula River valley. The northern border is marked by the southwestern Baltic Sea shores.

In the framework of a widely understood circle of rope ceramics culture, all of the northern groupings connected with this phenomenon were the subject of scientific research already in 19th century. As a result, there were many various suggestions as far as the taxonomical outlines are concerned and in consequence, complex models of historic interpretation were formulated. This fact determines the need to trace the next stages of the approach to the problem of “northern ecumene” of the Corded Ware Culture. However, it is to be noted at the



very beginning that the conditions of research in particular regions are very varied. There are a few reasons for such conditions and the key reason is probably the uneven state of the recognition of the source materials connected with the CWC. The next problem is the discrepancy between the approaches to the phenomenon under discussion. This discrepancy results from the totally different scientific centres in particular regions.

I am particularly interested in the region on the lower Odra River which covers the area of the Szczecin Lowlands (on the Polish side) as well as Wkrzańska Primeval Forest and Wkrzańskie Hills (on the German side). This region – which is so crucial on the prehistorical map of Europe – has been marginalized by archeologists for 30 years, and in consequence, it is the least recognized area on the prehistorical map of Europe. However, the lower Odra group – which was marked in this area – is a very essential and cognitively inspiring element in the context of the problem of contacts in the Baltic Sea region. Above all, it pertains primarily to the model of functioning of this group either as a closed communicative enclave which is not under any major external influence or – as the research proves – as an element of a wider communicative community. This element is defined as *a circum-Baltic circle of the Corded Ware Culture*. There are certain exogenous features, which are easily interpretable in the lower Odra source materials, which are characteristic of different areas located primarily in the south and in the west. At the same time, it is possible to show a number of local features which have influenced, to a significant degree, the characteristics and the development of the Corded Ware Culture.

Åland, Ålanders and mainlanders

Milton Núñez

The Åland Islands were discovered and occupied by sealers from the Finnish mainland some 7000 years ago. At the time the archipelago consisted of dozens rocky skerries and a handful of small islands no more than 5 km across, all situated over 100 km way from the closest mainland. Continuous contact with mainland Finland during the next 1500-2000 years is testified by over 25 sites, where pottery follows closely Finnish Comb ware styles of that period. Some time in the later half of the 4th millennium cal BC, the eastern wares gave way to western forms clearly associated with the Swedish Pitted ware complex. It is not clear what happened to the Comb ware population, but certain features in the Åland Pitted ware material suggest a certain degree of merging with the newcomers. During the following 1200-1500 years, we see a once again similarities in pottery development, this time with the Swedish coast and islands, even if there is also a clear the rise of typically local features. Although the local Pitted ware character seems to dominate Åland assemblages, there are also clear indications of eastern contacts during this period, perhaps even increasing in the 2nd millennium cal BC. The details of east-west interaction in the Stone Age archipelago may still be fuzzy, but one thing is clear, the Åland Islands owe their early discovery and their constant utilization and development to the surrounding sea that maintained them in contact with the then distant Finnish and Swedish mainlands. Moreover, the Stone Age archipelago most probably served as instrument that channelled genes and culture between the Finnish and Swedish mainland.