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Mats Burström & Anders Carlsson

The Swedish Archaeological Society

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INSTRUCTIONS TO AUTHORS

Instruction to authors are found on the inside of the back cover.

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The Swedish Archaeological Society

The Swedish Archaeological Society was founded in 1947 and the area of interest comprises all aspects of archaeology, both native and foreign. The Society is the only common body for professional Swedish archaeologists, independent of their posts at different departments and institutions. In 1947 it counted about 60 members and today more than 500 scholars belong to the Society. The Society can therefore act as spokesman for Swedish archaeological opinion on matters of national and international importance.

From 1951 to 1978 the Swedish Archaeological Society presented six volumes of *Swedish Archaeological Bibliography*, reviewing archaeological research published during the period 1939-1975. However, after the appearance in 1974 of *Nordic Archaeo-*

logical Abstracts (published annually), the need for these brief reviews diminished. Instead, the Society published two volumes of *Swedish Archaeology*, each containing somewhat more exhaustive comments on research published in a five-year period (1976-80 and 1981-85). This tradition was continued in *Current Swedish Archaeology, Vol. 3, 1995* where a retrospective analysis of the period 1986-1990 was presented.

This journal, *Current Swedish Archaeology*, was started in 1993, and is an important part of the work that the Society is engaged in. The Society also organizes seminars and excursions. Formal matters are dealt with at the annual general meeting. Every second year the Society also holds a thematic meeting for Swedish archaeologists.

Editors' Preface

This fifth volume of *Current Swedish Archaeology* coincides with the fiftieth anniversary of the Swedish Archaeological Society. To mark the anniversary the Society will arrange a series of public lectures. It is an important part of the Society's work to keep the general public informed of archaeological results. In this series of lectures, some of the most interesting results of half a century of Swedish archaeology will be summarized.

Since the establishment of the Society in 1947 archaeology has changed from being a discipline primarily concerned with the presentation of source materials, chronological studies, art history and cultural connections. It has developed via a more "scientific" archaeology concerned with reconstructing systems, emphasizing ecological, demographical and economical factors, into a more theoretically informed interpretative archaeology. The latter strives to utilize, in the best possible way, the interpretative potential in the archaeological source material and to visualize a more humane past.

During the past fifty years, Swedish archaeology has seen an enormous expansion. This is primarily due to the growth of rescue archaeology. The fact that rescue archaeology is dependent on factors largely outside the control of the archaeologists involves some problems. This has become even more obvious, since we are now experiencing a decline in excavation projects. The

consequences of the fluctuations in the number of projects, and the variation in the regional location of such projects, fall heavily on individual archaeologists.

At the same time, the great interpretative potential in the material documented by rescue archaeology has become evident. Work is now focusing on how this potential can be best transformed into concrete results. In view of the large amount of resources being put into rescue archaeology, this question is a responsibility for the entire archaeological community. If effective forms can be found, this work will no doubt produce exciting new knowledge.

There is a continued great interest for archaeology in society. To help the general public find forms of experiencing the past is an important and still somewhat neglected archaeological task. We believe this field of action will engage an increasing number of archaeologists in the future. It is essential that the latter have good knowledge of modern research so they are able to mediate a past that is not oversimplified and intellectually impoverished.

This volume is the first one produced in collaboration with the board of editorial advisors. We see their participation as an important support for the continued development of the journal.

Mats Burström & Anders Carlsson
The Swedish Archaeological Society

Editorial Introduction to Mats P. Malmer's Paper

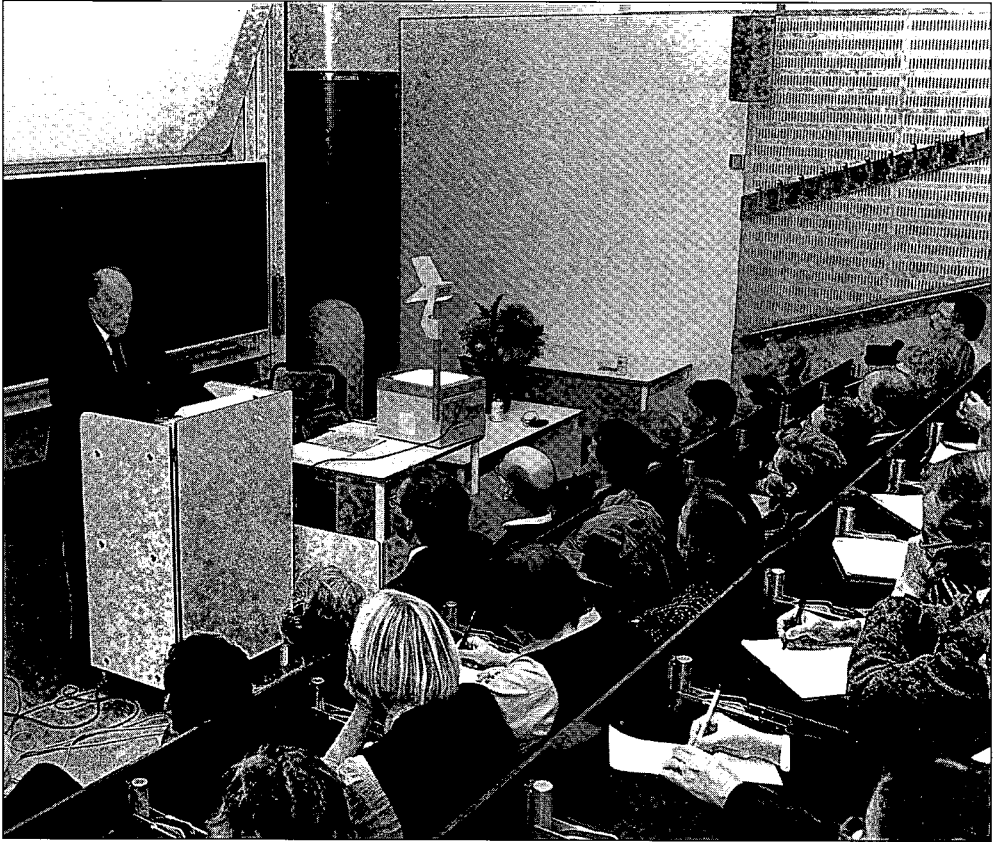


Photo: Stockholm University.

Mats P. Malmer has had a major influence on Swedish archaeology since the publication of his doctoral thesis, *Jungneolithische Studien*, in 1962. In this and in *Metodproblem inom järnålderns konsthistoria* (*Methodological Problems in the History of Art during the Scandinavian Iron Age*) published in 1963, he stressed the need for the use of objective methods in archaeology. Both these works became very important in the Swedish and Scandinavian debate. In a number of later papers Malmer has continued to argue for his position.

To mark his seventy-fifth birthday in October 1996 Mats P. Malmer gave a celebratory lecture at

the Department of Archaeology at Stockholm University, in which he summarized his view on archaeology. In the current state of debate some of Malmer's assertions may indeed seem controversial. Considering Malmer's important role within Swedish archaeology we believe, however, his statement to be of interest for a wider audience than could attend his lecture. Therefore, this volume of *Current Swedish Archaeology* begins with an English version of Mats P. Malmer's celebratory lecture.

Mats Burström & Anders Carlsson