

# CURRENT SWEDISH ARCHAEOLOGY

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Eds:  
Mats Burström & Anders Carlsson

The Swedish Archaeological Society

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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 Archaeological 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 will be continued within the journal *Current Swedish Archaeology*. In this volume there is a retrospective analysis of the period 1986-1990.

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. The Society also holds an annual thematic meeting for Swedish archaeologists, the first of which was held last year in Göteborg.

# Editors' Preface

This volume of *Current Swedish Archaeology* (CSA) contains a retrospective analysis of Swedish archaeology during the period 1986-1990. This is a continuation of CSA's predecessor, *Swedish Archaeology*, and the idea is to give a general view of the archaeological research during the period in question.

The papers in the present volume differ in their character and qualities. This is due to different approaches to archaeology and archaeological research among the authors. Consequently, papers dealing with different chronological periods and research areas are not fully commensurable. Whether or not this variation is to be considered a quality is for the reader to decide.

Many of the authors have used the publication *Nordic Archaeological Abstracts* (NAA) as a basis for their analysis. For a more complete account of archaeological work published we recommend NAA. The organisation of the papers dealing with Swedish archaeological research in the Mediterranean area has been done by Professor Pontus Hellström. We are grateful for this assistance.

In March 1994 the *Swedish Archaeological Society* arranged the very first *General Meeting for Swedish Archaeologists* (Sw. *Svenska Arkeologmötet*). These meetings are to be held annually and the purpose is to gather archaeologists from all sectors of the field for discussions concerning matters of common interest and general importance.

The first meeting was held in Göteborg in cooperation with the Department of Archaeology at Göteborg University. The

theme for this meeting was "Visions of Archaeological Knowledge." This turned out to be a surprisingly difficult theme to discuss. Questions concerning *what kind of archaeological knowledge we want, why we want it, and how we can get it*, do not seem to be a matter of course on the agenda in current Swedish archaeology. Instead, many of us are so occupied by our daily antiquarian or educational duties that our visions seem quite remote. As a matter of fact, the *lack of visions of archaeological knowledge is often more obvious than the presence*. Who has the time to think about visions when there is so much work to be done?

We believe that the last question illustrates a serious structural problem in Swedish archaeology. Today more resources than ever are invested in excavating, and the amount of archaeological "data" is growing incredibly fast. The time available for interpreting and fostering archaeological visions, however, is not in proportion to this situation. To remain an intellectual profession, Swedish archaeology urgently needs to devote more time to thinking, debating and writing.

The next volume of CSA - vol. 4, 1996 - will have the same character as vol. 1 and 2, i.e. a collection of papers presenting interpretations and discussing archaeological problems. These will certainly show that, despite everything, visions do exist in Swedish archaeology.

*Mats Burström & Anders Carlsson*  
The Swedish Archaeological Society

