

PREFACE

In this as well as the next issue of *"Laborativ Arkeologi"*, the papers presented at *"The 5th Nordic Conference on the Application of Scientific Methods in Archaeology"*, held at the Stockholm University 20-24 September 1990, are published. There were almost 200 attendants at this conference which was generally judged as succesful.

We are grateful to the many authors who have delivered their manuscripts so promptly. This allowed us to print more than half of the papers already within a year after the conference. Kerstin Lidén has been my coeditor and Ann-Marie Hansson and Sven Isaksson have diligently processed the manuscripts.

After the conference many archaeologists told me that if they had known that so many of the lectures dealt with "real archaeology" they would also have wanted to attend. I think this comment reflects a general misinterpretation of what "Scientific archaeology" or as we call it in swedish "Laborativ Arkeologi" really stands for. The use of scientific methods in archaeology does not deprive archaeology of being a basic humanistic research field. On the contrary the ambition shared by most archaeologists to recognize, describe and understand earlier human cultures, is also a reason for using scientific methods. These methods are wheels which facilitate further advance in a field, where the source material is so badly fragmented.

One of the first in Sweden to recognize the importance of scientific methods used in archaeology was professor emerita Greta Arwidsson. Already in the thirties she used scientific methods in the field work at Valsgårde. As professor at the Stockholm University she promoted the Osteological Research Laboratory and also took part in the preliminaries which later led to the establishment of the Archaeological Research Laboratory. It seems therefore appropriate to dedicate this issue of *"Laborativ Arkeologi"* to professor emerita Greta Arwidsson doing homage to her 85th birthday the 5th of July 1991.

Stockholm in May 1991

Birgit Arrhenius
Editor