

Debate

In this *Debate* we continue the discussion about archaeology in the 1980'es with contributions from Norway and Sweden by Björn Myhre and Åke Hyenstrand. They have both contributed to the development of archaeological method and theory in Scandinavia during the 1970'es and 1980'es, especially within settlement studies.

Finally Peter Rowley-Conway from Cambridge and Kristina Jennbert from Lund introduce a debate on the transition from the mesolithic to the neolithic in southern Scandinavia as seen from the mesolithic. We hope also to receive comments on the transition as seen from the neolithic and from the perspective of vegetational history.

The editors

Trends in Norwegian Archaeology

by BJØRN MYHRE

INTRODUCTION

In the foregoing issue of *JDA* (vol. 3, 1984) Kristian Kristiansen presents a very personal version of Danish archaeology, its history and future. He is mainly describing the Danish situation, but especially in the retrospective part of his article he leaves us with the impression that the development of archaeology was almost identical in all Scandinavian countries. This may be correct concerning the main trends, but each country has its own traditions which have been of decisive importance for the content and organization of the discipline.

Kristiansen indicates that Scandinavian archaeologists during the latter century were so oppressed by the burden of tradition and data, that new ideas and theories could not be accepted before the end of the 1960's. The ideology and paradigms of a discipline must, however, be evaluated according to the main scientific theories that are prevailing at the time in question. When Scandinavian archaeologists during the first half of this century gave priority to the study of chronological problems and "archaeological cultures" they operated within the existing theory of all disciplines of culture history; typology, diffusion, "Kulturkreislehre" and migrations were accepted tools, and during some periods were even radical new ideas.

It was only when the theoretical basis for the "new anthropology": social anthropology in England and cultural anthropology in the U.S.A., developed during the 1930's and 1940's, that the new understanding and the new theories were formed, which later also changed archaeology. But even in England and U.S.A. it took a long time before the new anthropological ideas became common archaeological tools. Archaeologists like G. Childe (1951, 1958), G. Clark (1939, 1952, 1953), W.W. Taylor (1948) and Ph. Philips and G. Willey (1958) were pioneers, who not until the late 1950's and early 1960's were followed by a larger group. The advances in philosophy and scientific theory and the development of computers, new dating methods and statistics, that have been of such importance to the new archaeology, were mainly achieved as late as the 1950's and early 1960's.

Scandinavian archaeology has therefore, according to my view, followed an international trend through most of this century, and has even contributed with new aspects and results. When searching for the reason why it lasted so long before Scandinavian archaeologists began orientating themselves towards the new anthropological theories, we must remember that Scandinavian archaeology was in no exceptional position in the world. Even in England and U.S.A. very few archaeologists in the 1940's and 1950's were actively developing in the new direction. To understand the position of Scandinavian

archaeology today and to be able to predict something of its future development, I think it is of importance to look back on what happened during the 20 years between 1945 and 1965.

NORWEGIAN ARCHAEOLOGY IN RETROSPECT

The 1950's

The community of archaeologists was rather small during these years. It consisted of merely 14 persons in permanent positions (Tromsø Museum 1, Trondheim Museum 2, Historisk Museum in Bergen 3, Stavanger Museum 2 and Universitetets Oldsaksamling in Oslo 6 persons). The museums in Bergen and Oslo were part of the Universities, but the two professors were primarily museum directors. The few students there were, spent much time working in the museums and doing field-work, and the setting for theoretical training was not the best.

The Second World War had recently ended, and the rebuilding of the country was given highest priority. Some of the leading archaeologists of the former generation, like A.W. Brøgger and H. Shetelig, had recently retired, while others like G. Gjessing, S. Grieg and E. Engelstad left archaeology to take up leading positions in other institutions. It must have been a difficult but stimulating task for the new generation to start archaeology anew.

The three traditions of archaeological research mentioned by Kristian Kristiansen came to dominate Norwegian archaeology also in the 1950's, but there are also other important aspects and new approaches that ought to be mentioned.

To be able to understand Norwegian archaeology, its tradition of organization and administration needs explanation. When the young State of Norway in 1905, as one of the first countries in the world, got a powerful legislation for the protection of ancient monuments, the still-existing decentralized administration was established. The five archaeological museums in Oslo, Stavanger, Bergen, Trondheim and Tromsø were given the responsibility for prehistoric and medieval antiquities and prehistoric monuments (older than AD 1050) within their region. The revised Ancient Monument Act of 1951 maintained this organization, while a sixth institution, the Central office of Historic Monuments (Riksantikvaren) became the authority for protecting medieval archaeological remains in addition to standing buildings, an authority it had since the Building Heritage Act entered into force in 1920. In 1905 as well as during the 1950's all Norwegian archaeologists were employed by the five regional museums, and both research and legislative administration were in the hands of the same staff. From the start, therefore, the double function of the monuments and the artifacts as both scientific sources and a national heritage was clearly stressed. The tension that is inherent in this organization has always influenced Norwegian archaeology, and has today turned into frustration because of the time-consuming work of administering the Act.

Another important tradition to be aware of is the close connection between archaeology and history. The connection

with history has always been strong, and it has been a major aim to use archaeological material as a source of local and national history. The historical approach has also characterized neighbouring disciplines, as also can be seen from their names: art history, culture history, history of religion etc. The study of the society that created the products, and their function within the society, had no strong tradition, and the question "When?" was more often asked than Why and How? (Gjessing 1951, p. 217). This historical approach seems to have been strong also in the 1950's. It was part of the ideology of archaeological research, and it must have been a motivating power behind the revision of the Act for the protection of Ancient Monuments, and of the efforts which so many archaeologists came to invest in monument preservation and rescue archaeology.

Chronological studies with their emphasis on typology and find-combinations have of course been important also in Norway (Gråslund 1976). In addition, the many richly decorated objects from the Migration and Viking Periods created a special interest in animal styles and the history of styles, based on works by B. Salin (1904) and H. Shetelig (1920). Such studies were given priority in the teaching of Bjørn Hougen who was appointed professor in Oslo in 1950. We must also take into consideration that the professorial chair in Bergen was held by H. Shetelig up to 1942 and his excellent works on animal styles and Norwegian prehistory (1925, 1937) considerably influenced Norwegian archaeologists.

It seems, however, that the post-war generation of archaeologists took more interest in the study of settlement history, subsistence and economic adaptation. Interdisciplinary research projects with botanists and zoologists as participants had been a tradition since the early part of the century, when the excavation and publication of the Oseberg Viking grave and the rock shelters from the Stone Age started. The late 1940's and the 1950's were characterized by the many large excavations which were begun with the aim of shedding new light on settlement history and early economy. New detailed excavation techniques developed in Holland and Denmark were introduced, and a cooperation with natural scientists was given high priority. The development of pollen analysis also gave the archaeologist a new tool, and laid the foundation for the close cooperation that exists between the two disciplines today.

Many of the large investigations had young Swedish and Danish archaeologists as participants, and especially the new Danish archaeology was of great inspiration in Norway, namely at the excavation of the deserted Iron Age farm at Sostelid (Hagen 1953), the Iron Age cemetery at Hunn (Hagen 1954) and the Stone Age settlements in Varanger, North Norway (Simonsen 1961). Especially in Oslo where most archaeologists and students were found, there developed an interest in this kind of research, inspired first by Bjørn Hougen (1947) and later by Anders Hagen. The new spirit spread to the regional museums when the students took up positions there. Excavations of New Stone Age sites were started in South and West Norway (Hinsch 1955), Iron Age farms and cemeteries were investigated in Rogaland (Petersen 1954, Møllerop

1957), and the first systematic excavations of Viking and Early Medieval ports and towns opened up a new understanding of these periods (Blindheim 1960, Herteig 1954, 1957 and 1960). By the end of the decade the investigations of the high mountain areas (initiated by the many hydroelectric power projects) were begun and these became of great importance to Norwegian archaeology (Hagen 1959).

Excavations like those mentioned above had never been done in Norway before. The investigations were encouraged by the older generation of archaeologists, like A.W. Brøgger, S. Grieg and B. Hougen (1947, see also Hagen 1953, p. 8–9), but the new inspiration came from Denmark (P.V. Glob, J. Troels Smith and G. Hatt) and England (G.V. Childe and E.C. Curwen). Later it seems that the influence from the “economic approach” of Grahame Clark was strong. A large and complex material for the study of settlement history and economic adaptation was collected, and a new basis for a new prehistory of Norway was created. At the same time the new Ancient Monument Act gave the archaeologists of the 1950’s a strong tool for rescue archaeology. It seems to have been an optimistic and creative decade between 1945 and 1955 when the historic and economic approach inspired the new and fascinating archaeology. Renfrew’s and Kristiansen’s phrase of “the long sleep” in no way characterizes this period in Norway. In the last years of the 1950’s, however, the pace seems to have slackened. Fewer initiatives were taken and the earlier paradigms guided research and field work. The ground was ready for new ideas and theories.

The 1960’s and 1970’s

The models and theories of the social sciences found no receptive climate in Norwegian archaeology during the 1950’s, but this also applied to most branches of culture history. Even at the Institute of Ethnography in Oslo there was no systematic teaching in social anthropology before 1959, following many years of debate over the ideology of the discipline. At the Institute of Ethnology in Oslo new Anglo-American theories were not taught till 1961. The early 1960’s was a time of great expansion for all social sciences at the universities of both Bergen and Oslo, and the new direction of archaeology was a direct result of this development (Klausen 1981, p. 153–159). We may safely conclude that the first phase of a transformation of Norwegian archaeology started around 1960.

Attempts to introduce the ideas of Anglo-American anthropology were made in the 1920’s and 1930’s by professor A.W. Brøgger (1925, 1937), who was probably inspired by works of Malinowski and Radcliffe Brown (Gjessing 1951, p. 216), and through initiatives taken by the Institute of Comparative Cultural Research founded in Oslo in 1922. It was an interdisciplinary institution that arranged lectures, financed research projects and series of publications. Among the guest lecturers were Malinowski and Frans Boas (Klausen 1981, p. 148). In the late 1940’s Guttorm Gjessing was an advocate of American anthropology, especially after he was appointed professor in

Ethnography in Oslo in 1947. His article in 1951 “Etnografi og arkeologi” was an attempt to introduce the new American archaeology in Norway, and he also presented the revolutionary book by Walter W. Taylor (1948) which has later meant so much to American archaeology. Strangely enough, Gjessing’s activity seems to have had no influence at all.

The new ideas entered into Norwegian archaeology through the next generation of archaeologists who began their studies in the late 1950’s and the early 1960’s, and to whom social anthropology and ethnology became popular additional subjects to archaeology. When Anders Hagen became professor of archaeology at the University of Bergen in 1961 a new active educational institution was built up. Knut Odner who had studied both archaeology and social anthropology was made a research scholar of archaeology in Bergen in 1963, and his teaching and strong ties to the Institute of Social Anthropology meant much to the attitude held by students of archaeology. It was an atmosphere ready for new ideas and theoretical discussions, and the inspiring publications of C.A. Moberg (1961) and Mats P. Malmer (1962, 1963) had a great influence (see also Johansen 1982). The curriculum for the study of archaeology was changed, and gradually the new methods and theories were presented in Norwegian publications (Odner 1961, 1964, 1969. Myhre 1964, Herteig 1965, 1966, Johansen 1969, Hagen 1970). In 1968 the journal *Norwegian Archaeological Review* was started in Bergen to respond to the need for introducing new ideas into Norwegian archaeology and to start a discussion of methods and theory (editorials of *NAR* 1968, 1969 and 1970).

Therefore, the pioneer phase of the new archaeology in Norway started already about 1960, and its development was under way when the “student revolution” occurred in the late 1960’s and the Association of Scandinavian students of archaeology was created in 1969. But I fully agree with Kristiansen that this association and its publication, “Kontaktstencil”, had a very stimulating effect on the process.

In Norway the 1970’s may be called the second phase in which the new archaeological theories were widely accepted, and when a discussion about the actual value of the different trends and models began. The teaching staff at Oslo University was enlarged, and it gradually led to a change of the study (Sjøvold 1979). It is symptomatic of the new attitude, that when the new University of Tromsø opened a degree course in archaeology in 1971, it was attached to the Faculty of Social Sciences. Today it is probably in Tromsø that Anglo-American archaeology has its strongest impact on the course of studies.

NORWEGIAN ARCHAEOLOGY IN THE 1980’S

What is then the position of Norwegian archaeology today and in which direction will it develop? It is quite obvious that the image and paradigms of the discipline have changed radically since the 1950’s. The training, the excavations and research projects, and the publications show a strong influence from other disciplines and other countries, and an open-mindedness towards the application of new methods and ideas pre-

vails. But we are still at a formative stage, archaeologists still experiment with their new “tools”, and the number of practical results are not as many as desired. A constant debate about the future trends of archaeology goes on (f.i. Bertelsen 1975, 1983, Christophersen 1976, 1982, Gjessing 1975, 1979, Hagen 1970, 1980, Håland 1974, Johansen 1974, 1980, 1982, Keller 1978, 1980, Marstrander 1979, Møllerop 1980, Schia 1975, Sognnes 1983, Sørheim 1983), but in spite of great optimism, views tend to differ a good deal, making it difficult to point to an overall trend as the common denominator in the views held by a majority of archaeologists. I will, however, try to sum up some tendencies visible within the discipline.

Organization. Since most Norwegian archaeologists are involved in the administration of the Act to protect ancient monuments, the future organization of this work will influence all other aspects of archaeology. After ten years of discussions a new cultural Heritage Act came into force in 1979. The legislative revision started on the initiative of the five archaeological museums which argued for a common administration of all protection work that needed archaeological expertise. Unhappily this was only partly achieved, as the Central Office of Historic Monuments is still responsible for archaeological monuments in the medieval towns, while other prehistoric and medieval remains are under the authority of the museums. This most unsatisfactory decision has had an unfortunate effect on the study of medieval and post-medieval archaeology in Norway, and is the reason for unnecessary conflicts between institutions.

The proposed organization of the legislative administration was supposed to be an interim solution, but still, five years later, the future organization is under discussion, and it has turned into a disagreement between two Ministries. Will the University museums under the Ministry of Culture keep the authority for the archaeological remains, or will the authority be transferred to the Central office of Historic Monuments and the county-municipalities under the Ministry of Environment? At the root of the organizational disagreement lies the old double function of the ancient remains: as historic monuments and as objects of scientific research into local and national history. Most archaeologists believe that an administration by the archaeological museums will satisfy both aspects since they are the only institutions with extensive and many-sided archaeological expertise. We fear that if the authority is taken away from the University museums, the monumental and environmental aspects will be given priority, and less attention will be paid to the immense number of sites which are not visible on the surface of the ground, but which are of crucial importance to archaeological research.

The unique position of Norwegian archaeology, where all theoretical and practical sides of the discipline are in the hands of a few institutions, ought to be maintained. The five so-called regional archaeological museums represent a decentralized organization, and being a part of the Universities, they ensure on the one hand a more research orientated rescue archaeology, and on the other hand inspire a more many-sided and practical education based on freshly collected data (see

also Fleming 1978, p. 18). The necessary cooperation between the different sections of archaeology advocated by Kristian Kristiansen for Danish archaeology, would then be much easier to obtain.

A decision about the future administration of the Cultural Heritage Act ought to be taken very soon. The amount of work that is needed for rescue archaeology is too time-consuming for the few scholars, and new appointments will not be made as long as the situation is unsettled. According to a calculation made in 1981, 73 years of work were invested in rescue archaeology, and the necessary number of new positions was as large as 57 (NOU 1982: 36, p. 99). The future position of Norwegian archaeology will very much depend on the governmental decision concerning the assignment of authority under the Cultural Heritage Act.

Education. During the 1960's and the 1970's the number of University teachers in archaeology in Norway has risen to nine, and the professors in Oslo and Bergen are no longer museum directors as well. Archaeological studies have been reorganized and systematic education is given at three different levels at three of the four Universities. The teaching is much more influenced by general archaeological methods and theories than earlier, and traditional museum work, and the study of specific Norwegian archaeological material are given less priority both in lectures and in the curricula. Both in Oslo and Bergen there is a tendency to loosen up the organizational bond between the archaeological museums and the teaching institutes, but not in such a drastic way as in Tromsø, where the two institutions belong to two different faculties. The development towards teaching more theoretical archaeology than before, will probably accelerate if the administration of rescue archaeology is taken away from the University museums.

Traditionally the discipline is called Nordic Archaeology, but as non-European material and studies are receiving higher priority, the Nordic part of the name has little significance any more. A renaming of the teaching departments into “Institute of Archaeology” has been discussed at all three Universities. In Bergen one of the lecturers and one research scholar have North-East African archaeology as their main field of research, and give lectures also in Middle Eastern archaeology. In Tromsø circumpolar archaeology is taught, and archaeological scholars from Oslo have taken part in expeditions to the Pacific Islands and the Maldives. The shift of interest from national and Scandinavian prehistory to global archaeology will probably become more distinct in the near future.

In my opinion a certain dissolution of the administrative ties, between the teaching institutes and the museums and their departments of rescue archaeology, will have a favourable effect on the teaching and therefore on the discipline as a whole. But the administrative gap should not be allowed to widen too much, and should always be kept within the Universities.

Research. The frustration felt by Norwegian archaeologists due to the time-consuming administration of rescue archaeology,

seems to have led many of them to rethink and re-evaluate their working routines. Even if the number of archaeological positions is considerably enlarged, the amount of work that is needed to protect and investigate all ancient monuments is almost unending, and it has to be guided by a more conscious and thoroughly discussed research policy. Certain monuments and environments have to be given priority both when it comes to protection and investigation, and well defined research projects have to be organized to solve central problems in local, regional and national prehistory. Such a trend within rescue archaeology is clearly evident at all the archaeological institutions. But we are in for complicated decisions, and to find a solution to this administrative and research policy problem will be one of the main tasks for Norwegian archaeology in the 1980's (see also Hagen 1980, p. 7).

Settlement history and economic and ecological adaptation in prehistoric and early historic times have been the main interest of the many interdisciplinary research projects that the museums started during the 1970's, thereby continuing the tradition from the 1950's. But it is also clear that much attention is paid to social and political organization (Odner 1972, 1973, Myhre 1978), inspired by works of M. Fried, E. Service and C. Renfrew, and this new trend will certainly be followed also in the 1980's.

The new basis for archaeology has created an optimistic wave as regards the research possibilities of the discipline, and new aspects of prehistoric societies will be challenged. It is obvious, for instance, that prehistoric religion and ethnicity, themes that have been discarded since the frightening developments during the 1930's, now again tempt many archaeologists (Håland 1977, Kleppe 1977, Johansen 1979). Because of the research activities in N.E. Africa, and specially because of the strong Lapp liberation movement and a growing interest in Sami prehistory, ethnic archaeology will probably be a major theme in Norway during the next decade. The same can be said about prehistoric demography (Welinder 1979).

We will probably also see a renewed interest in the old concepts of diffusion and migration as important forces behind cultural and social development, after a decade of belief in "internal development" (Sognnes 1981, Håland & Håland 1982). Of course typological and chronological studies will also be important in the future, and the use of computers and sophisticated statistical and mathematical methods will accelerate.

Obviously the archaeology of historic periods will be given more attention. Since the Second World War historians have done most research on the history of Viking Norway, but archaeologists have recently been strongly challenged to take part in the discussion (Blindheim 1982 and NAR 1982). The medieval archaeologists have for decades been preoccupied with chronological problems and the handling of the huge material from urban excavations. New publication series are, however, under preparation (Lunde 1977, *Norwegian Antiquarian bulletins*, *Bryggen Papers*, *META*). Post-medieval archaeology is also attracting more interest, especially marine archaeology, industrial archaeology and Sami archaeology (*Arkeologiske rapporter* 7). Most probably the millennium between AD 800 and 1800 will be in focus in Norwegian archaeology during the

1980's and 1990's, and it will renew the interdisciplinary cooperation with historians, ethnologists and place-name etymologists, which has been lacking during the last generation.

Museums and Public Information. The staff at the museums is working under hard pressure because of rescue archaeology, and public information has received too little attention. The permanent exhibitions dating from the 1950's and 1960's have not been altered, and most protected monuments are in a sad state. This important aspect of archaeology must get higher priority in the next decade if archaeology is to maintain interest and support. All the museums are now planning new permanent exhibitions, and a national committee has been set up to discuss and coordinate the museums' public relations campaign.

A government committee on artifact conservation submitted its proposals in 1983, and it will hopefully lead to an improvement in the training of conservation staff and better conditions for the conservation of archaeological objects (NOU 1983: 33). Principles and aims for the preservation of monuments, however, have never been properly elucidated by Norwegian archaeologists. Most monuments are overgrown with vegetation and bushes, they are seldom accessible to the public, and information plates and pamphlets are usually lacking. Such unfortunate conditions will prevail until a decision on the future legislative administration has been taken. The museums advocate that the preservation of archaeological monuments and their environment ought to be taken in hand by the counties, these have recently established Departments of Environment Protection. The work has to be carried out in collaboration with the museum in question, which also has to take care of the excavations that are needed.

The popularization of archaeology through articles and books has a long tradition in Norway (Hagen 1962, 1982, 1983, Håland & Håland 1983, Magnus and Myhre 1976). Hopefully this is a trend to be continued.

CONCLUSION

Norwegian archaeology has experienced a positive development during this century. From a small group of museum archaeologists in 1900 the discipline is today a University subject of medium size, and due to a powerful Cultural Heritage Act the archaeological institutions are active participants in public environment planning.

The impact of Anglo-American archaeology has also changed Norwegian archaeology considerably, but I am not willing to agree with Kristian Kristiansen when he describes the situation as "awakening from the long sleep". Norwegian archaeology has also earlier experienced periods of expansion, characterized by new ideas and foreign influence, especially the periods 1925–1940 and 1945–1955. The research traditions from these periods still have influence today, not as a burden, but as part of the basis for new trends in archaeological research. The large amount of work that has been invested in

recording monuments and in detailed descriptions of museum collections, make exemplary starting points for comparative studies, in addition to the new scientific material collected according to a more complex research policy than before.

Norwegian archaeology is now ready for fresh expansion and progress after a period of reconsolidation and reorganization. A new generation of students with a better theoretical training is coming out of the Universities. Hopefully the new situation will stimulate a many-sided archaeological research so that new aspects of early societies will be investigated, such as demography, religion, ethnicity, and social and political organization. Then "old" concepts like typology, culture, diffusion and migration will be given new dimensions and must be studied anew.

The future of Norwegian archaeology depends very much on how the Cultural Heritage Act will be organized. A central and coordinating institution is needed, e.g. under a reorganized Central office of Historic Monuments in Oslo, but it is to be hoped that the University museums will still be regional authorities under the Act, so that education, research and rescue archaeology will obtain mutual advantages also in the future.

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Swedish Archaeology in the 1980s

by ÅKE HYENSTRAND

The basis for archaeological research is affected by different traditions and regional variations. Research in different countries cannot be usefully compared without examining its foundations. In Kristian Kristiansen's analysis in *JDA* vol. 3, 1984, there is much which could apply to Sweden, and a good deal which does not. The process leading to an interplay between antiquarian and university research which occurred quickly in Denmark has been going on in Sweden for the last 25 years. This has to do with major differences in legislation and social structure.

Denmark has been a very important bridgehead in Scandinavia for the European tradition of archaeological "Siedlungsforschung", and later also for New Archaeology (NA). A superficial view, would suggest, however, that NA in Denmark has caused considerably more disagreement and is considered more revolutionary than in Sweden. There may be special reasons for this, to be sought in different backgrounds.