

Förflutna rum. Landskapets neolitisering i sydvästra Värmland.

Rooms of the past.  
The Neolithization of the Landscape in southwestern Värmland, Sweden.

by Curry Heimann

## ABSTRACT

*Thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, Göteborg University, Department of Archaeology, 2004. Written in Swedish, with an English summary. Gotarc series B. Gothenburg Archaeological Theses no. 30. 281 pages, 99 figures, 21 tables. ISSN 02 82 – 6860 ISBN 91-85245-02-X*

The main objective of this thesis is to study the effect of the Stone Age neolithization process on the human landscape. The landscape should here not be reduced to an arena for human actions provided by nature, but instead be viewed as something continuously being created by man, in a mental as well as in a physical sense. Proceeding from a post-processual landscape research perspective, where humans are seen as actors, and archaeological landscape analysis by visual methods of the spatial organization of the landscape, this thesis seeks to analyze the meaning of the Neolithic transitional process.

The empirical base for the thesis mainly consists of archaeological source material from southwestern Värmland, focusing especially on the extensive lake system at Stora Le and Lelången and the former Nordmark district. In this area the Neolithization process in its early phases did not so much mean a change of subsistence. It was probably more a question of a process of change towards social inequality and complexity in the society while the subsistence still was firmly based on hunting and fishing activities.

A second purpose of the study is to discuss in a more general manner the Stone Age archaeological material of Värmland, something which has been done only rarely in previous research. My analysis of the material primarily concerns how it was found and its value as a source material for landscape studies.

The first chapter contains an introduction to and a discourse on the central concepts of neolithization and landscape analysis used in this study. My ambition is to expand and discuss the conventional settlement-archaeological perspective by adding ideas from architectural theory and postprocessual landscape theory. The primary area of investigation, consisting of five parishes within the Nordmark district, is introduced, and its geographical features, both natural and cultural, are described.

The first and the last chapters of the thesis present the theoretical framework for the treatment of the empirical material in the sections in between. One aim of the study is, through the use of archaeological landscape analysis by visual means, to present the landscape as an active constituent in the social and economic change that took place during Neolithization. This is accounted for in chapter 6, where the materials from the different sections are integrated. The empirical material consists of archaeological finds, settlements, and pollen analyses (chapter 3), rock art (chapter 4), and stone cists (chapter 5). In chapter 5 the main focus is on the architectural design of the stone cists (gallery graves) and how they were placed in the landscape. The formation process of archaeology and the development of regional archaeological institutions in Värmland are discussed in chapter 2.

**Keywords:** Neolithization, landscape archaeology, Värmland, Late Neolithic, stone cists, gallery graves, architectural theory, Rock Art, pollen analysis, Western Sweden