

# Landskap

Visuella & rumsliga relationer  
i Falbygdens neolitikum

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## Abstract

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This thesis focuses on the complex and ambiguous concept of “landscape”. Briefly stated, the thesis aims to:

1) problematise landscape as a concept and show the difficulties and opportunities arising from its complex and ambiguous nature, 2) problematise geographic information systems (GIS) as analysis tools, 3) discuss the visual and spatial relationships presented by Neolithic Falbygden.

The archaeological material in this thesis is largely made up of surface-collected artefacts, stray finds, settlement sites (i.e. accumulations of finds) and passage graves. Four areas of analysis have been adhered to in studying the material. Based on the analysis results, it can be argued that passage graves are situated in locations that are visually more exposed than their surroundings. In the thesis, visibility from passage graves in different areas has been analysed to determine whether visibility is higher/lower depending on direction. The thesis demonstrates that, between groups of passage graves, there are differences in the “direction” of visibility and that these differences are topography dependent. Based on the material analysed, there is a pattern of few or no finds in the immediate vicinity of the passage graves. Furthermore, chronologically determined artefacts found in the vicinity of said graves were not contemporaneous therewith. The thesis raises the criticism that archaeology is perhaps too “visually-oriented” and, in many cases, based on Western perceptions. As a way of escaping from such comprehensive and general interpretations of landscapes, it is argued for an approach based on “action” and “local logic”. In this thesis, it has been argued that the visual relationships in landscapes represent only a small part of how any landscape is perceived by an individual. It is also argued that the contributions that phenomenological landscape archaeology has made to the understanding of landscape are a sensitisation to other ways of discussing landscape and a greater appreciation of archaeology’s constraints and opportunities. Nonetheless, it has not contributed significantly to a better understanding of how people experienced the Neolithic landscape. How a landscape is perceived is not determined solely by what is seen or not seen – our other senses (“mental imagery” being not the least of these) play an equal role here.

Keywords: *Archaeology, Falbygden, Sweden, Passage graves, Megalithic tombs, Neolithic, Society, Landscape, Visuality, GIS*