

Abstract

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Title: Den hemliga sjön - en resa till det småländska inlandet för 9000 år sedan

English title: The secret lake – a journey to the south Swedish inland 9000 years ago

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The thesis is based on the excavation of a Stone Age site approximately 9,300 years old located in the south Swedish inland. Although the site delivered very few finds it was a site of considerable potential merit. The landscape in the forested region was to a considerable extent untouched by human activity. As there were no natural deposits of flint in the area, all flint had been brought to the site from the coast. A GIS-based analysis enabled small concentrations of finds to be identified and analyzed. The analysis included both technological interpretations and use-wear analyses. The results of these analyses showed that many different tasks were carried out on the site although almost no tools or blades were produced at the site. All flints found were the remnants of sharpening and retouching, consciously discarded or lost. An analysis of the ¹⁴C-datings from other sites showed that the inland was only visited sporadically during the first few millennia after the end of the ice age. There are no data which indicate permanent settlement in the inland during the Mesolithic.

The inland was thus not colonized in the conventional sense. It was not a linear process and different areas acquired different significances during different periods. The motivation to explore the inland was not primarily ecological or economical. Instead the landscape was analyzed from a social perspective. The starting point was Maurice Bloch's description of man's ability to assume various societal roles and give their environment a social dimension. From this perspective, the landscape, journeys and animals were all various aspects of the same social phenomenon. Keeping this fundamental pre-requisite in mind, the author goes on to analyze the landscape from several different perspectives. Taking his inspiration from Claude Lévi-Strauss, he compares the interior of the country and the coast from a structural perspective, stating that one possible reason for visiting the interior was that it provided a direct contrast to people's everyday life on the coast. People's desire to change and expand their social roles inevitably led them to move between the inland and the coast.

Keywords: archaeology, behavioral archaeology, coast-inland, colonization, cognition, ecology, flint, intrasite-patterning, hunter gatherer, GIS analysis, landscape, lithic analysis, Maglemose culture, mesolithic, middle range theory, paleoecology, phosphate analysis, site formation processes, structuralism, transcendental social, use-wear analysis