

Foreword

In this issue, the ninth of *Laborativ Arkeologi, Journal of Nordic Archaeological Science*, we are happy to present papers from distinguished scientists from as far abroad as the USA and Bulgaria. Martha Goodway's and Yuyan Chen's paper is about the Fröslunda shields, and Oksana Minaeva's article treats the cup of Sivin – found in Bulgaria, but having a close parallel in the Dune cup, which is discussed in another paper by Gustaf Trotzig. We also recognize the contribution from one of our Nordic colleagues, Einar Østmo, who together with Birgitta Hulthén and Sven Isaksson have worked with material from the Middle Neolithic settlement at Auve.

Three articles are published on ancient diet, written by Lidén, Eriksson and Isaksson. In these articles new methods for characterizing diet intake are discussed. These methods will be of importance for the new research project SIV, Svealand in the Vendel and Viking Periods, which started this year and where diet factors will be used as indicators of high rank and wealth. Also the method for extraction of DNA from archaeological bones and teeth published by Götherström and Lidén, as well as Kjell Persson's phosphate strips, have already successfully been used within the SIV project.

In her article about bread in Birka and on Björkö, Ann-Marie Hansson gives us an insight of the bread culture of the Viking Age, and from Anita Malmius we learn about the use of textiles in Viking Age Birka.

We have this year celebrated the twentieth anniversary of the Archaeological Research Laboratory, and in connection with this celebration I made a retrospect of the development of the laboratory. The development of our laboratory should be seen in the light of the generally enhanced interest in archaeological science during this period. In Sweden there has during the past year been a more formal establishment of four already well-known laboratories, one in Umeå doing archaeological environmental studies, the accelerator dating laboratory in Uppsala, and the dendro- and ceramic laboratories in

Lund. The firm establishment of these laboratories is happy news and we look forward to still more co-operation than we have had so far.

In this connection it is a bit disturbing that the Swedish Research Council, who already has put so much money into the development of this side of archaeological research, now tries to advise us not to publish our journal any further, and instead publish the articles in other existing Swedish archaeological journals. The idea of the Research Council is that in this way the articles would get more readers. However, most of the authors in this journal also write articles in the other journals, but are constantly faced with a wish from the editors not to bring in too many technical details, i.e. to make the articles more popular. So if the main archaeological journals would be the only place to publish, this would mean that the special care we have taken to let our referee group examine the scientific methods used, and get the authors to document them in detail so that they can be repeated by others, would be lost. But also we would, following their advice, lose the readers with interdisciplinary interest which we think are an important target group for discussion and participation in our work. Interdisciplinary work means that you have to "broaden your circles", and through our readers – from other archaeological laboratories in Sweden and abroad, as well as from fields other than archaeology – we often get fruitful comments.

So we still have the hope that the Research Council will pursue their funding, and I can assure any reader that already new and intriguing articles are waiting to be printed in volume 10.

As usual there has been a lot of work behind the scenes to get this journal into print. Gunilla Eriksson has put much energy into editing the journal, not only taking care of all the technical details, but also having a heavy part in the general editing. Timothy Anstey has revised the English language and in connection with this made many fruitful comments.

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Birgit Arrhenius, editor

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