

Welinder, Stig (ed.). 2016. *Archaeology as Fact and Fiction. Mats P. Malmer's archaeological writings 1948–2002*. Kungl. Vitterhets Historie och Antikvitets Akademien (KVHAA), Handlingar, Antikvariska serien 50. Stockholm 2016. 396 pp.

Mats P. Malmer (1921–2007) published many essential books and articles on prehistoric archaeology beginning in 1948. This book offers a selection of texts, most of which have not been translated into English before. Malmer's work deals among other things with Mesolithic artefacts, Neolithic culture groups, Bronze Age barrows and rock carvings, and decorated Iron Age artefacts such as gold bracteates. First and foremost he published on methodology: how to do archaeological research in an objective way using well-defined terms and concepts. He constructed a system of typological categories ascending from attributes of individual objects up to cultures in parallel with the New Archeology, and quantitative methods such as production diagrams displaying the chorology and chronology of artefact types. The main line in his work is the study of innovation, from his introduction to archaeology of the pleion concept in 1957 to his final book on the Neolithic in 2002.

Mats P. Malmer was head of the Stone Age and Bronze Age Department at the Swedish History Museum in Stockholm from 1959 to 1968. He held the professor's chair at Lund University 1968–1973 and at Stockholm University 1973–1988. He was married to Brita Malmer, professor of numismatics.

Keywords

Archaeological method, archaeological theory, Battle Axe Culture, typology, chorology, innovation, material research, production diagram

© 2016 Elin Malmer, Stig Welinder and KVHAA, Stockholm

ISBN 978-91-7402-434-0

ISSN 0083-6761

Publisher: Kungl. Vitterhets Historie och Antikvitets Akademien
(KVHAA, The Royal Swedish Academy of Letters, History and
Antiquities), Box 5622, SE-114 86 Stockholm, Sweden
<http://www.vitterhetsakad.se>

Distribution: eddy.se ab, Box 1310, SE-621 24 Visby, Sweden
<http://vitterhetsakad.bokorder.se>

Cover image: Battle Axe Culture pottery from M.P. Malmer's
1962 doctoral dissertation.

Cover and graphic design: Bitte Granlund/Happy Book

Printed by Elanders Sverige, Mölnlycke 2016



Preface

WHEN MATS P. MALMER presented his doctoral dissertation *Jungneolithische Studien* in Lund in 1962, he initiated a period of intense debate about the archaeological research process. He emphasized that progress in archaeology, in the form of new horizons of understanding, is the result of both new finds and new ideas. In a series of acutely formulated articles he tackled fundamental problems, articles which led to fruitful discussions. But Mats P. Malmer was unusual in being a brilliant practitioner and a theoretical archaeologist combined in one and the same person. He did not like to write purely methodological or theoretical texts; instead he developed his new perspectives through empirical investigations.

In the 1990s Mats P. Malmer had plans to publish a collection of essays, revised versions of some of his most important articles. He never had the opportunity to assemble the collection, which was to have been entitled *Archaeology as Fact and Fiction*. In this volume we have made a selection of previously published articles and book chapters, along with one unpublished text. We hope that Mats P. Malmer's perpetual discussions will continue.

Anders Andrén Evert Baudou Kristian Kristiansen
Lars Larsson David Wilson