Timo Salminen

IN SEARCH OF A NORDIC IDEA? THE FIRST FIVE NORDIC MEETINGS OF ARCHAEOLOGISTS 1916–27

Abstract
International congresses of archaeology ceased abruptly after the outbreak of the First World War. The first Nordic Meeting of Archaeologists was held in 1916 in Kristiania (Norway). The first five meetings are analysed in this study. From the very beginning, these meetings were highly significant both for introducing new finds and for bringing interpretations under discussion. Also methodological questions, especially those relating to scientific methods, were included in the programmes. On the other hand, archaeological theory was not dealt with, nor was there any unanimity on theoretical questions. Diffusionist explanation models dominated the presentations, but a considerable plurality of views was allowed. Ideological connotations can be observed in several papers and excursions, but ethnic questions were relatively marginal. The various attempts to discover a common Nordic idea at the meetings did not lead to significant results. On a practical level, the meetings proved to be important from the beginning.

Keywords: Nordic Meetings of Archaeologists, international contacts in archaeology, Nordic countries, history of archaeology

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NORDIC MEETINGS OF ARCHAEOLOGISTS

The first Nordic Meeting of Archaeologists was organized in Kristiania (Norway) in the summer of 1916. Before the Second World War, five other meetings were held: Copenhagen (Denmark) in 1919, Stockholm (Sweden) in 1922, Helsinki (Finland) in 1925, Bergen (Norway) in 1927, and Copenhagen with some other places in Denmark in 1937. This was also a period of institutionalization, but the creation of an archaeological profession was already completed. With the deaths of Oscar Montelius in 1921 and Sophus Müller in 1934, the founders’ generation had withdrawn from the stage. In the 1930s, politics became more and more prominent also in archaeological circles, but in the 1920s, political views were still more veiled. One obvious change in the Nordic sphere was that Finland was accepted as a part of the Nordic archaeological institutions of cooperation after its independence (Baudou 2004: 205–8; Salminen 2014a: 49–55).

Was some kind of Nordic idea conceived in the first five meetings from 1916 to 1927, and if so, how was its realization attempted? What was presented at the meetings – new finds, new interpretations, or even new methods and ways of doing archaeology? To what extent were different periods of time and different geographical areas represented and why? Did Nordic archaeologists have a shared message about the mission and goal of archaeology to convey to their audiences or were conflicting ideas presented?

Human actions are communication with the external world. Founding an institution like the Nordic Meetings of Archaeologists and taking up any particular topic at these meetings conveyed messages to the archaeological community and the general public. On a deeper level, every conference presentation carried meanings and messages connected to the cultural back-
ground in which it was realized (Danow 1991: 13–6; also Lotman & Uspenskij 1984: 153, 160, 174). In this study, the Nordic meetings are read as a narrative of communication, but the latter level of analysis is too wide-ranging to be carried out here.

The sixth meeting is excluded from the comparison because it is analysed separately in Steffen Stummann Hansen’s book (2004). He also gives a brief overview of the earlier meetings (Stummann Hansen 2004: 11–2). Several other studies also discuss them briefly (Stenberger 1963; Stjernquist 1991; also C.F. Meinander 1991: 143–7; Baudou 2004: 207–8, 229–30; 2012: 350–1, 366–7; Edgren 2013: 113–5), but they have not been the focus of a special study. This study aims to provide a general overview of the meetings of 1916–27 and to pose further questions for future analysis. Detailed specifications of the contents of the presentations cannot be provided here due to space constraints. Also, some of the presentations were never published and are thus no longer available for analysis.

In addition to the published conference papers, personal correspondence between Nordic archaeologists is used here to shed light on some details. Contacts between Nordic archaeologists were lively from the very beginning, the second half of the 19th century, and the meetings can largely be seen as a result of this long and fruitful cooperation (see Salminen 2014a: 16–9, 30–1, 36–40; also Baudou 2004: 207–8). The correspondence reflects the personal level of contacts: scholarly questions are intertwined with other discussions. This paper cites letters to Aarne Michaël Tallgren and Carl Axel Nordman in Finland and Sune Lindqvist in Sweden. A general assessment of their correspondence can be found elsewhere (Salminen 2014a: 14–5). A more extensive look into archival material, such as a study of the archives of the hosting institutions in different Nordic countries, has been left for the future.

THE NORDIC MEETINGS: A SUBSTITUTE FOR EUROPEAN COOPERATION?

Sophus Müller (1846–1934) from Denmark and Oscar Montelius (1843–1921) and Bernhard Salin (1861–1931) from Sweden met in Copenhagen in autumn 1915. Also the Director of the Danish Museum of Industrial Art, Emil Hanover (1864–1923), has been mentioned in the context of this meeting. The meeting resulted in the founding of a Nordic Council of Museums for Prehistoric and Historical Archaeology. Sources of information differ on whether the initiative was originally Müller’s or Hanover’s. In any case, Müller wanted to strengthen the ties between Nordic archaeologists in the difficult times of the World War (Gjessing 1918: 187; C.F. Meinander 1991: 143; Stummann Hansen 2004: 11). The last pre-war World Congress of Prehistory had been held in Geneva (Switzerland) in 1912, and such extensive conferences could not be considered in wartime. Also the Baltic (Sea Region) Congresses were not able to establish themselves because of the outbreak of the war (Kossinna 1912). Marc-Antoine Kaeser (2010; also 2008: 383–8) has emphasized the international character of the research of prehistory. Also in that context, it was to be expected that Nordic archaeologists attempted to compensate for the severed wider international cooperation at least by working together within smaller circles.

There were also political reasons to organize meetings of Scandinavian archaeologists in the early 20th century. After the Swedish-Norwegian union was dissolved in 1905, there were three independent states in Scandinavia instead of two, and more nationalistic sentiments were influencing archaeology in all of them. Danish and Swedish archaeologists had always simultaneously striven to cooperate and presented conflicting interpretations (Müller 1884; Baudou 2012: 219–49; also Baudou 2004: 207–8). The Danes were doubtless interested in Nordic cooperation also in order to compensate for their poor relations with the Germans, which were also reflected in the field of research (Baudou 2004: 208, 226). Evert Baudou has calculated that around 1910, the whole Scandinavian community of archaeologists consisted of 25–30 persons, meaning that it was still relatively easy to arrange a meeting (Baudou 2004: 207–8). Thus, in addition to replacing a more extensive forum of cooperation, Nordic meetings also answered an internal demand within the Scandinavian archaeological community, and not only in a practical sense.
Nordic identity was being systematically built in the 19th and early 20th centuries. The concept of ‘Nordic’, meaning Swedish, Norwegian, and Danish, comprehended a Germanic language, assumed shared roots, and certain shared historical phenomena like Vikings and saga literature. In the early 20th century, the same concept was also applied to archaeology and taken back to the Stone Age by means of interpreting both Megalithic and Battle Axe cultures as Indo-European. In the 1930s, the Nordic idea and the northern origins of culture were formulated as an ideology in Nazi Germany (B. Petersson 2003: 70–6, 129–33; H. Petersson 2005: 50, 62–7, 100, 155, 176; Wallette 2008; Zernack 2008; Alkarp 2009: 334–7; Tamminen 2015: 19–35).

ESTABLISHING A NORDIC INSTITUTION AND MANIFESTING NATIONALIST SENTIMENT IN KRISTIANIA IN 1916

Forty archaeologists and interested persons gathered in Kristiania from 4 to 8 July 1916 (see Table 1). There were three female participants, Maria Fanøe and Ingeborg Kindt from Denmark and Martha Steinsvik from Norway.

There is no information available on why the first meeting was held in Kristiania, but the conference report thanks Professor Anton Wilhelm Brøgger (1884–1951) from Kristiania for the practical arrangements related to the conference (Gjessing 1918: 187). The reason to meet in Norway may be due to practical circumstances. Stockholm was probably not available because of the Baltic Conference of 1912, and Copenhagen may have been considered too close to the war-faring countries of Europe.

Thirteen different scholars presented seventeen papers – three by Oscar Almgren from Sweden, two by A.W. Brøgger from Norway, and another two by Haakon Shetelig from Norway. There were four Swedish, two Norwegian, and seven Danish speakers. All presentations are listed in the Appendix 1. Table 2 shows the distribution of the presentation topics among different countries or areas in percentages, and Table 3 shows the distribution according to different main periods of time (according to the main interest of each paper), also in percentages. Different periods were relatively evenly represented at the first meeting, but all Stone Age papers concentrated on the Neolithic period.

A visit was made to Norsk Folkemuseum and excursions to Frognesæteren, the Borre graves, Oseberg, and the recently (1915) discovered Stone Age rock drawings of Ekeberg (Gjessing 1918). The cemetery of Borre was considered significant by Norwegians as a departure point of the mythical Ynglinga dynasty and Norwegian sovereignty, and after the Oseberg Viking ship was found, it was likewise incorporated into the same national(ist) narrative. Scandinavian and especially Swedish audiences could experience both sites as a part of their shared Germanic past and, simultaneously, a competing Norwegian attempt to explain early history. The Borre find had recently been the subject of new research and publications by A.W. Brøgger, and the Oseberg ship find also had some novelty value left, as it had been discovered in 1904 (Christensen et al. 1992: 10–23; Nordenborg Myhre 1994: 89–92; Baudou 2004: 216, 220–1; Østigård & Gansum 2009: 250–7). The Ekeberg rock carvings belonged to a wholly different sphere of culture in this comparison and created a kind of balance in the programme (Gjerde 2010: 394, 433).

Twice during the meeting, Sophus Müller pointed out the necessity of breaking the desolation around Nordic archaeology, not only because of the war but also in a scholarly sense. He

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<th>Denmark</th>
<th>Estonia</th>
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<td>Helsinki (FI) 1925</td>
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<td>36</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>26</td>
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<td>Bergen (NO) 1927</td>
<td>4</td>
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Table 1. Participant statistics of Nordic Meetings of Archaeologists 1916–27.
gave an overview of different themes in which Nordic archaeologists had been compelled to defend their views of prehistory. The newest of them was the German interpretation of the origins of culture in the north instead of the south (see Wiwjorra 1996: 166–75). Müller assumed that it was impossible for Nordic archaeologists to meet without expressing their views on these questions. Oscar Montelius replied quite frankly that the question of the possible Nordic origins of culture ‘does not hold any interest for us’ and that ‘we have more important questions to deal with’, as well as that he himself has never said that he would support the idea of the Nordic roots of world culture (Gjessing 1918: 187–9).

In his closing speech, Müller stated what a great impression the meeting had made on him. There are people who are willing to extend their studies wide over different countries. Common themes and a common language had been fruitful for the meeting, he stated, and hoped that they had started a new era in joint Nordic archaeology. It is easy to notice that the person with the most initiatives at the meeting was Sophus Müller himself. Three years later, he was also the one with the main responsibility for the arrangements.

THE COPENHAGEN MEETING IN 1919: ARCHAEOLOGY AND NEW POLITICAL HEADACHES

When the Nordic archaeologists met for the second time from 30 June to 3 July 1919 in Copenhagen, the war was over, but inflation and passport difficulties made travelling increasingly problematic (Salminen 2014a: 49–50). In spite of these problems, there were 78 participants, exactly half of whom were Danes. Nine persons took part only as archaeologists’ wives or daughters (Kjær 1920: 1–2, 61–2). Also Finland had now gained independence from Russia and had been included as a participant in the Nordic archaeological cooperation, although it was not yet a member of the Scandinavian Association of Museums. A.W. Brøgger thought of proposing Finnish membership in 1919, but the board of the association had recommended that he postpone his proposal because it might be opposed. The obvious reason was the Finnish-Swedish debate on the ownership of the Åland Islands, resolved by the League of Nations in 1920 (NLF Coll. 230: A.W. Brøgger to A.M. Tallgren, 22 September 1919; T.J. Arne to Tallgren, 10 June 1920). On the other hand, Oscar Montelius wrote to C.A. Nordman that they would be glad to have Finland as a member of the association. He supposed that no Swedish archaeologist would set upon opposing it despite the issues on which the Finns and Swedes did not agree. With this, he obviously meant both the situation of the Swedish-speaking population in Finland and the Åland case (NLF SLSA 652: Oscar Montelius to C.A. Nordman, 23 January 1919; Salminen 2014a: 51). In his welcome speech, Sophus Müller noted that Finland was ‘the extreme outpost of the Nordic countries in the east’ (cf. Salminen 2014a: 261). Above all, he saw ‘blood ties’ and a common language unifying all participants. Shared scholarly interests took second place (on blood ties and archaeology, H. Petersson 2005: 25, 123, 128).

A special problem was posed by the participation of ladies in the excursion organized by the Konglige Danske Oldskrift-Selskab. No ladies had ever been allowed to take part in the excursions of the society, but now there were four female participants who were actually archaeologists themselves: Ingeborg Lindqvist and Hanna Rydh from Sweden and Charlotta Brønd-
sted (later Friis Johansen) and Maria Mogensen from Denmark. C.A. Nordman corresponded with Sune Lindqvist concerning their participation in the excursion, but could not get the long-established practice of the organizing society to change. In itself, the practice was not justified in any way. The society also did not allow female members (UUMG Lindqvist: Sophus Müller to Sune Lindqvist, 15 May 1919, Nordman to Lindqvist, 21 May 1919; Salminen 2014a: 51).

There were 22 presentations by seventeen scholars. Seven Swedish, seven Danish, and three Norwegian participants spoke at the event. T.J. Arne presented three papers and Oscar Montelius, Sophus Müller, and Jan Petersen each presented two. Hanna Rydh was the first woman to present a paper at a Nordic Meeting of Archaeologists. In her case, participation in the meeting was part of a broader process of making a place for herself as an active member of the archaeological community (Kjær 1920: 12–4; Arwill Nordbladh 2005). Compared with the Kristiania meeting, the balance between different periods of time had shifted, and the Iron Age was the focus of most scholarly attention.

The programme participants visited the National Museum of History at Frederiksborg, the Agricultural Museum, and the Lyngby Open Air Museum. The only longer excursions were made to a 4th-millennium kitchen midden (Da. kjøkkenmødding) settlement in Sølager and a megalith grave at Grønnæssegård. Thus, also in this respect the Copenhagen meeting had quite a different character compared to the Kristiania conference: there were fewer excursions, and most visits were made to museums. The tone of ideological colour here remains slightly unclear, perhaps except as regards the megalithic grave. Megalithic graves were considered as the remains of Indo-European populations and thus the ancestors of the Germanic peoples of Scandinavia (Kjær 1920: 17, 60–1; Jensen 2013: 145–6; also H. Petersson 2005: 80, 115, 117, 119).

**DISCUSSION ABOUT THE NEXT MEETING PLACE**

It had already been decided before Copenhagen that the next meeting would take place in Stockholm in 1922. In the spring of 1919, however, A.M. Tallgren enquired whether it would be possible to meet in Helsinki in 1921 on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Finnish Antiquarian Society. The anniversary actually took place in 1920, but in order to allow more time for preparations, Tallgren had proposed the following year. A.W. Brøgger wrote to Tallgren that the Norwegians supported the idea and suggested that the Finns now apply for membership in the Scandinavian Association of Museums, which would then be the organization to meet in Helsinki in 1921. T.J. Arne also wrote that the Swedes had thought of an idea for some kind of extra meeting in Helsinki (NLF Coll. 230, Brøgger to Tallgren, 15 July, 26 August 1919; Arne to Tallgren, 15 April 1919). However, the idea of a meeting in Helsinki was not realized.

**NEW METHODS AND APPROACHES IN STOCKHOLM IN 1922**

The next meeting was held in Stockholm in 1922, as scheduled. Travelling was becoming

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Several periods</th>
<th>Stone Age (incl. geology)</th>
<th>Bronze Age</th>
<th>Iron Age and Early Historical</th>
<th>Middle Ages and later</th>
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<td>1925</td>
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<td>1927</td>
<td>16,7</td>
<td>22,2</td>
<td>5,6</td>
<td>38,9</td>
<td>16,7</td>
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*Table 3. Different periods of time as topics of presentations at the meetings, distribution in percentages.*
easier and more accessible again, and the number of participants was also greater than it had been at the previous meeting, but the increase came mostly from Sweden (Hallström 1923: 171). The number of foreigners, 27, was smaller by 12 than in Copenhagen in 1919. Fourteen women took part as wives or other family members of male participants. This conference is, however, marked by the real entrance of women as independent conference participants in the Nordic Meetings of Archaeologists: there were eleven women with their own independent interest in archaeology (Hallström 1923: 168–70). The meeting was held from 26 to 30 June.

There were 27 presentations by as many scholars in the programme. Sixteen of them were Swedes, five Danes, three Norwegians, and three Finns. C.A. Nordman from Finland presented two papers, but one presentation was a joint venture by two Swedish scholars, Lennart von Post and Emelie von Walterstorff. There was also one participant from Iceland (Matthias...
Þórðárson), but the only presentation on the archaeology of Iceland was delivered by Professor Finnur Jónsson from Copenhagen. Late prehistory and even historical times dominated the programme, but the Stone Age was represented by excursions and a general overview, as well as through its firm link to the geological presentations. Geology was included in the programme for the first time by means of Gerard de Geer’s presentation and pollen analyses by means of Lennart von Post’s paper (Hallström 1923: 13–4 [50], 18 [64]). Also bog finds [65–7] formed a coherent subject group.

There were two excursions, one to the Stone Age settlement of Ingarö in the Stockholm archipelago and the other to Sigtuna. Sigtuna is the oldest town and a former royal and ecclesiastical centre of Sweden (Tesch 1990: 25–6, 30), and it therefore had an obviously ideological meaning in the context of the meeting. In Ingarö, Professor De Geer showed the Neolithic shorelines of the site to the participants, and the day after the conference he led a group of interested guests to the Neolithic shores of Haga (Hallström 1923: 21–2, 35). Some Stone Age specialists took up the invitation of the Swedish Film Industry to see a film of Stone Age experiments that had been carried out in Rockelstad three years earlier. Thus, there were new features in Stockholm compared with the meetings of 1916 and 1919, and the Stone Age had risen to higher prominence than at the previous meetings (Hallström 1923: 32–3).

The Stockholm meeting was especially important for a smaller group of archaeologists whose mutual contacts achieved a new level, although they had known each other already for several years. They were Sune Lindqvist from Sweden and three of his colleagues to whom he had provided accommodation during the meeting: Knud Friis Johansen from Denmark, C.A. Nordman from Finland, and Jan Petersen from Norway. From now on, they called themselves a sub-congress. Later, also Johannes Brøndsted from Denmark was close to the group. Their correspondence and meetings lasted for the rest of their lives, although the most active period was in the 1920s, when all of them worked to establish their positions in the archaeological communities of their countries. During that process, they helped each other by discussing the topics they were dealing with in their research (UUMG Lindqvist: Nordman to Lindqvist, 12 January, 16 May, 4 August 1922; Jan Petersen to Lindqvist, 9 July 1922; Knud Friis Johansen to Lindqvist, 22 July 1922; Salminen 2014a: 53).

DECLINE OF THE NORDIC PERSPECTIVE IN HELSINKI IN 1925

The fourth meeting was held in Helsinki from 2 to 5 July 1925 (Fig. 1). Before this meeting, Finland had hosted a Nordic meeting of ethnologists and a Swedish meeting of historians and philologists, as well as a Nordic meeting of students, all in 1922. This shows that Finland had truly been accepted as a Nordic country in this respect. However, the location of Finland was considered distant and the Finnish currency was quite expensive at the time, which diminished the number of participants at the archaeology meeting (Salminen 2014a: 53). There were 88 persons present, 52 of whom were foreigners. Twelve female family members of male participants and the widow of State Archaeologist Johan Reinhold Aspelin (1842–1915) took part in the meeting. The number of actual female participants was twelve, which means that the percentage of women out of all participants had also increased from the previous meeting. The participation of three young Estonian archaeologists, Harri Moora, Gertrud Niggol (Nigul), and Marta Schmiedehelm, was an exception to other Nordic meetings and emphasized Finland’s position between Nordic and Baltic, Scandinavian and Finnic (Nordman 1926: 135–7). Estonian participation reflects the fact that the Finnish scholar A.M. Tallgren acted as Professor of Archaeology in Tartu from 1920 to 1923, but it also shows the Baltoscandian interest in the newly-independent Estonia. Especially for Moora, Scandinavian contacts were important also in themselves (Salminen 2012: 99–103).

There were fifteen papers by as many scholars presented at the meeting. A sixteenth paper, Gunnar Ekholm’s, was only printed in the conference publication because he was not able to attend the meeting itself. Six Swedes, four Danes, three Finns, and three Norwegians gave presentations. Geology was represented by Wilhelm Ramsay’s presentation on Neolithic shore-
lines [81]. Not a single theme was taken up from a shared Nordic perspective.

There was only one excursion to the provinces of Hämë (Tavastia) and Upper Satakunta. The conference drove past several Iron Age sites and one Stone Age settlement in Kangasala, but the only sites mentioned as having actually been visited are the Late Iron Age hillfort on Rapola ridge in Sääksmäki and the Keisariharju ridge with a view over the lakes of Roine and Längelmävesi in Kangasala. Thus, it remains unclear what kind of significance the other sites had for the programme. Between the World Wars, Rapola was considered significant as a monument of prehistoric Finnish independence and military prowess, as well as a prehistoric organized society (Fewster 2006: 320–1). By presenting several historical battlefields, the newest of which were connected to the Swedish voluntary brigade in the 1918 Civil War of Finland, the organizers included recent history in the national-romantic image.

It was a long day. The departure had been scheduled with an extra train from Helsinki at 7.35 a.m. In the late night, the participants still visited the Museum of Hämë in Tampere. Sleepers were reserved for the participants so that they could go to bed around 11 p.m. in Tampere before the train left for Helsinki at 3.28 a.m. and arrived there at 7.54. The conference programme continued the same afternoon (Nordman 1926: 13–7).

ON A SMALLER SCALE IN BERGEN IN 1927

Although the decision had been taken to arrange a Nordic meeting every third year, the fifth meeting was held already two years after the fourth one, from 6 to 9 July 1927, on the occasion of the opening of the new museum building in Bergen on the west coast of Norway. There was also a meeting of the Scandinavian Association of Museums, and certain parts of the programme were meant for both meetings. This had also been done in Helsinki. There were 51 persons attending. Nine of them, eight females and one male, were present only as family members of the participants. There were 22 foreigners at the conference. It is especially striking that almost all central figures in Danish archaeology had stayed home. Only the director of the National Museum, Mortitz Mackeprang, had travelled to Bergen. The reason for this is unknown so far. The organizers were satisfied, or at least did not complain (NLF SLSA 652: Johannes Bøe to Nordman, 6 October 1927).

At the Bergen meeting, there were eighteen presentations by seventeen scholars. Sune Lindqvist and Otto Rydbeck spoke twice. A.M. Tallgren could not attend personally, and his paper, the nineteenth, was read by C.A. Nordman (Bøe 1929).

Two long excursions were made, one from 4 to 6 July and the other from 10 to 13 July. In addition, there was also a one-day trip to a Mesolithic rock shelter at Ruskenesset in Fana, the 17th-century manor of Stend, the Fana church, the Lyse monastery ruins, the Iron Age cemetery in Døsen, and the Os vicarage with surrounding grave mounds. The pre-conference excursion was made to Stavanger and Jæren, and its participants visited Migration Period house grounds at Bø in Nærbø, the Stavanger cathedral, the bishop’s house, and the museum. The excursion from 10 to 13 July was directed at a cemetery with bauta stones at Lunden in Flåm, the churches of Aurland, Urnes, Gaupne, Borgund, and Torpe, grave mounds at Nes in Luster, and the Heiberg Collections Museum in Amble (Bøe 1929: 6–7, 13, 116–8). Thus, none of the excursion destinations had such strong ideological significance as in 1916, although the old wooden churches belong to the established illustrations of Norwegian culture.

In Bergen, the Danes invited the participants to the next meeting in Copenhagen in 1932 and the Swedes to the following one in 1937. However, nothing came of either of them as planned. The World Prehistory Congress was held in London in 1932, but nothing was known about it yet in 1927. The Danish National Museum was also in the middle of renovations and its collections were out of order. Therefore, the Danes suggested that they change turns with the Swedes, but the Swedes were not willing to agree, because the meeting of the Scandinavian Association of Museums was to be held in Lund in 1932 and the International Congress of Art History in Stockholm in 1933. Also the economic depression played a big role in causing problems (Bøe 1929: 116; Stummann Hansen 2004: 13; Salminen 2014a: 227–8). Thus ten years went by before the Nor-
dic archaeologists met again. The 1937 meeting was held in Denmark. The Second World War brought about another break of 11 years, but since 1948 to this day, the meetings have been organized regularly. Especially the 1951 meeting in Helsinki manifested the rise of a new generation of archaeologists and the restoration of normal circumstances after the devastating war. A new group comparable to the sub-congress of 1922, although larger and therefore looser, also came into being (Stenberger 1963; Edgren 2013: 113–8; Salminen 2014a: 304–5).

**SUMMING UP THE STATISTICS OF 1916–27**

To sum up the statistics, 252 different persons took part in the first five Nordic Meetings of Archaeologists: 105 Swedes, 54 Danes, 47 Norwegians, 42 Finns, three Estonians, and one Icelander. If we exclude those who were there only as family members, there were 218 actual conference participants: 86 Swedes, 51 Danes, 43 Norwegians, 34 Finns, three Estonians, and one Icelander. Most of them were men, but there were also 31 women, making up c 14% of all actual participants. The women consisted of 13 Swedes, seven Norwegians, five Danes, four Finns, and two Estonians. Only four persons took part in all five meetings from Kristiania to Bergen: the brothers Jan and Theodor Petersen and Haakon Shetelig from Norway and C.A. Nordman from Finland.

If we count only the participants who delivered a presentation, it turns out that there were 57 altogether: 27 Swedes, 15 Danes, eight Norwegians, and seven Finns. The only scholar who spoke at every meeting was Haakon Shetelig.

The most striking feature of all these numbers is the Swedish domination. Approximately 42% of all participants, 39% of actual scholarly participants, and 47% of people who delivered presentations were Swedes. In addition to that, some Swedes had more than one speech at one meeting. The percentage of Swedish presentations out of the total varied from 38% in Helsinki in 1925 and Bergen in 1927 to 57% in Stockholm in 1922. The background can at least partly be sought in Sweden’s central location in the middle of the participating countries and its active archaeological life (Baudou 2004: 214–9), but it also seems obvious that the idea of the importance of the Nordic meetings was well realized there.

The past of every Nordic country was represented at least to some extent, although the main emphasis lay again heavily on Sweden. In all, there were 53 presentations in which Swedish themes were dealt with, 34 for Denmark, 32 for Norway, 12 for Finland, and one for both Iceland and Greenland. In this calculation, some presentations are counted more than once, because their scope was not restricted to one country.

If we look at the birth years given in parentheses after each participant’s name in the appendix list, it is easy to see that the meetings were quantitatively dominated by middle-aged researchers. The youngest person to give a presentation was the 29-year-old Johannes Brøndsted in Copenhagen in 1919, and the oldest were the 76-year-old Oscar Montelius at the same meeting and Emil Eckhoff of same age in Stockholm in 1922. Different generations were, however, represented to the extent that the meetings served everyone except the very youngest researchers as a forum for launching their ideas to an international scholarly public.

Danes were slightly more active than others in presenting new finds. Of the more interpretative presentations, more than half were by Swedes. Interpretative accounts clearly dominated among both Swedish and Finnish presentations, whereas for Danes they were a minority, and among Norwegians there was quite a good balance between the two types. This obviously reflects different expectations set for the meetings in different countries. It can also be asked whether the structure of the archaeological community and the relations between its members in each Nordic country made researchers focus on different concepts for the meetings.

The role of interpretative analyses was at its smallest in Bergen in 1927, but also in Stockholm in 1922, less than half of all presentations can be counted among that group. At the other three meetings, their percentages were between 53 and 56.

**PRESENTING NEW FINDS ON A GENERAL AND SPECIALIZED LEVEL**

How significant a forum were the Nordic Meetings of Archaeologists for presenting new
finds? What type of finds were most commonly brought under discussion at them? Were there differences between the meetings in this respect, or can trends of development be seen? What did the scholars want to convey with their choices? I exclude the medieval and later topics here.

At the first meeting, three presentations out of a total of fifteen concentrated mainly on reporting new finds [1, 6, 16] and a fourth one on the distribution of Post-Roman gold finds in Denmark (Neergaard 1915 [13]). In Copenhagen in 1919, there were six surveys of finds [19, 20, 22, 30, 33, 37], in Stockholm in 1922 there were seven [49, 53, 63–7], and in Helsinki there were practically none. However, the fifth meeting in Bergen was almost entirely devoted to presenting new finds. Twelve presentations out of eighteen [84, 85, 87–90, 92, 94–7, 100] concentrated mainly on finds.

In all cases, it is not known exactly what finds were presented, but a general overview can be obtained. There were two presentations of new finds in general (Hallström 1923: 33–5 [53]; Bøe 1929: 15–32 [94]). The Stone Age was represented both on a general level (Kjær 1920: 11–2 [33]; Bøe 1929: 45–9 [89]) and by means of finds from separate periods or cultural phases, Palaeolithic or Mesolithic (Bøe 1929: 14 [84]; Rydbeck 1929 [97]) and Neolithic (Bøe 1929: 14–5 [85], 43–4 [96], 49–50 [87]). Of the Stone Age finds presented at the meetings, the large 5th-millennium rock carving area in Vingen, Norway, is worth mentioning separately because of its later significance in research. The carvings had been found in 1910, and Johannes Bøe published them in 1932 (Bøe 1929: 14–5 [85]; Lødøen & Mandt 2012: esp. 14, 18, 27–8, 45–7, 52).

The Bronze Age finds represented both Early and Late Bronze Age, both settlements and burials (Kjær 1920: 14–6 [30]; Hallström 1923: 18 [64]; Bøe 1929: 32–43 [90]; Thomsen 1929 [67]). Among them is the iconic Egtved burial find from Denmark, the young female who was considered as the representative of an ethnically Danish Bronze Age, but who, according to recent research, has turned out not to be of local origin at all (Frei et al. 2015; Price Persson 2015). Thomsen did not mention her possible ethnic origin in his presentation or his publication of the find in 1929 (Thomsen 1929: esp. 178–9 [67]).

The Pre-Roman Iron Age was represented only by one find, the Hjortspring boat from Denmark, a find from 1921 that had considerable significance for later research (Hallström 1923: 56–64 [65]; Rieck 2003; Jensen 2013: 582–6). The Roman Iron Age and Migration Period were represented by coin finds, burials, and one settlement (Kjær 1920: 17 [19], 48–9 [20]; Hallström 1923: 23–5 [63]; Bøe 1929: 72 [95]). The most noteworthy of these sites was the Hoby chieftain grave from Denmark containing two Roman silver cups (Friis Johansen 1923 [49]).

Two Norwegian boat or ship finds from the Merovingian Period were presented, those of Holmedal and Kvalsund. Boat finds were discussed also on a general level (Shetelig 1923 [66]; Bøe 1929: 62–5 [88]; Løset 2009; Fredriksen 2015).

The finds from the Viking Age and the Early Historical Period consisted of burials, one ancient fortification, a ship find, and a church excavation. Most of the objects presented were of considerable fame: the Oseberg ship from Norway, as well as the Old Uppsala church and the Adelsö complex of late prehistoric times and medieval antiquities from Sweden (Gjessing 1918: 215 [6]; Kjær 1920: 12–4 [37] 48 [22]; Bøe 1929: 7–13 [86]; Rydh 1936). These objects could be, and, indeed, often were used for creating a nationally coloured image of the past (cf. Alkarp 2009: 372–7).

The most obvious observation is the underrepresentation of settlement finds within this category of presentations. Archaeology was in a phase of transition from the investigation of graves only to a broader view of prehistory. However, when a Nordic archaeologist wanted to relate what he or she had found, in most cases it concerned antiquities containing elements that could manifest in public the builder’s status in his own society, such as graves.

**INTERPRETATIVE PRESENTATIONS OF CULTURE, SOCIETY, AND ART**

What kinds of topics were covered in an interpretative survey, for what reasons, and what were the main elements of the interpretations?
The Stone Age was largely set aside. With the methodology available to researchers at the time, analysing the Stone Age was more difficult than studying later periods (Gräslund 1987: 34). In addition, it was often not easy to furnish finds from this period with unambiguous ideological meanings. In Kristiania in 1916, there was only one presentation with a mainly interpretative approach to a Stone Age topic, in Copenhagen and Stockholm two, in Helsinki three, and in Bergen none. Those topics varied from a specific artefact type to certain forms of prehistoric sites (graves) and general overviews of the Stone Age in a restricted area (Scania) (Gjessing 1918: 191–2 [5]; Kjær 1915; Kjær 1920: 36–40 [26], 53–5 [23]; F. Hansen 1923 [52]). A.W. Brøgger’s presentation on megalithic graves in Norway may have had an ideological undercurrent because of their interpretation as Germanic remains (H. Petersson 2005: 80, 115, 117, 119).

The presentation with the most general character was Gunnar Ekholm’s presentation in Stockholm in 1922, which gave an overview of Swedish Stone Age research and reassessed some of its results (Ekholm 1923 [48]). Ekholm was more inclined than many of his contemporaries to apply other models than the ethnic model in order to explain differences in material culture (H. Petersson 2005: 100, 146, 166). In spite of this, he did not altogether deny the possibility that archaeological material could reflect ethnic differences (Salminen 2014b: 277–8). At the Stockholm meeting, he could not avoid questions concerning prehistoric Germanic settlement in the Baltic Sea area. The presentation was part of an ongoing debate on whether the Finnish Battle Axe culture originated in Sweden or Central Europe, a dispute with strong political nuances both within Finland and between the two countries (Salminen 2014b: esp. 268–70).

Another presentation of general scope was Aarne Europaeus’s (later Äyräpää 1925) overview of Stone Age ceramics in the coastal areas of Finland, in which he concentrated especially on the chronology of Comb Ceramics. Wilhelm Ramsay provided the geological preconditions for the development. Europaeus published another version of his survey in German in 1930 (Nordman 1926: 9–10 [74], 11–2 [71]; Europaeus 1926 [73]; Ramsay 1926 [81]; Europaeus-Äyräpää 1930; Sirriäinen 1989).

Ethnic questions related to the Stone Age were otherwise dealt with very infrequently. H.C. Broholm had written about them in publishing the same finds he presented in Helsinki (Broholm 1924: 139–40), but in his presentation he obviously left ethnic problems aside (Nordman 1926: 11–2 [71]).

It is unclear to what extent Oscar Almgren presented interpretations or only finds in Kristiania when he spoke about the Stone Age research of deceased Swedish archaeologists like Knut Stjerna (Gjessing 1918: 189–90 [1]). He highlighted especially the settlement finds of Orust and Tjörn in Bohuslän near the western coast of Sweden, which he had interpreted as reflecting a break in settlement and new migration. A competing continuity interpretation had just recently been formulated by Arvid Enqvist. In the discussion, Otto Rydbeck agreed with Almgren (Gjessing 1918: 189–90 [1]; also Almgren 1914; Enqvist 1922: esp. 111; H. Petersson 2005: 145–6, 188–9).

In the case of the Bronze Age, the most dominant topic was rock art. In Kristiania, three of the four interpretative Bronze Age surveys dealt with rock art (Ekholm 1916 [7]; Gjessing 1918: 192–4 [2], 194–205 [14]). The discussion on rock art continued in Copenhagen (Kjær 1920: 55 [29]). In Stockholm, Oscar Almgren addressed the subject again. This was a part of Almgren’s process towards the synthesis he published in 1927 (Almgren 1927). In Helsinki, Theodor Petersen continued the discussion (Th. Petersen 1926). The lively discussion on rock art reflects the crucial position it had in the research of the early 20th century in Scandinavia (Gjerde 2010: 28–30). It was also considered significant as a part of national antiquity in Gustaf Kossinna’s footsteps (Goldhahn 2008: 13; Lødøen & Mandt 2012: 52, 85 ff.).

There was some debate between two conflicting rock art interpretations at the Kristiania meeting. Oscar Almgren considered rock art as emerging from a solar cult to promote life and fertility. He opposed both Gunnar Ekholm’s view of rock pictures as belonging to a mortuary cult (Ekholm 1916 [7]) and Just Bing’s attempts to find Germanic deities in them (Gjessing 1918: 192–4 [2]; Almgren 1927). C.A. Nordman mainly agreed with Almgren (Gjessing 1918 [14]: 195–205). In the discussion after the
three presentations in Kristiania, Just Bing explained his view, T.J. Arne expressed his support to Almgren, motivating it with the observation that only a few rock pictures were found near graves, and Oscar Montelius took a mediating standpoint between Almgren and Ekholm, although with a heavier emphasis on Almgren’s viewpoints (Gjessing 1918: 205–6). The debate did not continue in explicit form at later meetings, but Theodor Petersen underlined the symbolic character of the rock pictures in 1919 without taking a clear stand on their meaning (Kjær 1920: 32–4 [35]). In Helsinki, he leaned in the direction of Ekholm’s and Bing’s views, at least as far as the northern pictures were concerned (Th. Petersen 1926: 34–5 [80]).

In the case of the Iron Age and late prehistory, the inclination towards questions of political history appeared already at the first meeting in Kristiania (Gjessing 1918: 206–8 [4], 209–12 [3]) and maintained its position in Copenhagen (Kjær 1920: 52 [32], 47–8 [39]) and Stockholm (Hallström 1923: 29–32 [45]; Lindqvist 1923 [57]; Nerman 1923 [59]; Åberg 1926 [72]). However, it did not become dominant, but remained one approach among others. On the level of content, Birger Nerman’s presentations about the origins of the Swedish state [32, 59] had a connection to Sune Lindqvist’s and Erik Brate’s presentations on runes [45, 57] and some of Gunnar Ekholm’s thoughts [72]. A general history of society without an obvious political colouring had some weight in the presentations (esp. Ekholm 1926 [72]). Especially in case of papers on coin finds, archaeologists analysed their material in connection with general historical development known from other sources and brought even political factors into the analyses.

Different analyses of art and ornaments, as well as other typological comparisons in the Montelian tradition, especially related to Viking Age art, were prominent especially in Kristiania, Copenhagen, and Helsinki (Gjessing 1918: 214 [17]; Kjær 1920: 40–3 [28], 43–6 [38], 50–2 [34]; Shetelig 1926 [83]). Also Jan Petersen’s presentation on Viking Age grave goods can be considered in the same category (Hallström 1923: 29–32 [62]).

At Copenhagen, the above-mentioned presentations of coin finds by Almgren and Arne, and, of course, Oscar Montelius’s presentation on the invention of iron (Kjær 1920: 3–11 [27]) continued a long tradition from the past decades: a wide-ranging view of prehistory over Europe. Such settings were about to disappear, though.

At the Bergen meeting, the viewpoints on the Iron Age and late prehistory were completely different. The subject under discussion was the history of settlement with some ethnic colouring (Bøe 1929: 65–71 [101]) and the pure history of technology (Bøe 1929: 72–97 [99]). Other questions were left aside.

During the whole period from 1916 to 1927, there was no strong internal uniformity within the Iron Age–late prehistory group like there had been especially in the Bronze Age group. The presentations represented a much more versatile collection of different topics.

**NORDIC ARCHAEOLOGY BETWEEN TRADITION AND INNOVATION**

What was the relationship between tradition and innovation in the interpretative presentations?

Although there was quite a pointed discussion about the stagnation of Montelian archaeology going on in Scandinavia after Oscar Montelius’s death in 1921 (Nordman 1921; Lindqvist 1922; Baudou 2004: 227–8), purely typological approaches were quite rare at the meetings. They were represented mainly by Haakon Shetelig in Kristiania [17], Oscar Montelius in Copenhagen [28], Folke Hansen in Stockholm [52], and Jan Petersen in Copenhagen [34] and Stockholm [62]. Some other presentations also bore features of the typological approach, such as C.A. Nordman’s in Kristiania [14], Alfred Hackman’s in Stockholm [51], and Hjalmar Appelgren-Kivalo’s in Helsinki [69]. This shows that the risk of shifting to an exclusively typological orientation was not actually realized at the meetings.

Constructing both relative and absolute chronologies for prehistory had been the backbone of all archaeology since the 19th century (Gräslund 1987: 1–4 etc.; Trigger 2006: 294–7). During the first five meetings, chronology was a question worth mentioning in 23 presentations of generalizing type. It was sometimes connected with methodological approaches especially from the scientific sphere, above all geology (Hallström 1923: 13–4 [50]; F. Hansen 1926; Ramsay 1926
also Bøe 1929: 45–9 [89]) and palynology, which was mostly a dating method at the time (Hallström 1923: 18 [64]). At the Stockholm meeting, the geological approach was even more strongly present than at other meetings because of the excursions to the Stone Age shorelines around the city (Hallström 1923: 21–2, 35). The scientific approach had been a part of Nordic archaeology since the very beginning, although the central viewpoints had always been humanistic. Now science was occupying a more significant position than before (Gräslund 1987: 34–8; Trigger 2006: 315–6). This was one of the aspects in which the meetings really created a new image of prehistory.

The history of settlement was mainly dealt with in connection with the Stone Age, more precisely the Ertebølle and Pitted Ware cultures in Sweden (Kjær 1920: 36–40 [26], the Arctic Stone Age in Norway (Kjær 1920: 18–36 [35]), and the Swedish and Finnish Stone Age in general (Ekholm 1923 [48]; Nordman 1923 [61]; Europaeus 1926 [73]). Only one local survey of the Bronze Age (J. Petersen 1926 [79]) and one general overview of the Early Iron Age (Bøe 1929: 65–71 [101]) were exceptions to this rule. Of course, questions of settlement were in some way present also in several other presentations.

Why did the Stone Age dominate this category? In the research of other periods, a much larger variety of questions was within the scope of archaeology because of a more refined methodology. Also the demands of society required other types of analyses where the Iron Age was concerned. Thus, the Stone Age got to dominate within the history of settlement.

Questions of economy and technology were combined in different ways in the case of different themes. Presentations on economic history dealt only with the Early Iron Age in eastern and northern Europe (Gjessing 1918: 209–12 [3], Bøe 1929: 65–71 [101]). In the case of the Viking Age, it was combined with the history of society (Kjær 1920: 50–2 [34]). Questions of technology were dealt with in connection with quite different periods and topics: Stone Age technology for making tools and weapons (Kjær 1920: 18–36 [35]; Broholm 1924 [71]; Nordman 1926: 11–2 [71]), Iron Age agriculture (Arenander 1923 [42]), and Iron Age vessel industry (Bøe 1929: 72–97 [99]). Economy, technology, and society were combined in Oscar Montelius’s presentation on the invention of iron (Kjær 1920: 3–11 [27]). Broholm’s, Georg F. L. Sarauw’s, and even Montelius’s points of view were characterized by a functionalist approach. Archaeology in itself was largely a product of industrialization and a growing middle class in society, and technological progress seemed to be a fundamental feature in modern societies. It was the emergence of modernization and the consequent dichotomy between prehistory and the present that made questions of technology and economy fascinating for archaeologists (Baudou 2004: 268–70; Trigger 2006: 316–8; Alkarp 2009: 355–7).

Erik Arenander and Knut Kjellmark (Kjellmark 1923 [56]) had a strong ethnological approach in their presentation at the Stockholm meetings, but otherwise such an approach did not gain ground.

Especially the Viking Age had a strong ideological colouring (Nordenborg Myhre 1994: 106–10; Baudou 2004: 206–8, 268–70; Fewster 2006: 320–30; Trigger 2006: 248–61; Alkarp 2009: 369–72; Østigård & Gansum 2009), which created a demand for presentations dealing with it. That demand was fulfilled at the meetings, and it also formed the predominant message to the public. One might therefore expect that also physical anthropology and racial interpretations would have drawn quite a remarkable amount of attention, but in fact they remained quite marginal (Gjessing 1918: 190–1 [9]; S. Hansen 1919 [24]; see e.g. H. Petersson 2005: 108, 139–54).

When historical times were dealt with (Kjær 1920: 55–7 [21]; Ambrosiani 1923 [41]; Hallström 1923: 28 [46], 32 [47], 32–3 [44]; Karlin 1923 [54]; K.K. Meinander 1923 [58]; Nordman 1926: 21 [77]; Rydbeck 1926 [82]; Bøe 1929: 7 [91], 97–106 [98]; Kjellin 1928 [76]; Nordman 1942 [1922] [60]), it was mostly from an art historical perspective. However, in some cases the period was discussed from a more purely archaeological point of view, such as in Georg Karlin’s presentation on medieval ceramics in the Nordic countries [54] and Otto Rydbeck’s presentation on lead plumbs [98]. The question of why these types of presentations were so much more common in Stockholm
and Helsinki than in the other three meetings remains unanswered so far.

HOW NORDIC WERE THE NORDIC MEETINGS OF ARCHAEOLOGISTS?

To what extent were topics from outside the Nordic countries presented at the meetings? Which parts of the world figured in this context? No in-depth analysis is devoted to this question here, but a brief overview is worthwhile. Papers dealing with a basically Nordic topic and utilizing material from outside the region solely for comparison are excluded.

Presentations dealing to a considerable extent (although not exclusively) with regions outside the Nordic countries were delivered in all of the first five meetings, although in Bergen in 1927, there was only one such presentation. Only a few scholars actually concentrated in this area, and most of them were Swedes: Oscar Almgren in Kristiania and Stockholm (Gjessing 1918: 209–12 [3]; Almgren 1927 [40]) T.J. Arne in Kristiania, Copenhagen, and Stockholm (Gjessing 1918: 207–8 [4], Kjær 1920: 55 [18]; Arne 1925 [43]), Oscar Montelius and Haakon Shetelig in Copenhagen (Kjær 1920: 3–11 [27], 40–3 [28], 47–8 [39]), Erik Arenander and Rudolf Cederström in Stockholm (Arenander 1923 [42]; Hallström 1923: 28 [46]), Nils Åberg, Helge Kjellin, and Therkel Mathiassen in Helsinki (Nordman 1926: 19–21 [76, 78]; Åberg 1926 [68]), and A.M. Tallgren in Bergen (Tallgren 1929 [100]). Almost half of these presentations [28, 39, 40, 42, 68, 76] analysed the region outside the Nordic countries in connection to Scandinavia.

Speakers took up themes from central Europe [28, 39] Russia [4, 18, 46, 100], a widely defined Germanic area of habitation [3, 42], and the Baltic countries [76, 100], but also from the Mediterranean area [27], the British Isles [68], and Greenland [78]. Oscar Almgren [40] took a glance at Egypt and the Near East, in addition to a general view of Europe. One presentation, T. J. Arne’s in Stockholm [43], presented the collections of one museum on a worldwide scope. In addition to these, there were some presentations on classical archaeology (Gjessing 1918: 212–4 [8]; Hallström 1923: 20–1 [49]; Nordman 1926: 17–8 [70]).

Why were the themes divided like this? The assumed ethnic connection in the sense of Kossinna between Scandinavia and the area interpreted as Germanic is an obvious explanation. In the rest of the cases, almost all speakers had actually ended up with these themes in attempting either to explain cultural phenomena in their home countries or to analyse features of the other region considered parallel to their home country. Thus we can state that even in those cases where Scandinavia did not openly figure in the presentations, it influenced the background of the research. The Finn Tallgren had the longest tradition of eastern archaeology behind him, but also that tradition had come into being in order to explain cultural phenomena in Finland (Salminen 2007).

SOPHUS MÜLLER, POSITIVISM, AND HYPOTHETIC-SPECULATIVE APPROACHES IN ARCHAEOLOGY

Questions of archaeological theory were of marginal significance at the meetings. To be more precise, there was only one presentation of that type: Sophus Müller’s speech in Kristiania in 1916. He demanded that archaeologists keep their distance from the hypothetic or speculative approaches that had become more common in studies of prehistory and build their interpretations on observations (Gjessing 1918: 188). What was actually possible without turning to hypotheses? Nothing, at least according to R.G. Collingwood’s view, formulated in the early 20th century (Trigger 2006: 303–5). Sophus Müller, as a representative of a positivistic era, was of another opinion. He considered his view so self-evident that he did not define it in any more detail.

When we ask to what extent others shared his opinion, we should first set some premises. Thus, relative chronology through typological or other comparative analysis can be assumed to fulfil Müller’s criteria, as well as interpretations of the spreading of settlement to different areas, based directly on chronology. Also the research of technologies, various questions related to the subsistence economy and way of living, and the history of art on a typological level without analysing the meanings of the figures probably did not exceed what he considered possible. In ad-
dition, more or less all presentations that did not go further than the level of find reports belong to this category, but they are left aside here, because Müller himself had discussed interpretations in his speech.

Nobody commented his challenge explicitly, but opinions were expressed between the lines. Although observations of concrete material remains were the basis on which all interpretations were more or less built, it was commonplace to proceed to interpretations exceeding the level of immediate observations. It is self-evident that any topic taking a stand on questions like political history, world view, religion, or other forms of mental culture could not avoid hypothetical interpretations.

At Kristiania in 1916, Müller’s positivistic approach was more or less followed in A.W. Brøgger’s classification of Norwegian megalithic graves and Oscar Almgren’s analysis of dinar treasures (Gjessing 1918: 191–2 [3], 209–12 [5]). In Copenhagen in 1919, its main lines were followed by Oskar Lidén’s presentation about the southern Swedish Stone Age, Theodor Petersen’s analysis of the Stone Age in central Norway, Otto Frödin’s explanation of scalping, Oscar Montelius’s typology of ring swords, Bror Schnitger’s analysis of Gotlandic ship-shaped graves, Jan Petersen’s Viking Age studies, and Carl Neergaard’s survey on the distribution of Bronze Age gold finds in Denmark. Undoubtedly Oscar Montelius thought that his presentation on the invention of iron had so firm a ground both in archaeological finds and written records that it had also passed the level of hypotheses (Kjær 1920: 3–11 [27], 18–46 [35, 26, 28, 38], 50–2 [34]). Actually, Montelius’s analysis, with its dependence on written sources, reflected an older tradition of archaeological thought than the other presentations, going back even to early antiquarianism (Trigger 2006: 52–61, 227–9).

In Stockholm in 1922, positivism had to retreat to some extent. Alfred Hackman’s search for Swedish and Norwegian cultural features in the Ostrobothnian Migration Period, Folke Hansen’s dating of the Neolithic earth graves of Scania, and Jan Petersen’s Norwegian Viking Age grave goods could be classified as keeping to empiria (Hallström 1923: 26–32 [51, 62], 50–64 [52]). In Helsinki in 1925, Jan Petersen’s general overview of the Bronze Age in Rogaland (J. Petersen 1926 [79]), H.C. Broholm’s analysis of antler weapons (Nordman 1926: 11–2 [71]; also Broholm 1924), and Aarne Europaeus’s systematization of Stone Age pottery from Finnish coastal dwelling sites ( Europaeus 1926 [73]) accepted the positivistic main principle. In Bergen in 1927, Georg Sarauw’s investigation of the resin-tightening of prehistoric wooden vessels was the only obvious representative of this type among the interpretative accounts (Bøe 1929: 72–97 [99]).

Thus, several participants did not share Müller’s conviction but delivered another message of what they thought archaeology should and could do. And, further, if there was no unanimity concerning the basic approach of archaeology, there could be less yet concerning specific questions. The only really shared idea remaining was that of the Scandinavian concept of archaeology as a comparative discipline (see Baudou 2004: 140–1; cf. Kaeser 2002: 171–4; Trigger 2006: 129–56, 166–89; Baudou 2012: 222–4).

In general, the 1920s were an era of new views about the aim of archaeology in the Nordic discussion. Especially A.W. Brøgger in Norway emphasized a more functional interpretation and suggested paying more attention to the environment of the remains instead of performing a traditional pure comparative typological analysis of the antiquities themselves. Also an evolutionist approach was evidently present in his view (Nordenborg Myhre 1994: 86–9; Baudou 2004: 250–3). This line of interpretation was seen at the Nordic meetings mostly in the case of connections between nature and culture, as well as in some interpretations of technology, but it did not have an especially crucial position.

KOSSINNA’S GHOST: KULTURKREISE, MIGRATION, AND DIFFUSION AT NORDIC MEETINGS OF ARCHAEOLOGISTS

The doctrine of Kulturkreise is usually connected with the German researcher Gustaf Kossinna (1858–1931), although it had practically formed a basis for J.R. Aspin’s archaeological thinking in Finland already in the 1870s (Aspin 1875). These ideas also had a strong influence on several presentations at the Nordic meetings. It was
mostly Swedish (Åberg, Almgren, Arenander, Arne, Ekholm, Hallström, and Lidén) and to some extent Norwegian (Brøgger, J. and Th. Petersen) and Finnish (Appelgren-Kivalo, Hackman, and Nordman) archaeologists who were influenced by the Kossinna-type approach. Only one Danish presentation by H.C. Broholm in Helsinki in 1925 [71] showed traces of the Kulturkreis methodology. The situation reflects both the closer relationship many Swedish researchers had with Germany – we must keep in mind especially Nils Åberg’s studies as Kossinna’s pupil in Berlin – and the tenser attitude of the Danes towards the German scholar. Especially Sophus Müller had criticized him in spite of the fact that Müller himself had interpreted prehistory largely with cultural spheres as his departure point (Baudou 2004: 225–6).

Both diffusion and migration were at present in the Kulturkreis archaeologists’ presentations, although the diffusionist model dominated. Nils Åberg, Oscar Almgren, Gunnar Ekholm, Oscar Montelius, C.A. Nordman, Jan Petersen, and Haakon Shetelig had a clearly diffusionist emphasis in their explanations, T.J. Arne supported the migrationist explanation to some extent, and Alfred Hackman, Montelius (partly), and Theodor Petersen combined both. Aarne Europaeus and Haakon Shetelig connected diffusionism with an evolutionist approach in their presentations in Helsinki in 1925. It is worth noting that Bror Schnittger explicitly denied diffusion in his presentation in Copenhagen (Kjaer 1920: 46 [38]). The Petersen brothers were actually quite careful in expressing explicit thoughts about how ideas and phenomena had spread in prehistory.

The most crucial point of divergence between the Nordic archaeologists’ presentations and Kossinna is that ethnic questions and explanations did not have an especially significant position at the meetings. Ethnic history was dealt with in connection with the history of agriculture (Arenander 1923 [42]), the newest interpretations of the Stone Age settlement in Scandinavia and Finland (Ekholm 1923 [48]), the Migration Period contacts between Ostrobothnia and Uppland (Uppsverige) (Hallström 1923: 26–8 [51]), the search for ethnic indicators in Late Iron Age clothing (Appelgren-Kivalo 1926 [69]), and the relations between Scandinavia and the west during the Middle Iron Age (Åberg 1926 [68]). In other presentations, it had practically no part.

A NORDIC IDEA ON THE PRACTICAL AND PRINCIPAL LEVEL?

Sophus Müller expressed his disappointment at the first meeting because there was not a single presentation with a theme comprehending the whole Nordic (Scandinavian) area. Therefore, he, A.W. Brøgger, and Bernhard Salin made a joint initiative, which was also accepted, that the prehistoric state museums of Copenhagen, Kristiania, and Stockholm would apply for six-year funding to send one archaeologist every year to the neighbouring countries’ museums to do research on themes common to all Scandinavian countries (Gjessing 1918: 206). However, this plan could not be realized. Also in other respects, Müller’s criticism of missing Nordic viewpoints did not bear much fruit: at the next four meetings, the emphasis was continuously and increasingly on local or regional viewpoints. The ideological Nordic community was not emphasized in any way.

In Bergen in 1927, the organizers had obviously expressed a wish that scholars from different countries give an overview of the latest research in their home countries in order to convey a Nordic image on a practical level. Such presentations were given by Sune Lindqvist from Sweden and C.A. Nordman from Finland, but nobody from Norway or Denmark. 11

Concerning which periods of time were the borders of countries crossed, and which countries were usually represented? International viewpoints appeared in connection with practically all main periods, but most commonly in the case of Stone Age periods and the Viking Age. As far as the Viking Age is concerned, the reasons are obvious; the period itself was characterized by international mobility. Some topics also showed possibilities of extending the view beyond the borders of the Nordic countries to a European or even global perspective, but this was seldom realized. The communication from the meetings to the external world emphasized Scandinavian togetherness.

All Fennoscandian countries were represented in only two presentations, Theodor Petersen’s
about the Arctic Stone Age in Norway [35] and Hjalmar Appelgren-Kivalo’s on bronze spirals as ethnic indicators [69]. Connections within Scandinavia were sought in nine presentations [2, 5, 9, 21, 23, 28, 34, 83]. The combination of Finland, Sweden, and Norway appeared three times [51, 54, 74].

Of the individual countries, Sweden was most commonly linked to the others. There were 27 presentations dealing with Sweden in connection to others, 21 dealing with Denmark and others, 17 with Norway and others, and nine with Finland and others. These figures reflect both Sweden’s location in the middle of the Nordic area and Swedish archaeologists’ active participation in the meetings. It seems, however, that the presentations were too different and dealt with too varied a combination of regions to allow finding more generally applicable answers to the question of the manifestation of a Nordic idea.

NORDIC MEETINGS OF ARCHAEOLOGISTS AS AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL MEDIUM IN THE 1910S AND 1920S

The founding of the Nordic Meetings of Archaeologists was an answer to the changed world situation. The aim was to confirm to both archaeologists themselves and others that international cooperation had an absolute value in itself and must be continued in one form or another. Another aim was strengthening inner Scandinavian cohesion in a period of nationalistic interests drawing the three states in different directions. Although archaeology’s results could have a wide distribution in society and there were also laymen taking part, meetings of archaeologists were mostly aimed at the scholarly community in order to strengthen cooperation within it.

The meetings were used to a significant extent both to spread information about new finds and to bring archaeological interpretations under discussion. Methodological approaches had some importance, but theoretical ones were practically missing. If the participants expressed their thoughts about archaeology as a discipline, they did it through the practical choices they had made rather than by presenting explicit theoretical assessments.

When the series of meetings was founded, archaeology lived in a period of transition both theoretically and institutionally. If it is in any way possible to see trends in the development of the first meetings, they point towards replacing general with local and wide with deep. In that respect, the participants followed the development taking place more generally in archaeology and confirmed their commitment to it. In the beginning, the 19th-century problems of a European-wide chronology and preconditions of ethnic definition from archaeological material, as well as craniometrical questions, were still present. Little by little, questions of local or regional character became dominant and were analysed in depth, although some researchers, like Oscar Almgren, Haakon Shetelig, and T.J. Arne, kept the more extensive topics under discussion as well. Evert Baudou (2012: 351) has correctly stated that Oscar Montelius must have noticed at the first meeting that he had already been pushed into the margins of research. On the other hand, also Sophus Müller, with his demand of empiricism and pure observation, did not represent the archaeology that was to come. Baudou (2004: 209–26) has seen the mapping of prehistoric remains, research into the Stone Age, and different types of national projects as the most important trends in Nordic archaeology at the time. These themes were also present at the meetings, but the image was more versatile. Human culture was analysed in its different aspects: history of settlement, economy, society, political systems, technology, and art and ornamentation. There were also conscious attempts to understand prehistoric people’s minds and thinking. Geology and palynology were presented as archaeology’s new tools. What remained of the tradition was that questions of chronology maintained their importance and diffusion prevailed in the ways of looking at prehistory. Ethnic questions had not completely lost their significance. The obvious message was that pluralism was allowed in Nordic archaeology.

The Nordic Meetings of Archaeologists showed in practice that they were needed. Although they did not result in a joint Nordic archaeology, as Sophus Müller had wished, they did allow constructing a Nordic image of the past based on a variety of presentations on regional and local questions. In the future, it is cru-
cial to analyse more deeply what kind of inter-
action was actually going on between different
topics of research at the meetings, how different
phenomena of past were signified in them, how
the values set varied according to the origins of
each speaker, and what kind of ideas they want-
ed to promote.

NOTES

1 The 1915 meeting does not seem to have been
documented in any published record.
2 Until the end of the World War, he spelled his
name in the form Schetelig.
3 Among them was also C.A. Nordman, who
was actually from Finland, but was working at
the Danish National Museum at the time.
4 Although according to the sagas, its origins
were in Gamla Uppsala in Sweden.
5 The name of architect Carl Frankenhaeuser
from Finland is missing in the printed list of
participants. C.A. Nordman has added it in the
copy of Aarbøger for Nordisk Oldkyndighed og
Historie 1920 that now belongs to the Helsinki
University Library.
6 The number in square brackets refers to the
list in the Appendix.
7 I have counted Mrs Ida Arne among the wives
of participants, although she had worked at her
husband’s excavations. She took part in both Co-
penhagen and Stockholm.
8 Experimental archaeology had emerged in
Denmark in the 1870s. The idea of the Rockel-
stad experiment had been invented by the jour-
nalist and later ethnologist Ernst Klein. The ex-
periments carried out for several months in the
summer of 1919 covered the Stone Age way of
living in general, as well as different handicraft
skills. At first one man and later two men lived
permanently in a Stone Age setting. The experi-
ment acquired ideological connotations via the
owner of the Rockelstad manor, Eric von Rosen,
whose sister was married to Hermann Göring.
On the other hand, Klein himself was of Jewish
9 There are both Bronze Age carins and Middle
Iron Age mounds in Os (Shetelig 1932).
10 In his presentation [16], Haakon Shetelig may
have discussed the Ruskenesset rock shelter that
was in use in both the Mesolithic and Neolithic
periods (Brinkmann & Shetelig 1920: esp. 41–2).

11 Other joint Nordic projects in archaeology
were active at the time. Especially the two-vol-
ume prehistory of Europe, published in Swedish
and Danish in 1927, is worth mentioning (Salmi-
nen 2014b: 164–5).

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land, Storbritannien, Tyskland og Danmark:
241–62. S.I. Stofnum Vigdísar Finnbogadót-
tur.
APPENDIX 1. PRESENTATIONS AT THE NORDIC MEETINGS OF ARCHAEOLOGISTS IN 1916–27.

The year of birth of each speaker is mentioned in parentheses after the name, and the region and period (main scope of interest) in italics after the title: BA – Bronze Age; Bal – Baltic countries; Class – classical archaeology; Dk – Denmark; Eur – Europe; Fi – Finland; Gen – in general; Gre – Greenland; Hist – Middle Ages and later; IA – Iron Age and Early Historical Period; Ice – Iceland; Mult – multi-period; Mus – museums; No – Norway; Nord – Nordic countries; Rus – Russia; SA – Stone Age including geology; Swe – Sweden.

Kristiania 1916
1  Almgren, O. (1869), Ett kort meddelande om de pågående af framlidne docenten Knut Stjer na igångsatta undersökningarna öfver Sveriges stenåldersbebyggelse Sve SA
2  Almgren, O. (1869), Kulthandlingar och kultför- renål framställda på bronsålderns hällristningar Gen BA
3  Almgren, O. (1869), Några anmärkningar om denarskatterna från germanskt område Eur IA
4  Arne, T.J. (1879), Tenetid och romersk järnålder i Ryssland Rus IA
5  Brøgger, A.W. (1884), Om norske megalitgraver No SA
6  Brøgger, A.W. (1884), Osebergfundet No IA
7  Ekholt, G. (1884), Tydning av helleristningerne Nord BA
8  Friis Johansen, K. (1887), Bemærkinger om græske geometriske Vaser i italiske Fund Class IA
9  Hansen, S. (1857), Kortskaller och langsampler Nord Mult
10  Kjær, H. (1873), Nogle liggtagelser vedrørende Votivfund fra Sten- og Bronzealderen Dk Mult
11  Montelius, O. (1843), Människo-offer vid grafven Gen Mult
12  Müller, S. (1846), Meddelelser vedrørende Be- gyndelsen af yngre Stenalder Gen SA
13  Neergaard, C. (1869), Guldfundene fra den efter-romerske Jernalder i Danmark Dk IA
14  Nordman, C.A. (1892), Ormar och hållristning- gar Dk BA
15  Rosenberg, G. (1872), Oplysninger om nye Meto der til Konservering af Jern og Bronse Mus Mult
16  Shetelig, H. (1877), En ny stenaldersboplads paa Vestlandet No SA
17  Shetelig, H. (1877), Osebergfundets ornamentik No IA

Copenhagen 1919
18  Arne, T.J. (1879), Äldre fibulaformer från Ryssland Rus IA
19  Arne, T.J. (1879), Solidusfynden paa Øland och Gotland Swe IA
20  Arne, T.J. (1879), Stendösar från järnåldern Swe IA
21  Beckett, F. (1868), Elfenbenskrucifikset i Her- lufsholm Kirke Dk Hist
22  Brøndsted, J. (1890), To Fund af Sølvbægre fra Vikingetid Dk IA
23  Frödin, O. (1881), Har skalpering förekommit i Norden under stenalder? Nord SA
24  Hansen, S. (1857), Om posthum Deformering af fossile Kranier Gen Mult
25  Jensen, C.A. (1878), To sjællandske Bispeborge fra Middelalderen Dk Hist
26  Lidén, O. (1870), Sydsvenska stenåldersfrågor, belysta av nya fynd Swe SA
27  Montelius, O. (1843), När och hvor upptäcktes järnet? Gen IA
28  Montelius, O. (1843), Ringsvärd Eur IA
29  Müller, S. (1846), Bemærkinger vedrørende Be- tydningen af den nordiske Bronzealders Billed- udhugninger paa Stenflader Nord BA
30  Müller, S. (1846), Meddelelse om nye Udgrav- ninger paa Bronzealders Bopladser Dk BA
31  Neergaard, C. (1869), Bronzealders Guldfund i Danmark Dk BA
32  Nerman, B. (1888), Den svenska Ynglingaätt- tens gravar; en översikt Swe IA
33  Petersen, J. (1887), Nye stenaldershelleristnin- ger i Syd-Norge No SA
34  Petersen, J. (1887), Vikingetidsstudier Nord IA
35  Petersen, Th. (1875), Meddelelser fra Stenalde- ren i det nordenfjeldske Norge No SA
Stockholm 1922

36 Rosenberg, G. (1872), Konservering af Oldtids Træ Mus IA
37 Rydh, H. (1891), Meddelande från de arkeologiska utgrävningarna på Adelsö Swe IA
38 Schnittger, B. (1882), Gottländska skeppssättningar från bronsålderns slut och järnålderns början Swe Mult
39 Sletelig, H. (1877), Et norskt folkevandringsrike No IA

Helsinki 1925

57 Lindqvist, S. (1887), Jarlabankesläktens minnesmärken Swe IA
58 Meinander, K.K. (1872), Profanskisser bland medeltida kalkmålningar i Finland Fi Hist
59 Nerman, B. (1888), Det svenskarikets uppkomst Swe IA
81 Ramsay, W. (1865), Eustatiska nivåförändringar och neolithicum *Nord SA*
82 Rydbeck, O. (1872), Uppgifter om ärkebiskop Andreas Sunessons sjukdom, sedda i belysning av den senastegravundersöknningen *Swe Hist*
83 Shetelig, H. (1877), Tidsbestemmelser i vikingetidens stilhistorie *No IA*

**Bergen 1927**
84 Bjørn, A. (1897), A[nders] Nummedals nye stenalderfunn från Finnmarken *No SA*
85 Bøe, J. (1891), Helleristninger i Vingen, Nordfjord *No Mult*
86 Brøgger, A.W. (1884), Osebergskibets flytning till Bygdøy *No IA*
87 Hansen, F. (1890), Gånggriften i Snöstorp - med nischer från sittande lik *Swe Mult*
88 Johannessen, Fr. (1873), Båtene i Kvalsundfunnet *No IA*
89 Kaldhol, H. (1872), Gjermundnesfunnene *No SA*
90 Kjær, H. (1873), Et jydsk Votivfund fra Hallstatt-tid *Dk BA*
91 Lexow, E. (1887), Gamle bergenske bygninger *No Hist*
92 Lindqvist, S. (1887), 1926-års grävningar i Gamla Uppsalas kyrkas grund *Swe IA*
93 Nordman, C.A. (1892), Redegjörelse för vikinge funn i Finland *Fi Mult*
94 Petersen, J. (1887), Gårdssanlegg i Rogaland fra folkevandringstiden *No IA*
95 Petersen, Th. (1875), Et nytt funn av bergmalinger i det nordenfjelske Norge *No IA*
96 Rydbeck, O. (1872), Hornyxan från Höganäs *Swe SA*
97 Rydbeck, O. (1872), Medeltida blymärken *Swe SA*
98 Sarauw, G.F.L. (1862), Forntida kärl av trä eller läder, tättade med kitt (hartstättning) *Swe Hist*
99 Shetelig, H. (1877), Holmedalsfunnet, En båtgrav i Sunnfjord *No IA*
100 Tallgren, A.M. (1885), Synspunkter på nordöstra Europas järnålderskolonisasjon *Gen IA*
101 Thordeman, B. (1893), Rustningarnas från korsbetningsslaget 1361 *Swe Hist*