

Dating Ängersjö

Trenching Lynchets in Quest of the Origin and Development of a Boreal Forest Village

BY MATS MOGREN

Abstract

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Archaeological work in Ängersjö in Hälsingland is presented, with special emphasis on an investigation of the village infields. Through a series of ^{14}C datings and palynological results a still hypothetical development is described. With a prehistory as a probable transhumance cum hunting/trapping station, sedentary settlement was established in the 13th century. A seemingly continuous development led up to the situation known from cadastral records and early maps, where Ängersjö is a relatively large village. The results are put into the context of the interdisciplinary discussions about early medieval colonization, the late medieval agrarian crisis and the impact of the core elites on peripheral societies. A working hypothesis for future research is formulated.

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In Sweden, as in many other European countries, the 10th–13th centuries are regarded as a period of expansion. We generally assume a push out into the outland areas, with establishment of a large number of new, independent settlements. In the forested interior of Sweden the phenomenon has been studied in various ways, within archaeology mostly as a secondary result of a study of deserted settlements, victims of the 14th-century crisis. Still living settlements were left unattended, however, so we know next to nothing of the genesis of the hamlets and villages that enter written history in the 16th-century cadastral records, and we also know very little about their internal dynamics and subsistence systems.

This study presents results from the first years of research in such a village. It addresses questions

regarding the village genesis: When did it take place? Did the settlers come to a virgin tract of land or was it already in some form of use? Can we discern an original settlement layout? What do we know of the economy? How does it compare with other known settlements in the region? It also addresses questions concerning the internal dynamics of the village: How did the settlement grow and how did it expand its arable land? Are there indications of restructuring? Are there traces of the 14th-century crisis? To some extent the internal dynamism is also set up against external influence: to what extent can external forces be said to influence or direct the course of development? All these questions can not receive a full answer at present, but the work done so far has been able to elucidate some of the more important problems.

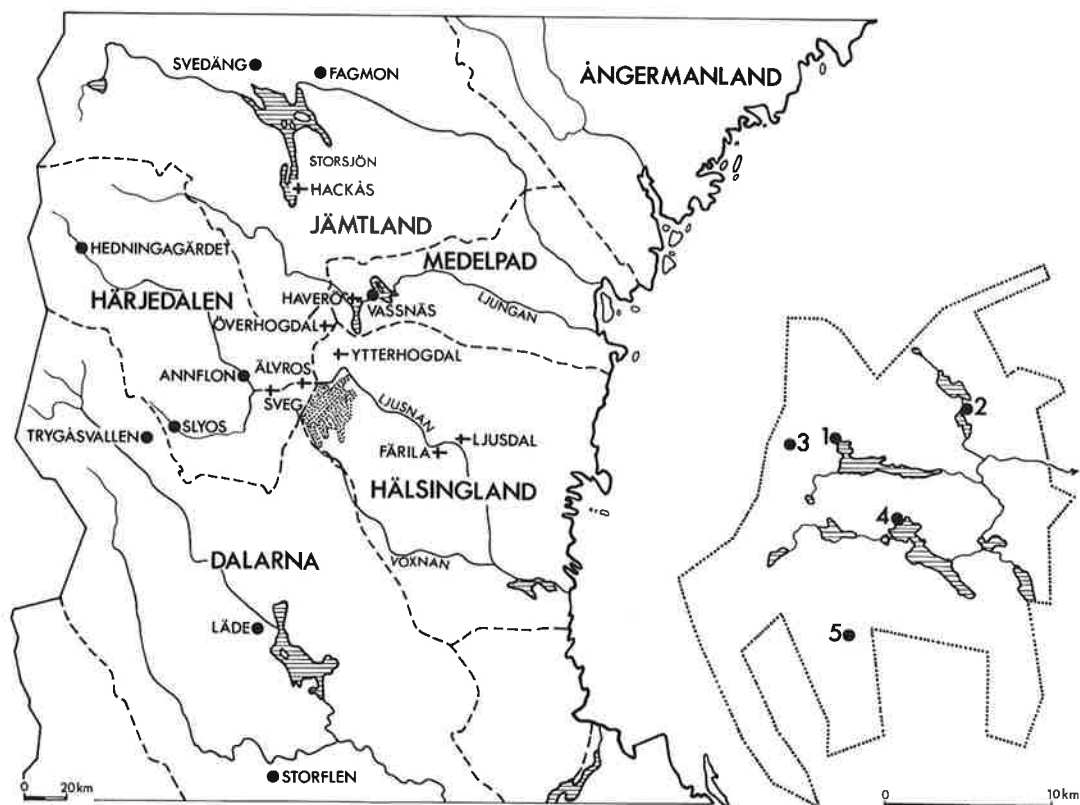


Fig. 1. Map of the southern Norrland interior with sites mentioned in the text. Inset map of Ångersjö parish (hatched area in the large map). 1. Ångersjö village. 2. Vänsjö village. 3. Gammelvallen on Frosktjärnsberget. 4. Gammelvallen at lake Öjingen. 5. Lake Drocksjön tool-set find. Drawing: T. Borstam.

The village

Ångersjö is the name of a parish and a village in the north-western part of the historical province of Hälsingland, next to the border of Härjedalen. The village more or less forms a glade in the coniferous forest that covers a hilly moraine plateau, with numerous lakes, tarns and bogs, south of the river Ljusnan. The altitude of the village area is ca. 400 metres above m.s.l. The arable is more or less confined to the sandy patch of land by lake Lill-Ångersjön on which the village is situated (Fig 1). The area has always been sparsely populated.

Until 1925 Ångersjö parish was part of Ytterhogdal parish. (Ytter-)Hogdal parish was mentioned for the first time in written documents

in 1406 (SD, no. 792) and it was an annex to Ljusdal until 1562. The chapel in Ångersjö, according to an unconfirmed tradition, was built by four peasants in the early 16th century (Bergström, Magnusson & Raihle 1990, p 157), but the earliest reliable source is a map of Ytterhogdal and Haverö parishes from 1655, where the chapel is clearly marked (Lantmäteriverket, X 20 1¹).

The name Ångersjö, designating the village, is found for the first time in the cadastral records for the year 1542 (Skatteboken, p. 64). At that time (Ytter-)Hogdal, with Ångersjö, was a border parish, the western parish borders also forming the state border between Sweden and Norway.

After the Swedish annexation of Härjedalen in 1645 this came to an end.

Four peasants are mentioned as living in Ängersjö in 1542, but being a land taxation register, this record lists only peasants wealthy enough to pay tax. One of these farms is comparatively rich. It is the second richest farm in Ytterhogdal parish and the three smaller farms in Ängersjö measure between 37% and 57% of the large farm, judging from the land assessment. In comparison with farms in southern Sweden, the arable in Ängersjö was very small.

In a poll tax register from 1535, Ängersjö is not mentioned by name, but similarities of personal names compared to the 1542 register seem to indicate that there may have been six peasants living in Ängersjö in 1535 (cf. Brink 1994, p. 43; Skatteboken, p. 64). That is the number in a later poll-tax register of 1571, the so-called *Ålvsborgs lösen*, and also in 1610. By 1616–1619 the number of peasants had risen to seven (Johansson, unpubl. 1992). No farm names are mentioned in these early sources.

Judging from these documents, cattle-breeding was the most important source of income for the villagers, while cultivation seems to have been of minor importance. This notion is corroborated by some brief descriptions from the 18th century. The rural dean Olof Johan Broman wrote in 1726 about Ytterhogdal, including Ängersjö: "The soil here is rather meagre and the grain seldom manages to ripen until it is destroyed by frost; therefore the food is mostly from the livestock, of which here many can be fed because of the good grazing and the wide grounds" (Broman [1726] 1911–1949, vol. I, p. 240). Writing 64 years later, the vicar of Ytterhogdal, Olof Waldenius, and the county sheriff (Sw. *kronolänsmän*), Jonas Bergklint, did not quite agree when in 1790 they answered a questionnaire from Governor Cronstedt and said about Ängersjö: "Cattle breeding is the main part of the economy [...] The grazing is meagre, but they own 6 shielings (Sw. *boland*), between which they often travel, which does the

cattle good." In spite of the meagre grazing there were 87 cows, 105 sheep, 112 goats and 6 pigs in the entire chapel congregation, divided among 14 peasants (Bringéus, ed. 1961, pp. 331 f.).

When the map for the *storskifte* land reform was produced in 1813–1815 (Lantmäteriverket, Y 64, 14¹) there were 8 freehold farms in Ängersjö village. These 8 farms make up what can be seen still today as the infields of the village. They are marked with letters on the map (Fig. 2), but in this article their names will be used too. A good understanding of their relative wealth can be gained from the written documents that accompany the map (Tab. 1).

Probably between 1830 and 1835 parts of the land belonging to the richest farm, Utigår'n (BL, Fig. 2), was partitioned as the ninth freehold farm of the village, Väst i Ås'n. The settlement there is somewhat older, though. People from Utigår'n moved to Väst i Ås'n around 1800. The farm is situated in the northernmost area named BL in the map (BL:2 in Fig. 2). Today the number of freehold farms is 11, but the two other ones are situated at a distance from the infields of the village. Apart from this a number of Finnish colonizers settled at some distance from the village in the Ängersjö and Ytterhogdal forests in the early 17th century (Modin 1958; Broberg 1988, pp. 69 ff.), and a number of crofts emerged around Ängersjö village during the 19th century (Pålsson 1989; Karinen Acosta, unpubl. 1993), but these units are of no concern to us in the present discussion. Ängersjö reached its cultivation maximum in the early decades of the 20th century, but in 1927 still only 0.4% of the parish area was under cultivation.

Also the settlement layout that we see in the 1813–1815 map is about the same as the one we meet today. As far as we know, the village has never been nucleated. It may be termed a joint village, with farm enclosures (cf. Erixon 1960, pp. 200 ff.) and the fields were laid out in large blocks around the buildings. Expansion of the arable has taken place around the edges of the infield area, so there are few examples of natural

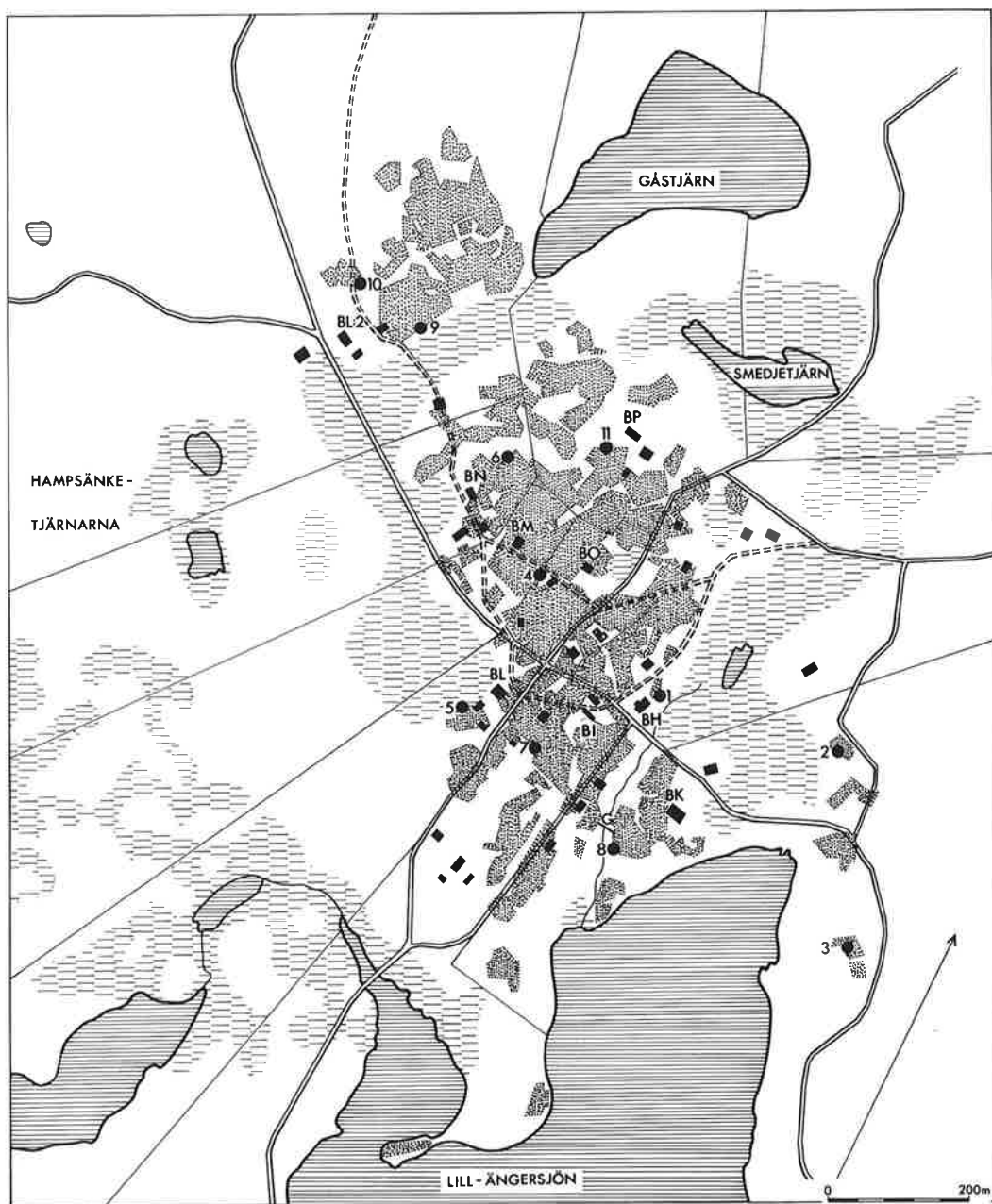


Fig. 2. Map of Ängersjö village with a conjectured tracing of the 1815 arable land over present-day freehold boundaries, also showing the 11 trenching sites (cf. Tab. 2), the present road system with the old (pre-1920s) village road (conjectured) and the approximate extent of wetland areas. BH = Turgår'n. BI = Skröbb. BK = Backen. BL = Utigår'n. BM = Jopers. BN = Kröjars. BO = Oppigår'n. BP = Norrgår'n (lettering following Tab. 1) and BL:2 = Väst i Ås'n). The building symbols represent present-day houses. Please note that the church dates from the 17th century and must not be seen as part of a medieval village landscape. Data from the 1813–1815 map, from the 1952 village map (municipal archive), from the Economic Map of 1973 and project mapping in 1994. Drawing: T. Borstam..

Table 1. Taxation assessment for the eight freehold farms of Ängersjö in 1815 as stated in the documentation for the *storskifte* land regulation (from Johansson, unpubl. 1992).

<i>Letter code</i>	<i>Name of farm</i>	<i>Assessed for</i>
BH	Turgår'n	2 öre 2 penningar
BI	Skrôbb	2 öre 2 1/4 penningar
BK	Backen	2 öre 2 1/4 penningar
BL	Utigår'n	5 öre 2 penningar
BM	Jopers	2 öre 12 penningar
BN	Kröjars	2 öre 12 penningar
BO	Oppigår'n	2 öre 20 2/3 penningar
BP	Norrgår'n	3 öre 4 1/2 penningar

partitioning. Farms like Skrôbb (BI), also called Hemigår'n, and Oppigår'n (BO) have been more or less circumscribed by the others, and it is only natural that their expansion of the arable had to take place in the form of outfield, of which the map seems to bear evidence. Farms like Turgår'n (BH) and Kröjars (BN) are bounded by wetlands to the east and north-west respectively, which has also hampered expansion to some extent, even though some mires were drained and cultivated during the cultivation maximum of the late 19th and early 20th century (Fig. 2).

Turgår'n (BH) and Skrôbb (BI) are traditionally thought of as the oldest farms of the village, but in 1813–1815 they were also the poorest. Relative wealths in the early 19th century can not be used retrogressively for comparison with the relative wealths of the 16th century, however. Backen (BK) was partitioned from Skrôbb (BI) in 1809, the first known owner being born and raised in Skrôbb, but the story is obviously more complex than we understand at present. The oldest map of the village, from 1639 (Lantmåteriverket, V1:6–7), shows only one of the farms, and it seems to depict the farm later known as Backen (it has no name in the map). The possibility that it may depict an area now known as Härkbacken (at 2 in Fig. 2), will be discussed further below.

The map is part of a collection that was drawn by one of the best-known of the government surveyors of the first generation, Olof L. Tresk, and the collection is said to depict the farms of the Finns in Hälsingland, Medelpad and Ångermanland, and desertions and “mediated” (Sw. *förmedlade*) farms in Ångermanland. In this sheet a number of farms and crofts have been compiled from the entire north-western part of Hälsingland. Most of them are well-known Finnish settlements originating in the second and third decade of the 17th century, so there is a slight possibility that Backen in Ängersjö (if the identification is correct) was also a Finnish settlement. In that case there must have been an amalgamation of Backen and Skrôbb before the two farms were parted again in 1809.

Jopers (BM), also called Västigår'n, and Kröjars (BN) were probably a single farm in the 16th century. The identical taxation of the two farms in 1815, and the relative closeness of the two tofts, seems to support the assumption that it was divided into the two units we know of from the early 18th century on. The exact date of the partitioning is unknown. The case of Norrgår'n (BP) is more uncertain. The first known proprietor was a soldier from Västansjö village, Ytterhogdal parish, born in 1714, but the taxation in 1815, where Norrgår'n is the second richest farm in the village, does not tally with the assumption of a newly established unit.

Local tradition tells about two abandoned farms or crofts within the infield area, the locations of which are not known in detail. A croft named Bjurs is supposed to have been situated somewhere between Oppigår'n (BO) and Norrgår'n (BP). The crofter moved to the neighbouring village Vänsjö and from there the Vänsjö freehold unit moved on to the village of Flor in Ytterhogdal parish, according to village tradition. It is not known when. If we assume that the tradition is correct, it would perhaps help in explaining the relatively high taxation of Norrgår'n in 1815. The same pattern of movement is supposed to have been the case for another vanished settle-

ment unit situated somewhere near Turgår'n (BH) and Skråbb (BI). The name of that unit was Tjändalsbacken, but in this case too the exact location is unknown.

This is the main outline of the story that can be deduced from written documents and maps. A close scrutiny of the sources may elucidate the development further, but there is reason to believe that the development of the village was more complex than written sources can reveal.

As a take-off hypothesis, the six farms from 1535/1571 might have been Turgår'n, Skråbb, Oppigår'n, Utigår'n, Kröjars/Jopers, and Norrgår'n or Backen. Jopers and Kröjars parted in the early 18th century, if not before, and an eighth farm had been created before 1813. Väst i Ås'n was formed between 1830 and 1835 as the ninth freehold unit.

The situation before 1500 is impossible to describe from written sources. It was only in the 16th century that the village attained cadastral stability. For the medieval period we may assume a small number of units, but we can not speculate about locations.

Early research

This picture became more complicated when archaeological and palaeobotanical research started yielding results. The survey for archaeological sites in 1971 recorded numerous pit-trap systems, iron production sites etc., in the forests around Ängersjö village. While Ängersjö's "mother parish" Ytterhogdal has seven known Iron Age graves, stone settings in "forest context" (Persson 1995), there are no known pre-Christian graves in Ängersjö parish, with one conspicuous exception: at lake Drocksjön, in the southern part of the parish, one of the Merovingian period tool-set finds that are known from about a dozen sites in the interior southern taiga belt of Sweden, was found in 1980 (Sundström 1983; Sundström, et al. 1987). Starting in 1975, a number of bloomery iron production sites in the parish were investigated and dated by ^{14}C to

ca. 1300–1575 AD (Magnusson 1986, pp. 125 ff., 175 ff.). In the late 1970s a number of Mesolithic camp sites were found, pushing back known human presence several thousand years. Two sites, both of them called *Gammelvallen*, situated 3 and 6.6 km respectively from the village centre (the church), and thought to be abandoned transhumance shielings (Sw. *fäbodlar*), attracted interest. They are dated by ^{14}C and recently recalibrated to 1210–1400 AD and 1220–1440 AD respectively. At the nearest one (on Frosktjärnsberget) archaeological excavations took place in 1982 and 1985 (Karlenby, unpubl. 1985; Magnusson 1989; Zetterström unpubl. 1992). All these findings indicated considerable medieval activity in the Ängersjö area.

In 1986 a palynological investigation was carried out, using material cored from Lill-Ängersjön and Smedjetjärn (Påhlsson, unpubl.). The start of the juniper curve, indicating grazing, was dated to 1615 ± 130 BC. Before this indication is corroborated by further analyses, it must be treated with caution, but possibly this type of very extensive land use lingered on all through the Bronze Age and early Iron Age. In 150 ± 95 AD clearance increased and in the uppermost layers cereal pollen was found (barley and rye). A ^{14}C dating to 395 ± 100 AD, from just under the earliest cerealia level, was considered too early to be credible, but the start of cereal production in the area was hypothetically set, by Påhlsson, to the Viking Age, assuming that the sedimentation rate has been even. Even though the start of cereal production could not be fixed, the results supported the archaeological assumptions that sedentary settlement in Ängersjö had a history several centuries older than the written sources indicate.

The project

In 1990–1991 an archaeological project was formulated (Andersson et al. 1995; cf. Mogren 1992), with the aim of studying the origin and development of the boreal forest village seen as a

system where agriculture, animal husbandry and various outland activities, such as hunting, trapping, fishing and iron production, were integrated in a complementary economy. The project was called "*The use and change of a forest environment in the light of Ängersjö in Hälsingland*" and was organized as a collaboration of archaeological researchers from Stockholm and Lund universities and from the Central Board of National Antiquities. Fieldwork commenced in 1992 and was carried out until 1994, with some additional work in 1996. Results are being processed and report writing is presently under way.

Archaeological work was carried out within different fields of investigation. Archaeology students from Stockholm university compiled and processed data, in the form of seminar papers, on a number of issues such as the village field system (Johansson, unpubl. 1992), hunting (Lindh, unpubl. 1992), mills (Lagerstedt, unpubl. 1992), the road network (Stenquist, unpubl. 1992), the shieling sites (Zetterström, unpubl. 1992), the household annual cycle (Karinen Acosta, unpubl. 1993), wood carvings with hunting motifs (Sundberg, unpubl. 1993), timber building traditions (Taawo, unpubl. 1993) andcroft sites (Olsson, unpubl. 1994). A good base for further studies was thus laid.

The survey for sites was recommenced and the number of registered sites quadrupled. Among the new registrations were several previously unknown Mesolithic camp sites, pit-trap sites and bloomery iron production sites, but also road and track remains and numerous post-medieval sites such as settlement sites, mills and charcoal production sites.

Excavations at the *Gammelwallen* site on Frosktjärnsberget were also recommenced, which revealed the full extent of the site. A minor excavation was carried out with the aim of dating a wooden trackway, which local tradition connects with large-scale driving of oxen from Härjedalen to the copper mine at Falun. All this work will be presented in forthcoming studies. A new approach to Ängersjö studies was the investigation

of the village infield area. It was carried out by the present author, and the rest of this paper will concentrate on the results from that investigation.

The village investigation: issues addressed

Within the field of the archaeology of medieval and post-medieval rural settlement in Sweden, two dominating research issues have created two distinct research traditions. One is the "village genesis" tradition. Within this tradition archaeological research has been carried out in still living villages, by both contract and research archaeologists, but this work has been confined almost exclusively to Scania in the south (Söderberg 1994). The tradition has links to the Danish research in the same field, which has concentrated on dating the emergence of the villages as we know them from medieval documents and later cadastral records and maps (e.g. Grøngaard Jeppesen 1981; Porsmose Christensen 1981).

The other one is the "desertion" tradition. The Deserted Farms and Villages Project, with its focus on the late medieval agrarian crisis, has of course had a great impact on the development (Gissel et al. 1981). North of Scania almost all of the research (also outside the contract sector) during the last 20–25 years has concentrated on the abandoned units (Carlsson 1979; Sandberg 1987; Andersson 1994; Andersson & Svensson 1994, to give just a few examples from the southern third of the country).

For Sweden in general, the concentration on abandoned settlements has also to do with the notion of the "closed archive", that a lid has been put upon the deserted units, which can be studied without later disturbances. Furthermore it is due to the antiquarian regulations, according to which only permanently deserted settlements get legal protection. This may have resulted in an implicit conception of these units as more "valuable" and thus more worthy of becoming objects of research.

In the south Norrland interior the concentration on deserted farms (Sw. *ödesbölen*) has been a rule with no exceptions. An article by Selinge (1972) was to become seminal, as also the regional study within the Deserted Farms and Villages Project (Salvesen 1979). Until the Ängersjö project started, no living settlements were archaeologically investigated in the region. The issues addressed here touch upon the traditional desertion problem complex as well, but it is of very subordinate importance.

The Ängersjö village work has been governed by the idea that archaeology should be also the study of a continuum, that “we” and “they” are links in the same chain, and that archaeology is applicable to any period. Whenever possible, the archaeological record should be linked up to the living present. I feel that the sense of continuum, that working in a living village gives, lends more meaning to archaeological work than does peeping at “the Other” over a temporal gulch.

Thus, the Ängersjö work attempts at a broad working method, which combines Welinder’s approach in “historical ethnoarchaeology” in Dalarna (Welinder 1992, 1994), with a more established kind of settlement archaeology. The theoretical base of the present investigation is wider than the confinements of archaeology itself, though. Sweden’s fine research traditions on settlement systems within ethnology and human geography are indeed an essential foundation for any settlement study. Works by researchers like John Granlund, Sigurd Erixon, Gunnar Bodwall, Ulf Sporrang and others form standard references. Others are referred to in this text. Future approaches in Ängersjö will also link up with historical archaeology in the Anglo-American sense, with its concentration on contact studies, consumer choice studies, and so on.

During the early stages of the sub-project the main issue addressed has of course been the dating of the original sedentary settlement and its subsequent development into the village that we see today. The work has been carried out within the broader project framework, with its

concentration on the village as a system, so the economic base of the settlement has been of great importance as well. Other issues such as communication systems, technologies, and the like, have been touched upon and are currently being developed by collaborators. There will be reason to return to this broader field of study in forthcoming presentations.

The village infields

What is here called the village area is the tofts and infields of the nine freehold farms mentioned above, including a number of service buildings (church, shop, school) and 20th-century households partitioned from the nine “original” farms. The area measures about 1000 metres SE–NW, measured from lake Lill-Ängersjön to the ridge Långbacken, and about 700 metres SW–NE. On most sides the village area is delimited by tarns and wetlands. It more or less corresponds to the arable and meadowlands in the 1813–1815 map. The village area is divided into three parts by two wetland areas in small valleys, running roughly N–S through the area. The wetlands separate the farm Väst i Ås’n in the NW part, and the farm Backen in the SE part from the seven farms that are grouped around the church in the village centre. The eastern of these valleys, Bäckedal’n, was previously dammed by a grindery dam, built in 1826 or somewhat later, according to dendrochronological dating, and this valley was probably also the site of a mill mentioned in the 1639 map. Of course these artificial ponds cut off the Backen area even more efficiently from the present village centre, even though the dams could function as bridges.

The village sub-project aimed at making a contribution to the history of cultivation in Ängersjö. The method applied was the trenching of positive lynchets, i.e. the terraces formed down-slope in ploughed fields over time. The method has been tried before, for example, in the investigations of deserted farms in Jämtland (Gauffin 1981, 1989; Björck et al. 1996), Här-

jedalen (Norrman, Robertson-Åkerlund & Hedén 1979), Värmland (Myrdal-Runebjer & Bladh 1995) and Norway (e.g. Salvesen et al. 1977), and by human geographers working in south and central Sweden (e.g. Lindquist 1975) and similar methods have been applied for dating stone walls and clearance cairns (e.g. Widgren 1983; Windelhed 1992, 1995).

The method is founded on the assumption that land clearance for cultivation was carried out by burning the natural vegetation. When a lynchet is trenched, a layer of charcoal-mixed soil is almost always found towards the lower edge of the field, while it has been ploughed away further upslope. The plough-soil covering the charcoal layer can measure from 0.1 to more than 1.0 metres in thickness, depending on a combination of factors: the angle of inclination, the type of cultivation system, the age of the field, etc. However, the height of a lynchet can not be used for assessing the age of a field. In coniferous forest regions like Ängersjö, a typical podzol profile with eluvial and illuvial strata is found beneath the charcoal layer (see Fig. 3).

The trenching sites were chosen so that they would be spread over most of the village area, preferably including all of the freehold farms and also a few outfields (Fig 2). The sites had to have a distinct lynchet that could be assumed not to have been affected by secondary encroachments, such as road cuts or building activities. Eleven lynchets were chosen and trenched.

Trench 1 was dug in Turgår'n in a very small field adjacent to the main house and sloping towards the east and the wetland area that probably is identical to the 1639 mill pond. The field is marked in the 1813–1815 map and may be assumed to have been used for other crops than cereals, such as flax or garden herbs. The maximum thickness of the plough-soil is 0.35 m.

Trench 2 was dug in one of the outfields south-east of the village, on the opposite side of the above-mentioned wetland. The site is called Öst i Svea ("east in the swidden") in the descriptions for the 1813–1815 map, but is

colloquially called Härkbacken by the present-day villagers. The name is peculiar, *härke* being the Saami word for a geld reindeer bull and *härkä* being the Finnish word for bovine bull or oxen (*backe* means hillside). There are no traditions about Finnish or Saami settlement there, but there is a possibility that the farm depicted in the 1639 map is Härkbacken. If so, the compilation of farms in the map would be easier to understand; they would all be Finnish settlements, and the name Härkbacken would not seem so odd after all. The site has two small fields and there was a barn standing in the larger, southern one within living memory (its foundations can still be seen), but no earlier habitation at the site is known. A hearth between two small boulders was found next to the barn foundations. It was excavated and dated to cal. AD 1663 (see Tab. 2). The trench was dug in the smaller northern field, which slopes towards the wetland in the west. The lynchet is very low, maximum depth of plough-soil being only 0.3 m.

Trench 3 was dug in another south-eastern outfield. The site is named Utisveden ("outer swidden") and was named Getsveden ("goat swidden") in the descriptions for the 1813–1815 map, but is colloquially known in the village as Gammelskräddarns ("the old tailor's"), after a disabled miner living there in the early 19th century, carving out a living as a tailor. The relatively small field slopes towards the lake in the west. The maximum depth of plough-soil at the site is 0.35 m.

Trench 4 was dug next to Oppigår'n, in a lynchet which is to be found in the centre of the large area of adjacent fields in the middle of the village. This lynchet slopes towards the east and towards the farm toft. It is now on the border of Jopers, but according to the 1813–1815 map, the field was clearly part of Oppigår'n before it was regulated. The maximum depth of plough-soil is 1.0 m.

Trench 5 (Fig. 3) was dug in Utigår'n in a field that is very close to the farmhouse and now more or less part of the farm toft. It slopes towards a

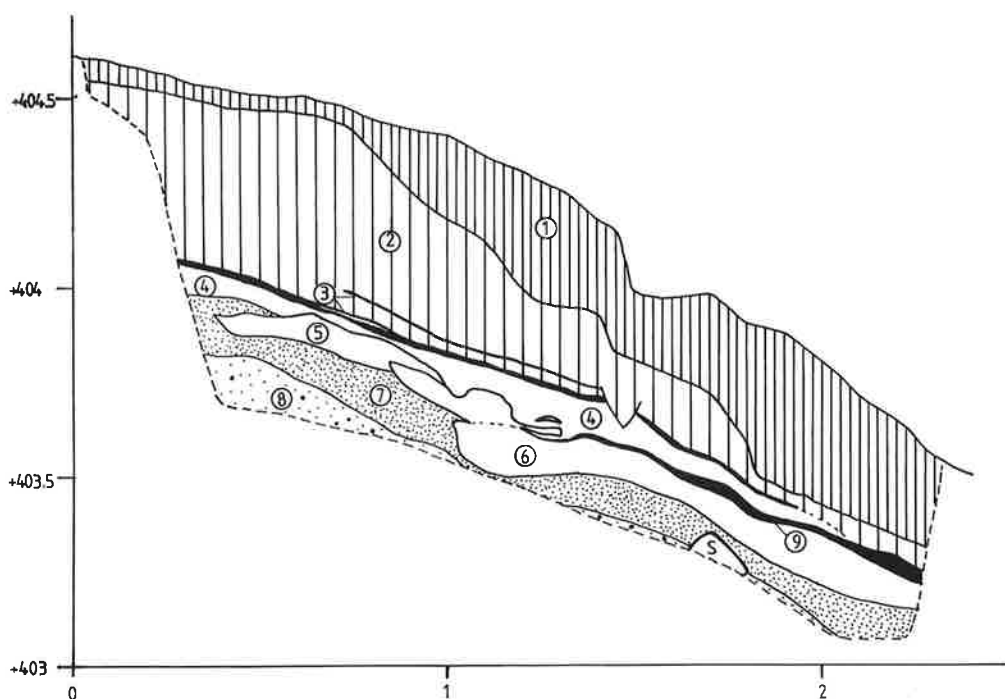


Fig. 3. Trench 5 at Utigår'n. South side. 1. Turf. 2. Plough-soil. 3. Soot- and charcoal-mixed layer, incl. some burned clay (Lu-3996). 4. Mixed layer with streaks of charcoal, soot, podzol E horizon soil and podzol B horizon soil. 5. Mixed podzol E and B horizon layer. 6. Podzol E horizon. 7. Podzol B horizon. 8. Yellow pebble-mixed silt. 9. Charcoal-mixed layer (St-14154). Drawing: M. Mogren.

mire in the west, which was drained and cultivated around the turn of the 20th century. The maximum depth of plough-soil is 0.5 m.

Trench 6 was dug in a relatively high lynchet delimiting the field behind the farmhouse at Kröjars, towards a valley in the north and north-west. Maximum depth of plough-soil at this site is 1.0 m.

Trench 7 was dug in a field close to the farmhouse at Skråbb, which slopes southwards towards a small wetland hollow. Maximum depth of plough-soil is 0.7 m.

Trench 8 was dug in a relatively steeply sloping field at Backen. The field is bounded by the small valley for the creek that drains the wetland area next to trench 1 and in which the 1826 grindery dam was built, adjacent to the Backen field. The grindery dam also functioned as a bridge, and the narrow road bank leading from the dam on the Backen side is partly

covered by the lynchet. The field is clearly marked in the 1813–1815 map, though (as is every other field trenched in this investigation), and the trench was laid out further towards the lake where there is no direct connection with the road bank. Maximum depth of plough-soil is 0.5 m. A small test-pit was also dug at the brow of the hill. There the soil depth was only about 0.15 m and a pattern of ard marks was found in the bottom silt.

Trench 9 was dug at Väst i Ås'n in a high lynchet delimiting the fields north of the farmhouse from a wetland hollow in the east. Maximum depth of plough-soil is 1.0 m.

Trench 10 was placed in a small field, also in the Väst i Ås'n grounds, just where the village area ends and the ground rises steeply towards the forested ridge above. The old village road, in use into the 1920s, leading westwards from the village, passes by and forms a hollow road in the

steep slope adjacent to the field. Maximum depth of plough-soil is 0.6 m.

Trench 11 was dug in a northward-sloping lynchet in the central parts of the Norrgår'n infields. The lower slopes of the field seem to have been abandoned when modern ploughing equipment was introduced, and today only the flat top of the field is kept open by mowing. The maximum depth of the plough-soil is 0.4 m.

All these lynchets showed the stratigraphical pattern described above, with the exception that in nos. 9 and 10 the natural ground was silty moraine gravel, instead of the fine silt found in the lower parts of the village. Charcoal was

sampled from the clearance horizon in all of the trenches. The lynchets at Backen (no. 8) and Utigår'n (no. 5), possibly also those at Oppigår'n (no. 4) and Kröjars (no. 6), were singled out by the fact that two separate charcoal layers were found, indicating two burnings. At Utigår'n there are charcoal samples from both layers. The amount of charcoal differed considerably in the different trenches. In the trench at Backen (no. 8) charcoal was found more or less as soot mixed into the humus. No large charcoal pieces at all could be sampled, and only one of the charcoal layers yielded material for dating. At other sites like Härkbacken (no. 2), Utigår'n (no. 5) and

Table 2. ¹⁴C-datings from the Ängersjö village lynchet trenches and the Härkbacken hearth. Calibration according to Radiocarbon Calibration Program Rev 3.0.3. (Stuiver & Reimer 1993, pp. 215–230.) From an archaeological point of view all calibrated dates and probability ranges for lynchets after 1813 can be disregarded.

<i>Trench & Farm</i>	<i>Analysis no.</i>	<i>¹⁴C age</i>	<i>Calibrated age</i>	<i>1 s probability</i>	<i>2 s probability</i>
1. Turgår'n	LuA-3612	520 ± 120 BP	cal. AD 1421	1307–1361, 1378–1473 AD	1279–1647 AD
2. Härkbacken	Lu-3611	840 ± 70 BP	cal. AD 1220	1160–1280 AD	1030–1300 AD
3. Gammelskräddarns	LuA-3613	800 ± 140 BP	cal. AD 1253	1046–1098, 1115– 1145, 1153–1303 AD	984–1421 AD
4. Oppigår'n	LuA-3995	610 ± 130 BP	cal. AD 1322, 1340, 1393	1284–1436 AD	1191–1516, 1591–1621 AD
5a. Utigår'n I	St-14154	2340 ± 120 BP	cal. BC 441 ± 185	671–245 BC	759–96 BC
5b. Utigår'n II	Lu-3996	800 ± 60 BP	cal. AD 1252	1213–1284 AD	1063–1076, 1126–1134, 1159–1298 AD
6. Kröjars	St-14152	315 ± 90 BP	cal. AD 1574	1507–1630 AD	1458–1756 AD
7. Skróbb	Lu-4129	420 ± 55 BP	cal. AD 1454	1437–1496, 1604–1613 AD	1414–1638 AD
8. Backen	LuA-4137	490 ± 90 BP	cal. AD 1433	1400–1473 AD	1300–1638 AD
9. Väst i Ås'n I	Lu-4127	270 ± 80 BP	cal. AD 1651	1516–1591, 1621– 1675, 1776–1798, 1943–1954 AD	1448–1822, 1833–1882, 1912–1954 AD
10. Väst i Ås'n II	Lu-4130	290 ± 65 BP	cal. AD 1644	1513–1596, 1619– 1664 AD	1452–1683, 1744–1807, 1933–1954 AD
11. Norrgår'n	Lu-4128	160 ± 65 BP	cal. AD 1683, 1745, 1807, 1933, 1954	1664–1893, 1905– 1955 AD	1664–1955 AD
Härkbacken hearth	LuA-4136	230 ± 110 BP	cal. AD 1663	1520–1569, 1627– 1702, 1718–1819, 1859–1860, 1917– 1954 AD	1443–1955 AD

Kröjars (no. 6) the amount was large enough to be sufficient for a conventional ^{14}C analysis. There may be alternative explanations for this. Possibly the Backen area was used by the villagers as open pasture before clearance burning.

The datings

A total of twelve charcoal samples from the eleven trenches have been collected. Sampling being stratigraphically correct, they must nevertheless be regarded as general samples, since charcoal was collected from at least a 30 cm stretch of the clearance horizon to be sufficient. Seven datings (Tab. 2) were made possible by the project being granted analysis costs from the research quotas of the archaeological departments at Stockholm and Lund universities; the other five datings (and the hearth dating) were financed by a special development grant obtained by Ängersjö Byalag (the village society for the revitalization of the village). The analyses were carried out at the Laboratory for Isotope Geology at the Swedish Museum of Natural History, Stockholm (St numbers) and at the Laboratory for ^{14}C dating at Lund University (Lu and LuA numbers). Eight of these samples were analysed using the conventional mass spectrometer method, four (LuA numbers) were analysed using the Pelletron accelerator in Lund.

As is evident from table 2, the three datings from trenches 2, 3 and 5b (cf. Fig. 2) strongly indicate an initial phase of clearance burnings in the 13th century. The location of these early datings are not altogether the ones to be expected. Trenches 2 and 3 are outfields of the village, sites that could have been expected to be part of a later expansion of the arable. The trench 5b dating conforms better to the original assumptions. The initial phase is followed by the 14th and 15th century datings from trenches 1, 4, 7 and 8. It is interesting to note that they imply clearance of new arable land during a period when large parts of Scandinavia suffered from the so-called agrarian crisis.

The late-16th-century dating from trench 6 further to the north implies that this process continued as an expansion around the edges of the infield area. In the 17th century this expansion reached the slopes of the ridge in the north-west, developing outfields which in the 19th century were partitioned from the mother farm, forming the ninth freehold farm, Väst i Ås'n. Finally, clearances in the north formed the infields of Norrgår'n, probably during the 18th century, thus completing the number of eight farms that were recorded in 1813–1815.

The Celtic Iron Age dating from trench 5a stands out as seemingly very singular, but must be compared to the dating of the clearance for grazing around 150 AD that comes out in the palynological investigation (see above). The implications drawn from these results will be discussed further towards the end of the paper.

Comparison with neighbouring regions

For Jämtland, Magnusson has sketched a development of settlement, from the first sedentary colonization phase in the late Roman Iron Age onwards, in which a marked settlement contraction in the Merovingian period (ca. 7th century) is evident from the archaeological and palynological evidence alike. Similar results have been obtained from the central and coastal parts of Hälsingland (Engelmark & Wallin 1995; Liedgren 1992; Brink 1995, p. 157). During the course of the Viking Age in Jämtland, a new and dramatic expansion phase occurred, until at the end of the Viking Age, in the 11th century, about 150 farms can be calculated for the entire province (Magnusson 1986, pp. 297 ff.), a figure that Sandnes (1996, pp. 110 f.) is inclined to treble. Almost all of this colonization took place in what during the Middle Ages can be termed as central settlement districts around lake Storsjön.

As part of the Early Norrland Project, Engelmark (1978) carried out palaeoecological

investigations in Haverö parish, the westernmost parish of Medelpad and bordering on Ängersjö's "mother parish" Ytterhogdal towards the south-west. Haverö is part of the Ljungan river valley and the river forms a succession of lakes along which the settlement is concentrated. The entire parish lies above the "highest coastline" (just like Ängersjö), but the area differs geologically from Ängersjö in that the ground around lake Havern has some glacial clay, proving the existence of an ice-dammed lake during the recession stage of the last glaciation. Haverö has some Iron Age settlement, as evidenced by graves (Baudou 1978), and the palaeobotanical research corroborates this. At three of Engelmark's four sampling sites, colonization occurred around the birth of Christ, and at two of them cereal pollen is also present (one of these sites is at the parish centre adjacent to the church). Cultivation was small-scale, but continuous, and no clear evidence of a Merovingian Period contraction are mentioned. The fourth site, Vassnäs, a hamlet mentioned in a document from 1412 (SD, no. 1653), appears to be a parallel to Ängersjö; weed, grass and cereal pollen curves increase at about 1100 AD (Engelmark 1978, pp. 46 f.).

K. Andersson worked with Engelmark in Ljusdal parish, Hälsingland, and two sites situated north of the central parts of the parish were sampled and analysed, showing similar development (Andersson 1988).

Gauffin, in his investigations of the abandoned farms of Svedäng in Alsen parish and Fagmon in Lit parish, both in Jämtland, sampled charcoal for dating under lynchets and the results, albeit from very few samples, showed a colonization phase in the 11th century at both sites (Gauffin 1981, 1989).

Björck, Håkansson and Antonsson carried out palynological and soil studies at the deserted farm Eisåsen in Berg parish, southern Jämtland, including the trenching of a lynchet with subsequent dating of charcoal. The results showed a clearance at 1265 ± 65 bp (8th–9th centuries), but with no cereal pollen. Coring in the sedi-

ment of an adjacent tarn gave evidence of anthropogenic influence from ca. 2500 bp, however, probably including growing of hemp (Björck et al. 1996).

In eastern Härjedalen, at Annflon west of Sveg, a system of field terraces was investigated preceding the flooding for a hydroelectric power plant dam. A number of terraces were trenched and one ^{14}C analysis indicated a clearance phase in the Viking Age (ca. 770–1100 AD). A pollen sample from one field indicated grazing, but no cereal pollen was found (Norrman, Robertson-Åkerlund & Hedin 1979). Annflon is mentioned as a settlement in the 1270s (ST I, p. 244).

Archaeological work at abandoned settlement sites in western Härjedalen, carried out by Jämtland County Museum and others, has also revealed a colonization phase that is earlier than the one we can discern in Ängersjö; in that region pre-Christian graves are also found at no less than 32 sites (Sundström 1989a, p. 88; 1989b; Hansson, forthcoming). There are close chorological connections to pit-trap systems, and it is suggested that these settlements are part of a hunting and trapping economy. Mikkelsen (1994) has carried out an in-depth study of similar phenomena from the Viking Age and the Middle Ages in the Dovre district in Norway.

Königsson has presented results from a landscape project in this area of western Härjedalen, which includes a large number of palynological analyses. Human impact is discerned already in the late Neolithic or early Bronze Age, when there were even attempts to grow barley. After a long period of abandonment, permanent settlements were established again around the birth of Christ and included both cultivation and stock-raising. Königsson does not mention a contraction in the Merovingian period (Königsson 1984, 1986).

Hedningagärdet in Tännäs parish forms part of this settlement system, but can also be partly compared to Ängersjö. The site was described as abandoned already in the 17th century when the first written data appear, but there are extensive

traces of cultivation in the form of terraces and clearance cairns, as well as house remains. This site has been partly investigated during three seasons (Hansson, unpubl. 1992, 1995, forthcoming), and the datings gives evidence of a colonization phase in the Viking Age (9th–10th centuries), while dated building remains were from the 13th–14th centuries. Osteological material from a 12th century building and two waste heaps, from the 12th and 14th centuries respectively, have been examined and elucidate the complementary economy but also a marked shift from a basic reliance on hunting (mainly wild reindeer was found, but also elk, roe deer, bear, beaver and capercaillie) to a mainly agrarian subsistence with live-stock raising (Eriksson, unpubl. 1995). A macrofossil analysis from the same contexts shows that barley was cultivated. Finds of *Chenopodium album* imply manured fields (Oscarsson 1994). Hansson (1995), in describing the economy of the site, uses the concept “hunting agriculture” (jaktjordbruk), which is very explicatory. The Viking Age settlement of western Härjedalen is seen by most scholars as naturally westward oriented, i.e. a Norwegian settlement.

In Lillhärda parish, Härjedalen, there is a site called Slyos (also called Lövnäsvalen), which has been identified as the place called *Sliarosvellir* in a 13th-century written source (ST I, p. 245), which relates a tradition about the first settler of Härjedalen, a Norwegian named Herjulfr hornbrioter (“the horn-breaker”) in the time of Halvdan Svarte, a saga ruler in 9th-century Vestfold. After Herjulfr, fifteen generations of descendants are mentioned. The eighth descendant is said to have been the first to build a church in Härjedalen. This may be taken as an explanatory tale for certain elements in the local 13th-century landscape, and Herjulfr himself is of little relevance. The important thing is the early notion of ancientness. At the site a large amount of metal finds have been made, displaying typical Viking Age/medieval forms (Ahlund 1948, pp. 43–60; Bergström, Magnusson & Raihle 1990, pp. 56–

57). A small-scale investigation was carried out in 1993 and charcoal from a hearth was dated to the late Viking Age (Heinerud 1994).

In Dalarna, a number of palynological investigations at shieling sites during the last few years have yielded very interesting results. At the Trygåsvalen shieling in Särna parish (before 1645 a Norwegian parish) there are clear signs of human impact from about AD 1000. A charcoal layer, which probably signifies burn-clearing, is part of the evidence, but most clearly the impact can be discerned in the pollen record. The site is interpreted as having been a summer pasture shieling also in the 11th century, but there was some cultivation of barley at the site as well. Also pollen from sedges increases dramatically at the same time. This indicates deliberate and controlled flooding in order to favour the growth of these fodder plants, and three ancient dams can actually be seen in the area (Segerström, Hörnberg & Bradshaw 1996, pp. 44 f.). Similar results have come from investigations at Läde in Mora parish and at Stor-Flen, Nås parish, but they have not yet been published (Segerström 1995, and M. Emanuelsson pers. com.).

The evidence may be 100–200 years earlier in Dalarna, Härjedalen and Jämtland, than in Ängersjö, but it all seems to be part of the same process. It is interesting to note that most of the Dalarna evidence stems from sites of a typical shieling character. It may seem adventurous to connect the shieling data with data from sedentary settlements like Hedningagårdet, Svedäng and Fagmon, but the Ängersjö material shows that this connection could be quite relevant. In Ängersjö we have a series of datings from both the village and the shieling sites, giving us strong indications that the process of colonization and the establishment of shielings in the outlands were contemporary phenomena – and most probably parts of the same socio-economic structure.

It is often assumed that the shieling system was established in the late Middle Ages (see e.g. Ersgård & Hållans 1996, pp. 25 f.). Hedblom

(1960) and Szabó (1992) in their encyclopaedic overviews acknowledge the possibility of medieval origins, but stress the fact that reliable evidence only exist from the end of the Middle Ages. Montelius, in his short summary of the state of research up to the 1970s (1977, pp. 7 ff.), inclines towards an early medieval dating, but reflects the very common assumption that shielings represent a development secondary to the emergence of the home villages.

The new results from Dalarna and Ängersjö show that the general working hypothesis should be that the shieling system was established in the 11th–13th centuries, if not earlier, as an integrated part of the marked colonization wave in the forested interior. The fact that traces of cultivation can be found in shieling sites does not imply that they are permanent settlements rather than shielings. Bodwall's studies of the *bodland* system in Hälsingland (Bodwall 1959) clearly point to the fact that these systems were far more complicated than just consisting of the mutually exclusive elements of permanent homestead and seasonal shieling for the livestock herding. Our problem is that we as archaeologists accept a definition of shielings founded on ethnological documentation in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, thus depriving ourselves of the diachronic, processual perspective.

Discussion

Despite all the inherent difficulties in using ^{14}C , such as the age of the organic matter itself before burning, the sampling bias (including the possibility that if the charcoal emanates from swidden cultivation, we may have a number of subsequent burnings over some period of time that are not distinguishable in the stratigraphy), the fairly wide probability ranges and the difficulties of the dating method itself, there is a high coherence in the datings obtained so far.

In all the eleven trenches the stratigraphical sequence is the same. We can not rule out the possibility that one or two charcoal horizons

derive from forest fires, but if such a stratigraphy is found wherever one trenches a positive lynchet, that risk must be considered small. With the coherence in datings obtained in Ängersjö, it must be seen as negligible.

It is very interesting to note the early datings from the "swidden" sites in the south-east, of course. Nothing is self-evident in this case, though. First of all, we can not follow the names beyond the 19th century. Secondly, the place-names with the *sved* element need not imply slash-and-burn cultivation. *Sved*-names are known from 14th-century written sources (*swidhium*, 1324, Hanebo parish, Hälsingland being the earliest), but there is no consensus as to what these names stand for. That slash-and-burn cultivation (swidden cultivation) was common in medieval Sweden stands beyond doubt. Six of the provincial laws from the decades around 1300 have regulations about accidental forest fire caused by swidden cultivation, as indeed also the first national law from ca. 1350. The law of Dalarna mentions swidden for growing turnips (Holmbäck & Wessén 1936, p. 62), the national law mentions rye (*Bær man eeld til skoghs, vil brænna rughrypio, kol alla apra brænno...*) (MEL, p. 120), but there are alternative aims for burning the forest. Myrdal has attempted to structure the terminology by distinguishing between slash-and-burn cultivation, clearance burning, burning to improve the grazing and "burn-cleaning", the last one being used mainly in south Scandinavian deciduous forest meadows (Myrdal 1995, p. 6). In the case of the medieval *sved*-names any one of the first three categories could apply, and this is also the case for the south-eastern outfields of Ängersjö. It is likely, even, that all three types were applied in Ängersjö, even though they might be assigned to different periods. The "swidden" sites might also have got their names long after the burnings that resulted in the dated charcoal horizons. The 1639 map with its compilation of Finnish settlements, the name Härkbacken in living village tradition, and the hearth dating from the 17th or 18th century at

the site, might indicate a Finnish slash-and-burn phase in the 17th century.

In comparing with the available palynological results, it is very probable that the lower charcoal horizon in trench 5 (Fig. 3), which got a Celtic Iron Age dating, is the result of burning to improve the grazing in the area (even though there is a slight probability that we are dealing with a natural forest fire). The charcoal horizons with medieval and later datings, which all seem to have resulted in permanent fields, are likely to be the result of clearance burning, even though some, and perhaps the ones from the "swidden" sites, could have been slash-and-burn cultivations at the very beginning and later were converted into permanent fields.

We may hypothetically discern an early phase of settlement, represented by the 13th-century datings, which was later restructured into the first stages of the pattern that we can study today. This must have happened at least during the late Middle Ages. The village, as it grew in population and needed to expand the arable, developed new land around the edges of the infield area. The introduction of the two-course rotation system (which happened before the earliest map from 1639) of course necessitated further substantial extension of the arable land. Being surrounded by wetlands the villagers had to expand northwards, which the comparatively late dating from Kröjars (trench 6) seems to corroborate, but also to break new grounds outside the wetland ring in the form of outfields. In the 17th century some of these edged up against the delimiting ridge in the north-west, and others followed in the next century.

How do these results relate to the agrarian crisis issue? Ängersjö is not very far from some of the areas in Jämtland where Salvesen found evidence of extensive desertion; about one-third of all the farms in Hackås parish were abandoned and in western Jämtland the figure was around 50% (Salvesen 1979, pp. 154 ff.; cf. also Selinge 1972). On the other hand, Magnusson (1986, pp. 129 ff.) provides figures for the number of

farms in Jämtland in the 11th and the 16th centuries, showing that in spite of the extensive desertion a dramatic increase in settlements took place during the course of the Middle Ages.

We have no reliable figures for Härjedalen, but we know of several deserted farms (Annflon, Hedningagärdet, etc.) and even in Medelpad and Ångermanland, deserted farms are not unknown. Hälsingland, on the other hand, has been shown with all probability by Brink to have had a very low desertion rate (Brink 1990).

It may be too early to speculate about whether and how Ängersjö was affected by the agrarian crisis. So far no evidence for an agrarian crisis exists. The clearance datings from the 14th and 15th centuries may perhaps even indicate a continuous expansion through the Middle Ages. The issue will hopefully be elucidated by palynological research in the future.

If we may presume that Ängersjö as a settlement was established around 1200 AD, or at least during the course of the 13th century, a comparison with written sources could have been of interest – had there been any. As stated initially, Hogdal parish was mentioned in 1406 for the first time and Ängersjö only after the end of the Middle Ages. There is, however, one set of documents relating to the region and originating in the late 13th and early 14th century. From ca. 1273 there are six provisions in a parchment codex defining the border between the Swedish and the Norwegian kingdoms (ST I, pp. 242 ff.; Ahnlund 1948, pp. 191 ff.). Two of these, nos. 3 and 4, concern the border between Hälsingland and Härjedalen. Some of the border marks have been identified and it seems that the indicated borderline very closely follows the border that ultimately was changed in 1645 (which is still the border between the historical provinces). The border marks around Härjedalen are closer together than the ones along the more northerly and southerly parts of the border, which reflects that the decisions were taken at the *allting* – the judicial assembly – in Sveg, but possibly also that the border in this area connects to established

outland rights. One of the two records concerning the area has the heading *þetta landamære hafua Jämtar ok Helsingiar halldet sidan londen varo bygd* (These borders have been kept by the Jämts and the Hälsings ever since the lands were first settled). The other one starts: *þætta var boret ok suoret vm landa mære ok ramerki mellim Noregs konongs rikis ok Swia konongs i Sueigi i Heriardale a alþingi* (This was testified and attested about borders and border marks between the realms of the Norwegian king and the Swedish king at the *althing* in Sveg in Härjedalen).

In one of the preserved manuscripts of the provincial law for Hälsingland, codified some time between 1320 and 1340, probably in the 1320s, there is an addendum to the Code of Judicial Procedure called "About Borders". It starts: *Swa skifptis landum II konungæ mellum* (Thus the land is divided between two kings) (Holmbäck & Wessén 1940, pp. 398, 408 ff.). This document states another borderline than the 1270s document. In the area of our present concern it runs 4–8 km west of the older line, claiming most of Överhogdal parish (all of the settled area) and the eastern half of Älvros parish (including most of the settled area). We may presume this to be a Swedish pretension line (cf. Hellbom 1990, pp. 106 ff.). All through the 15th century this pretension turns up in the various border conflicts indicated in the contemporary documents.

What has all this to do with the colonization process? Well, one of the interesting details in the documents is that one of the border marks of the 1270s line is at the very place where Haverö parish church in Medelpad was built. Another of the six borderline references, no. 5, dealing with the eastern border of Jämtland, mentions the Haverö church site: *i Hafra austan aat kirkiunni*, but the two references mentioned above do not. The church itself is first mentioned by name in a 1366 source, but an annex church under Borgsjö is mentioned in 1314 and this is in all probability Haverö (DS, no. 1946). Similarly, one of the border marks of the Swedish pre-

tension line mentioned in the Hälsingland laws is very close to the site where later Älvros parish church in Härjedalen was built, probably in the 1570s.

Överhogdal is mentioned as a newly built chapel in 1466 (JHD II:1, no. 47). This corresponds well with the first known mention of the name form Ytterhogdal (*ytrahoadall*; JHD 1, no. 208) in 1432, distinguishing the nearer Swedish parish from the more distant Norwegian one. (There is no doubt that Överhogdal was named from the Hälsingland side; *över* means upper and *yttre* means outer, but they also have the meaning of farther and nearer respectively.) One must ask whether or not there is a dialectic between colonization and border formation in this area. What was the aim of building churches like Haverö and Älvros at the sites chosen? We can possibly interpret it as the underpinning of a claim by building a symbolic and manifest monument, which in itself was a centre-point rather than a border marker.

A working hypothesis for future research

With the data now available, one dares to put forth a working hypothesis, which of course must be tested against future empirical data, but which can nevertheless help us to understand something of the process that led forth to the present village of Ängersjö. The story of Ängersjö might very tentatively read like this.

The rich fishing and hunting milieu of lakes Ängersjön and Öjingen and other lesser waters (which have been utilized since around 5000 BC by Mesolithic groups) was possibly being used by a group of livestock-herdsmen from around 1600 BC. These herders could have been the direct descendants of the hunter-gatherers of the area, which would be in line with the processual model presented by Selinge (1982), but no evidence for such an assumption can be put forth as yet. They may also have come seasonally from

some place outside the area. It is impossible to say from where, but a fair guess is from somewhere lower down the river Ljusnan or maybe even its tributary Voxnan. Sedentary Iron Age settlement, as deduced from graves, is known along Ljusnan up to a point about 50 km from Ängersjö and along Voxnan to a point about 80 km from Ängersjö, as the crow flies. Comparatively few palynological investigations have been published from the area, but evidence from the Voxnan valley indicates settlement in areas beyond the settlement areas marked by cemeteries as far back as the early Iron Age (Brink 1995, p. 157). The Bronze Age is more or less unknown in Hälsingland beyond the coastal belt, but future problem-oriented palynological investigations might prove that a stock-herding population already inhabited the interior of Hälsingland then. When discussing the possible origin of the Ängersjö herdsman, the barley cultivation in western Härjedalen, at the same time (Königsson 1984; 1986), must not be overlooked, however. This extensive grazing in Ängersjö might have continued all through the Bronze Age, with small impact on the environment.

In the Early Iron Age, the centuries around the birth of Christ, herdsman started clearing the area close to Lill-Ängersjön to obtain improved grazing. We may even dare to presume some type of transhumance system at work during the Later Iron Age and the Viking Age, perhaps even "proto-shielings" where Ängersjö village is now.

Such cattle herding could have improved soil fertility and around 1200 AD, or at least during the 13th century, cultivation started. It is also very likely that the first sedentary settlement at the site appeared at this time. These first settlers, the same group of people who had used the area seasonally for pasture in the Viking Age, now needed their own shielings, and so the two sites that we now know as *Gammelvallen*, and maybe also three or four other known sites with similar house structures, were established. Alternatively, some may even have been Viking Age shielings

like Ängersjö itself, which in around 1200 were taken over by the new sedentary settlement. This is quite probable at least in the case of *Gammelvallen* at lake Öjingen. Palynological work is under way regarding three of these sites and will probably provide the answers requested.

There is really no support for the idea that the settlement pattern, that we know of during the post-medieval period, was established from the start. The earliest datings so far, albeit very few, indicate that the outfields on the south-eastern outskirts of the village, which are known to have swidden names, were important for the first cultivators. Somewhat later there might have been a restructuring of the settlement. There is also one 13th-century dating from one of the present-day farm tofts, Utigår'n, and this, together with the late medieval datings from Turgår'n, Oppigår'n, Skrôbb and Backen supports the earlier working hypothesis, that the 4–6 farms around the church were the farms mentioned in the first cadastral records. The last formed of the "early six" might have been the still undivided Jopers/Kröjars, but this assumption is founded on a dating from the edge of the rather large infield area and must be corroborated by further datings closer to the farm tofts. This farm was divided, probably in the early 17th century, into the two farms we know today. In the 18th century Norrgår'n was established and in the early 19th century Väst i Ås'n. The village attained cadastral stability in the 16th century, and from that period on historical sources lend some support to the archaeological results.

This has raised a number of new questions, which future research will have to answer. Palaeobotany will play a crucial part in the future too. The hypothesis presented here, that cultivation started in the 13th century, is put forth supported by the 1986 palynological results, but new palaeobotanical analyses are required before we can totally rule out the possibility of a slightly earlier start or, on the other hand, that the medieval datings also stem from clearance for grazing. It will be necessary to complete the

picture by trying to find evidence of the settlement that we now presume was established around 1200 AD. This is especially important in the light of the results from the “swidden sites” in the south-east of the village.

Also putting Ängersjö in a wider context has far-reaching implications. What made the Ängersjö settlement successful enough to survive in a time of crisis, when settlements like Hedningagärdet, Slyos, Annflon and a large number of farms in Jämtland were abandoned? We do not know, but a study of successful settlements would certainly give new impetus to the discussion of desertion.

The 13th-century settlers did not settle in a completely virgin land. In some sense it was already theirs. Nevertheless, Ängersjö was part of a marked wave of colonization, in the marginal lands of the southern taiga region of what is now Sweden, during the 10th–13th centuries. This antedates the colonization efforts governed by elite core-groups that we know of from the early 14th century (cf. Wallerström 1995). It even antedates the presence of state power itself in the area (Mogren 1996). The early medieval colonization of the margin, as is indicated from Ängersjö, Hedningagärdet, Vassnäs and other sites, was undertaken by local groups unbounded by elite aspirations.

Such a fact can also revitalize the discussion about who laid out borderlines through the forest in those days, local communities or states. The 1270s agreement about the border between Norway and Sweden could be interpreted in this light as a compilation of documents of originally regional concern, which was used by the core elites when fixed borderlines between the realms were being negotiated. At the same time or somewhat later core elites underpinned conflicting pretensions by erecting manifest monuments in the form of churches. In spite of later border pretensions from both states, however, it was, with minor exceptions, the early borderline that was finally established as the line that we know as the pre-1645 state border. We may

interpret this as a result of already established and locally respected outland rights. Thus, in one sense, the will of local populations might have been decisive when national borders were finally fixed.

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