

Borders, Margins, Fringes: archaeologies on/from the Edge

The Nordic-TAG has now for more than a quarter of a century acted as one the most poignant forums for cutting-edge debate in Scandinavian archaeology. At the time of its establishment, and for a long period thereafter, theoretical archaeology was regarded rather peripheral within the general archaeological discourse. Now times have changed. Theoretical archaeology has earned a more central place within the discipline. Yet, is it not paradoxical to consider archaeological theory in terms of the mainstream or something generally accepted? Must theory not waltz at the margins of the mainstream debate? Is it not mandatory that theoretical debate transverses all conventionalities?

In 2013 the NTAG will for the first time visit the margins of the Nordic world when the 13th TAG conference will be held in Reykjavik, Iceland. As a consequence of the location the conference will focus on the concepts of *Borders*, *Margins* and *Fringes* and how they have penetrated archaeological debate from various angles and perspectives, equally addressing their involvement in relations to geography, culture, society and the academic discourse in general, as well as critically scrutinizing the application of these issues within the scholarship. This session will act as a warm-up for the NTAG in Iceland in 2013. Hence, people are invited to contribute papers that touch upon the theme from a multitude of vantage points.

Chairs:

Kristján Mímísson & Steinunn Kristjánsdóttir, University of Iceland

sjk[at]hi.is

Life on the Edge: Identity and Interaction in the Land of Ulúa and the Maya World

The lower Ulúa valley region of northwestern Honduras was part of a zone of cultural transition in which patterns of Maya communities to the west blended with and eventually gave way to non-Mesoamerican patterns of the east and south. The developmental trajectory of Ulúa societies follows the same course and timing as that in the Maya world and shares features ranging from the ball game to iconographic elements, but the absence of such traits as hieroglyphic texts and monumental political sculpture created the notion that the "Mayoid" Ulúa people were marginally successful imitators of their grander western neighbors. They are often characterized as peripheral to a Maya core or cores; this

has wide-ranging consequences for discourse on identity and cultural affiliation among populations in the southeastern fringe of Mesoamerica. Archaeology in the region reveals prosperous societies deeply entangled with their western neighbors and offers no indication they constituted an impoverished peasantry subordinated to a Maya core. Understanding the relationships among societies in eastern Mesoamerica requires recognition of multiple Ulúa and Maya identities; this entails reconsideration of archaeological taxa and their relationships to identity, plus consideration of how contemporary scholarship fosters the illusion of an absolute core-periphery dichotomy in the region.

Kathryn Marie Hudson, University at Buffalo

khudson[at]buffalo.edu

John S. Henderson, Cornell University

jsh6[at]cornell.edu

British ceramics on the Nordic margins: Creamware marketing in 19th century Northern Finland

In 1822, a devastating town fire sealed a large ceramic assemblage from a store in the town of Oulu in northern Finland. Excavations of the merchant's stock recovered several hundred kilograms of ceramics almost entirely composed of undecorated creamware, whose consumption and popularity had nearly ended in the Atlantic World over a decade earlier. The assemblage reveals the global complexities in the international ceramics trade in the early 19th century, illuminates how particular mass-produced commodities reached geographically peripheral markets, underscores distinctive European market and consumption influences, and lays the groundwork to examine consumption and marginality in markets like Oulu.

Paul R. Mullins, Indiana University-Purdue University, Indianapolis

paulmull[at]iupui.edu

Timo Ylimaunu & Titta Kallio-Seppä, University of Oulu

Archaeological grey reports and future

The dissemination of research results is essential to merit scientifically but it is not always needed to work as a field archaeologist, if it is not required in the work practice. The general outcome of the archaeological excavation is the report, which often remains as unpublished grey literature. It is a necessary prerequisite for the publication, but grey reports are often neglected in archaeological scientific discussion. The reports operate as access point to the data recorded during the field work and

their content varies. They are products of unique processes, including pre-planning, field and post-excavation processes, which comprise invisible phases before, during and after excavation such as selection, fragmentation, interpretation and negotiation related to material. The reports form the rich but heterogeneous ensemble constituted from diverse data sets. The reports have a history as a document, but development relating *digitalization*, data integration, open access and *e-infrastructures* will have an impact on them in future. This creates possibilities for dissemination and new representations of the data, but it faces also challenges. Increased use of technologies may affect the archaeological data selection and interpretation processes. Are these topics discussed within archaeological literature and related future strategies globally?

Teija Oikarinen, Archaeology, University of Oulu/ Student in Finnish Master Degree Programme in Information Systems, University of Oulu
teija.oikarinen[at]oulu.fi

Skriðuklaustur: a monastic space on the margin of Medieval Europe

Research on monasticism has for long centred upon an empirical examination on the architecture of monastic houses and the uniformity of their planning. The growth of theoretical awareness in archaeological research during the recent decades has changed this emphasis, particularly with emergence of the approaches of post-colonialism and the concepts of materiality and hybridisation. At present, monastic space is not only regarded as being based on architecture or certain written rules and orders, but also on their materiality and meanings. The monastic space is commonly compounded by certain spatial gradations of holiness – fixed material or imagined – but independently from the geographical or social location. Accordingly, this paper will be devoted to the discussion on the materiality of the monastic space as being a product of the contextual culture and social landscape. The recently finished excavation on the ruins of the late medieval monastery at Skriðuklaustur, East Iceland, will here be used as an example on the metaphoric space of monasticism at the margin of Medieval Europe.

Steinunn Kristjánsdóttir, docent University of Iceland & National Museum of Iceland
sjk[at]hi.is