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Swedish Rock Art Series: Volume 6

North Meets South

Theoretical Aspects on the
Northern and Southern Rock Art
Traditions in Scandinavia

Edited by

Peter Skoglund, Johan Ling &
Ulf Bertilsson

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*Front cover: Rock paintings at Cuttle Lake, Western Ontario, Canada (after G. Rajnovich);
and rock paintings at River Olekma, Eastern Siberia (after P. Okladnikov and A. I. Mazin).*

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Swedish Rock Art Series

Bronze Age rock art represents a unique Nordic contribution to world culture, and more than 17,000 localities are known in Sweden alone. They constitute one of the World's most complex and well-preserved imageries. Centered in the World Heritage site of Tanum in western Sweden, the Swedish Rock Art Research Archives (Svenskt Hällristnings Forsknings Arkiv - SHFA), at the University of Gothenburg was established in 2006 to further documentation and research on this unique Bronze Age heritage. All original documentation - from large rubbings to photos are being digitized and along with modern digital documentations made continuously accessible for international research on the web portal www.shfa.se. Based on this material Swedish Rock Art Series will present ongoing research and new documentation in the years to come.

Kristian Kristiansen
Series editor

Johan Ling
Director SHFA

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Swedish Rock Art Series 6: North meets south. Theoretical aspects on the northern and southern rock art traditions in Scandinavia

Peter Skoglund, Johan Ling and Ulf Bertilsson (eds)

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List of contributors

ULF BERTILSSON
Swedish Rock Art Research Archives (SHFA)
University of Gothenburg
Department of Historical Studies,
Archaeology
P.O. Box 100
S-405 30 Gothenburg, Sweden
ulf@shfa.se

JAN MAGNE GJERDE
Department of Archaeology, History,
Religious Studies and Theology
UiT – The Arctic University of Norway
Postboks 6050 Langnes
9037 Tromsø, Norway
jan.magne.gjerde@uit.no

FLEMMING KAUL
The National Museum of Denmark
Ancient Cultures of Denmark and the
Mediterranean
Frederiksholms Kanal 12
DK-1220 Copenhagen K., Denmark
Flemming.Kaul@natmus.dk

ANTTI LAHELMA
Institute of Archaeology
Department of Philosophy,
History, Culture and Art Studies
University of Helsinki
P.O. Box 59
00014 University of Helsinki, Finland
antti.lahelma@helsinki.fi

JOHAN LING
Swedish Rock Art Research Archives (SHFA)
University of Gothenburg
Department of Historical Studies,
Archaeology
P.O. Box 100
S-405 30 Gothenburg, Sweden
johan.ling@archaeology.gu.se

TROND LØDØEN
Section for Cultural Heritage Management
University Museum of Bergen
P.O. Box 7800
5020 Bergen, Norway
trond.lodoen@uib.no

ANNE LENE MELHEIM
Museum of Cultural History, Department
of Archaeology
University of Oslo
P.O. Box 6762
St. Olavs plass
0130 Oslo, Norway
a.l.melheim@khm.uio.no

PETER SKOGLUND
Linnaeus University
Department of Cultural Sciences,
Archaeology
391 82 Kalmar, Sweden
peter.m.skoglund@lnu.se

HEIDRUN STEBERGLØKKEN
NTNU Vitenskapsmuseet
7491 Trondheim, Norway
heidrun.steberglokken@ntnu.no

Introduction

Peter Skoglund and Johan Ling

The Swedish Rock Art Research Archives (SHFA) were established in 2006 as an infrastructure to further documentation and research on Swedish rock art. The archive, which is part of the University of Gothenburg, aims to store and present existing rock art documentation for public and research.

SHFA is also a research institute promoting research on rock art in Scandinavia and beyond. The archive publishes the Swedish Rock Art Series, aiming to present research on Scandinavian rock art to an international audience. An initiative to facilitate and strengthen this process is to arrange international symposia targeting Bronze Age imagery.

The current volume, which is number 6 in the series, is the outcome of the second international symposium under the heading *North meets South* held in Tanum, Sweden, 21–23 October 2014. The title of the volume, *North meets South. Theoretical aspects on the northern and southern rock art traditions in Scandinavia*, was chosen to put a focus on Scandinavian rock art regardless of regions and traditions.

There has been a tendency in rock art research to merely focus on either the Northern Tradition (NT) or the Southern Tradition (ST) of rock art and there is a need to broaden the discussion. Thus, the aim of this symposium was to stimulate different perspectives and themes that focused on the intersection between these traditions.

However, it is important to stress that there are obvious differences in space and time regarding these two traditions. Yet there are also some features and formats in common in time and space, and a significant theme of the conference was to highlight the interaction between these rock art traditions. Various aspects of this theme are reflected in this publication, which gathers nine researchers from four different countries (Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Finland).

The papers presented in this volume fall into two broad categories. There are papers dealing with issues concerning categorization and style – *i.e.* presupposed concepts that shape the way we comprehend data and organize the material in various traditions (Lødøen, Stebergløkken). There are also papers taking their starting point in the images themselves, trying to elucidate possible influences and interaction between different regions and rock art traditions (Bertilsson Kaul, Melheim and Ling, Skoglund, Gerde, Lahelma).

In his paper, *Trond Lødøen* questions the still predominant tendency to categorize Scandinavian rock art into just two traditions, associated with hunting societies on the one hand and farming societies on the other. Using the Norwegian material, Lødøen discusses a number of aspects associated with this categorization. He questions both the background for the separation exclusively into these two traditions and the possible interaction between them, and argues in favour of a much more developed and nuanced classification of the still expanding bulk of rock art. Furthermore, Lødøen argues that the standard categorization into two major traditions has hindered researchers from discussing other possible interconnections such as similarities between rock art in western Norway and rock art in southern Europe reflecting possible interconnections across the Atlantic.

An interesting characteristic of central Norway is the meeting between the Northern and the Southern Traditions. In this region, the different traditions coexist not just in this macro-perspective, but also side by side at the same sites – occasionally even in the same panels. The region is a perfect setting to study the interaction between the two traditions. Based on a thorough definition of style and type, *Heidrunn Stebergløkken* identifies various sub-groups in the material and argues that meetings between various socio-cultural groups actually took place at least at some of the locales in central Norway.

Lene Melheim and *Johan Ling* argue that the strong maritime focus in south Scandinavian Bronze Age rock art could be seen as a fusion of two different maritime legacies. The first legacy relates to the north Scandinavian hunter-gatherer tradition of making rock art at maritime locations in the landscape and the second major impact relates to Bell Beaker influence in southern Scandinavia. By incorporating two different maritime legacies on both a practical and a symbolic level, the societies in southern Scandinavia created new

maritime institutions which enabled them to enter and participate actively in the maritime exchange networks of the Nordic Bronze Age. The authors regard the institutionalization of this particular kind of maritime-ness as a crucial feature, a doxa for the reproduction of the Nordic Bronze Age societies.

Ulf Bertilsson focus on the rock carvings at Nämforsen. Although some researchers have pointed to similarities to the Southern Tradition, the notion that the carvings belong to the Stone Age and the northern hunting and trapping culture is firmly established. A difficulty then rises from the fact that the two adjacent settlements, Ställverket and Råinget, were most intensively settled in the Bronze Age i.e. after the period carvings are considered to have occurred. Moreover, bronze casting was done at Råinget. The coastal burial cairns from the Bronze Age largely contemporary with these settlements may also be connected to the carvings. A special type of manned ships resembling the SN Nag type occurs in 'strategic positions'. The explanation for these phenomena is the advancing Bell Beaker culture that also left its mark in the form of a very typical flint arrowhead at Ställverket, indicating that the area was drawn into a growing network of trade and exchange in the Bronze Age.

Jan Magne Gjerde takes boat typology as a starting point for his essay, which compares boat images from the Northern and Southern Traditions. Traditionally, the history of research on rock art in Scandinavia has a clear division between the (northern) hunter and the (southern) agrarian rock art traditions. In light of new discoveries of boat motifs in northern Scandinavia this paper argues that new data call for a re-evaluation of the strict divisions based on the economy, geography and time of the boat motif. This paper proceeds from the Stone Age boat depictions in northernmost Europe and is an attempt to nuance this strict north-south division and point out some possible relations between the two traditions.

In his paper, *Antti Lahelma* concludes that even though the southern and northern rock art traditions partially overlap in both space and time, and show some evidence of communication and interaction, the scholarly traditions rarely do, but tend to interpret each type of rock art according to models that seem oblivious to each other. This paper examines the 'sun ship' in the context of the northern Scandinavian 'hunter' rock art. Russian and North American scholars have pointed out parallels to the same motif also in the rock art of other regions of the northern circumpolar zone. However,

scholars studying the Southern Tradition have associated this motif with elements of Indo-European mythology, and its roots have been traced to the Mediterranean world and Ancient Egypt. By discussing and comparing these different models Lahelma points out the danger of being too restricted to only one research model or one geographic area.

Flemming Kaul takes his starting point in the rich evidence of long-distance exchange and communication between southern Scandinavia and examines the possible influences between southern Scandinavian rock art and the Mediterranean. Kaul's paper asks what kinds of mechanisms made these connections possible. He argues that the ancient Greek (and Homeric) concept of guest-friendship, *xenia*, may give us an idea of those social mechanisms that would make the transportation of people and goods practically feasible. This concept can also be used to understand the long-distance connections, which seem to be reflected by specific shapes or types of ships in Late Bronze Age rock carvings – from Alta in northernmost Norway to Bottna in central Bohuslän – could be understood in terms of the *xenia* concept. Here, well-established guest-friendship connections would make long-distance maritime journeys possible.

Peter Skoglund discusses the occurrence of axe images at Simrishamn in Scania and at Stonehenge in Wessex, all of which can be dated to the Arretton phase/Montelius' period 1, 1750/1700–1500 BC. These two concentrations are the only major clusters of axe images in northern Europe dating to this time, and some of the images demonstrate similarities in style and design. In order to understand this situation, an interpretation is put forward implying that these two areas were linked by a network of people who traded in metal and amber. The function and value of amber and metal was, however, different in the two areas. It is argued that differences in the conceptualization of metal are reflected in the ways axe images are arranged and displayed in Wessex and in Scania.

A major conclusion to be drawn from the symposium is the great complexity and variation of rock art in Scandinavia and the need for a perspective comparing various regions in Europe and beyond. By bringing together scholars from various parts of Scandinavia, and publishing the contributions in this volume, we hope we have been able to demonstrate the potential for further research along these paths.

Chapter 1

The Meaning and Use(-fulness) of Traditions in Scandinavian Rock Art Research

Trond Klungseth Lødøen

Abstract: The paper questions the still predominant tendency to categorise Scandinavian prehistoric rock art into just two traditions, associated with hunting societies on the one hand and farming societies on the other. More than a century ago, the iconography from this part of Europe was separated into 'South Scandinavian' and 'North Scandinavian' rock art. Later on, the terms hunters' and agrarian rock art came into use, together with

other variants, before these were reconceptualised into the ‘Northern and Southern Traditions’ in the 1930s. Despite the fact that hundreds of sites have been rediscovered since the first categorisation, we are still left with just two major groups of rock art in Scandinavia. Researchers have also argued in favour of merging the two traditions and even of interaction between them, but this has often been challenged by the widely-separated dating of the supposed traditions. This paper, which takes its point of departure in the Norwegian material, discusses a number of aspects associated with this categorisation, questions both the background for the separation exclusively into these two traditions as well as the possible interaction between them, and argues in favour of a much more developed and nuanced classification of the still expanding bulk of rock art. This will be thoroughly problematised, as it will be argued that some of the sites normally labelled within the Northern Tradition, at least in Western Norway, share a number of features and elements with rock art of the Atlantic tradition of central and southern Europe, thus indicating a potential interaction between Scandinavia and southern Europe at the end of the Late Mesolithic. This adds to other supposed influences from north-eastern and eastern Europe, thereby challenging the background for both the Southern and the Northern Traditions as clearly defined and consistent traditions.

Key words: Cup and Ring Tradition, Rock art, traditions, dating, contemporaneity, Northern and Southern Tradition, Atlantic and Megalithic art.

Background

The following discussion takes its point of departure in the symposium ‘Where North Meets South – Methods and Theory in Interpreting Rock Art Traditions’, in which contributors were also encouraged to highlight potential interaction between these traditions. For many years, Scandinavian rock art has been categorised into two basic traditions that are assumed to have northern and a southern geographical backgrounds respectively. Apart from their opposing points of origin, it has been argued that they are the result of different types of cultures and ideologies, although the nature of

the societies behind the imagery is not always fully brought to light when analysing the iconography, something that is often out of reach when only the images are analysed. This has resulted in a considerable amount of relativism in studies of rock art. However, the traditional view has been that the rock art that is claimed to be of northern origin was developed by an indigenous hunter-gather-fisher population, while the other type of tradition, with an assumed southern origin, was produced by a culture with another set of ideas that was introduced to Scandinavia from outside (Sognnes 2001: 13). However, the varied character of the iconography means that it is far from clear what the shared and unifying features within each of the different traditions actually were, and therefore these crude assumptions and categorisations are questioned.

What is the significance of rock art traditions?

What exactly is implied by the idea of ‘traditions’ when it comes to prehistoric rock art? Is it the similarity between individual figures, or the shared codex represented by the numerous compilations of images, also understood as narratives, spread over a certain geographical area? The societies and ideologies behind the iconography are still of an uncertain nature, and clearly the more or less inaccessible ideas behind the imagery. From the literature, it seems to me on the one hand that a ship equals the ‘Southern Tradition’, which equals farming societies and their ideology, and so we can immediately question why ship images should be associated with agriculture and farming. On the other hand, naturalistically outlined animals equal the ‘Northern Tradition’, something which for decades our modern Cartesian world view has tended to equate with subsistence, economy and hunting, and whose mission also seems to be accomplished when it comes to the meaning of the rock art. There have been a number of suggestions as to how to understand the imagery at the hunters’ sites, but it is often only the sites that are considered, being interpreted as hunting grounds, aggregation places or assembly sites, as the iconography itself is more difficult to decipher. Analyses of the iconography of the Northern Tradition have tended to focus mainly on the animals, causing interpretations to be associated with hunting, emphasising the reluctance to move beyond the

idea of animals only as game. In the same way as the previous concept, the Northern Tradition is used as a type of all-encompassing description for most rock art from northern Scandinavia, which despite its categorisation, varies considerably in its form and nature within this area, something that causes me a number of problems, and this is why I believe we are far from having a clear understanding of the situation.

Two ruling and contrasting traditions in Scandinavia?

The departure point for our present traditions dates back to the beginning of the nineteenth century, when rock art was first divided into ‘South Scandinavian’ and ‘North Scandinavian’ rock art (Sognnes 2001: 13). These two have also been synonymous with ‘Arctic’ and ‘schematic’ art respectively, and because of the different datings of these two categories, also with ‘Stone Age’ rock art on the one hand and ‘Bronze Age’ rock art on the other. At a later stage, this separation was based more on the assumed subsistence for the societies behind the art, which divided naturalistically outlined animals into ‘hunters’ rock art, while sites with geometric motifs such as circles and spirals were classified as ‘agrarian’ rock art (Hansen 1904: 323–325; Sognnes 2001: 13). This led to highly particularised categorisations, in which individual types of motifs were believed to be either of the hunters’ or the agrarian type. Large compilations of rock art at many sites, which we now seem to be more willing to consider as narratives and more closed events, were often understood in the past as the result of the continuous adding of new figures to a rock art panel, and not necessarily by the same culture. A geometrically-shaped image amongst a number of naturalistic animals could therefore be interpreted as either the result of agrarian thoughts and ideologies added to the imagery of hunter-gatherer expressions, perhaps with the aim of altering the meaning or changing the ideological content of expressions left by a former culture, or alternatively, that those which are claimed to be more recent motifs were the result of superimpositions, made at a much later stage, and awkwardly enough without any concern for the earlier iconography the rock panels may have contained, as if the

only purpose for the rock art was to mark the presence or existence of one culture instead of another. For nearly a century, animals that were depicted or at least outlined in a naturalistic manner were categorised as hunters' art. At the other end of the scale, circles or motifs, which could not easily be associated with or identified in the material remains of hunter-gatherers, were ascribed to agriculturalists. Much later, these two groups were modified or reshaped into the Northern and Southern Traditions, and in the following discussion the latter descriptions will be used more or less synonymously with the 'hunters' and 'agrarian' rock art. Now, more than a century after the first categorisation, we are still left with just two general groups or traditions (Sognnes 2001: 13). These are supposed to categorise iconography produced over several thousand years, all over Scandinavia, into just two branches. Taking into account the number of discoveries made since they were first separated into groups, this is a case of extreme categorisation, and something I find almost counterproductive for acquiring new knowledge. What exactly do sites within the Northern Tradition have in common?

What exactly are the similarities shared by sites within the Southern Tradition, and what are the ruling premises for the different traditions? I see a clear need for more internal analysis of the rock art within these two supposed traditions before we investigate the interaction between them, because I believe that there are a number of possibilities to isolate more groups or traditions within the present number of sites – at least within the Northern Tradition, which concerns me the most. Otherwise, I am not sure if we will be able to understand what is interacting, and we should not forget that it is not the images that are interacting, but instead the societies that were responsible for them. In addition, I believe that there are similarities between the Scandinavian rock art and rock art elsewhere in Europe that should be analysed more thoroughly.

The need for a better framework for rock art categorisations

As I see it, we would benefit from a complete reconsideration of our present traditions, since I believe our goal is to try to approach the meaning behind

the rock art, which can vary considerably when our scope is northern Europe. If we consider that the spread of rock art and the meaning of the imagery is often discussed without including the contemporary context, something that is difficult to identify due to dating issues – at least in the case of the Northern Tradition – then we have a considerable way to go. The latter addresses another fundamental problem with rock art archaeology as such. In this tradition we seem to group together almost incomparable entities, with criteria of the most basic level, where images of red deer, reindeer or elk, or for that matter sea mammals, are all placed in the same group, based on the idea that as long as there are more or less wild species to be identified on the different panels, then they are considered to be from the same group or tradition – the Northern Tradition. But is this sufficient to define a tradition?

Here, these matters will be questioned in greater detail, addressing a number of basic concerns that mainly refer to what is defined as the Northern Tradition, but also going beyond its borders, balanced by a discussion of some of the iconographical features that are left for us to investigate. I will use Western Norway as my point of departure, starting with the traditional interpretation of one of our most debated sites, *Ausevik*, in the municipality of Flora, and also touching on the *Vingen* site in Bremanger, a little farther to the north, both of which are in the county of Sogn og Fjordane (Fig. 1.1). The nature of these sites will be discussed in light of other sites of the so-called Northern Tradition, and also seen in relation to a few significant rock art complexes elsewhere in Europe.

The significance of the Northern Tradition in Western Norway – or a western Norwegian variant of the Northern Tradition?

Over the last eighty years or so, the dating of the *Ausevik* site and its association with groups or traditions has varied (Lødøen 2014). When the site first became known to the public in the 1930s, the documented animal images were regarded by Johannes Bøe as being of the same type as those found in *Vingen*, and so he claimed that the site belonged to the hunters’



Figure 1.1. Map of Norway showing sites mentioned in the text.

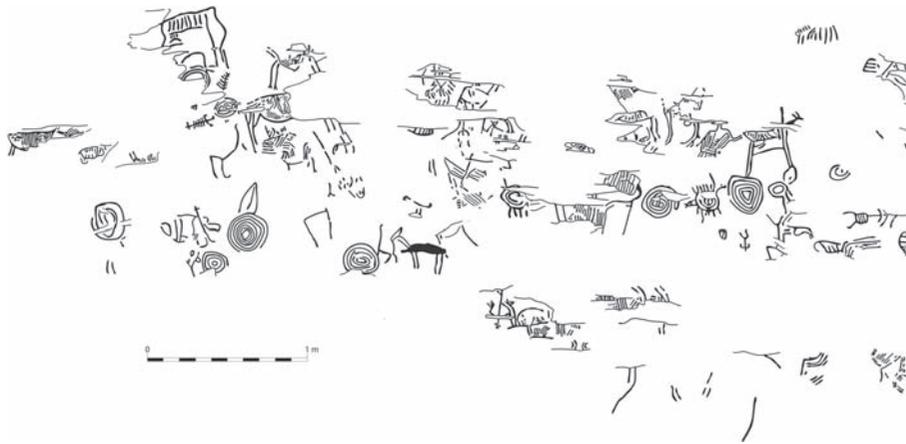


Figure 1.2. One of the many panels in Ausevik with animal images and circular combinations (after A. Hagen 1969).

type of rock art (Bøe 1932: 34–36). Thirty years later, this was questioned by Anders Hagen, who was highly occupied with cultural dualism, and accepted that all the animals depicted in the rock panels were the result of hunting groups and of the hunters' tradition, but claimed that all the geometric images must have been the result of influences from agricultural societies (Hagen 1969: 5, 79) (Fig. 1.2). However, he was not able to fully identify this and track down any provenance or a convincing origin for these motifs, either in terms of geographic areas or cultures and societies (Hagen 1969: 90–95). It is possible to read between the lines in Hagen's work that hunters were not capable of thoughts involving such abstract images as geometric shapes, despite the fact that they are present even in Palaeolithic art (Breuil and Obermaier 1935; Bégouën and Breuil 1958). In the 1970s, on the basis of stylistic similarities with the Vingen rock art, Egil Bakka argued that the site should instead be dated to the Middle Neolithic, and that the images were produced by hunting societies, while still accepting that a single foot symbol could belong to a more recent tradition (Bakka 1973: 178). It is striking to note how these researchers focused on single categories of motifs, and do not seem to have understood the compilations of images as anything more than a continuous process of adding new images to rock panels and not as narratives. This is illustrated by the attention the foot image mentioned above has received in the literature – if indeed it even is a foot image – and is also symptomatic for a number of approaches chosen throughout the history of rock art research. Later on, Eva and Per Fett focused more closely

on the geometric images – also with a strong focus on a single group of images – and introduced a completely new perspective when they tried to see similarities, relationships and a clear influence from the Megalithic art of the British Isles and Ireland at sites in Western Norway (1979: 72). A couple of decades later, in the 1990s, Eva Walderhaug revisited the site and tried to identify a series of known societal changes in the material culture of Western Norway during the Neolithic period, reflected in the imagery (1994: 81). Like the previous researchers, she also argued for an influence from Megalithic art in Ausevik, although she saw a number of challenges with the chronology of the rock art in Scandinavia in relation to the British Isles (1994: 81). Walderhaug’s occupation with the Neolithic development also led to a collaboration with Christopher Prescott, as a result of which they claimed to have identified influences from the Nordic Battle Axe culture and later the Bell Beaker culture in the iconography at Ausevik (Prescott and Walderhaug 1995: 263) (Fig. 1.3). They concluded that Ausevik was a site where hunters’ rock art or the Northern Tradition was under the influence of farming societies, leading to a rock art site that also belonged to the Southern Tradition – a transition site – while Vingen was accepted as a site that was less influenced by Neolithic cultures and where a hunters’ ideology, in the form of rock art, was more or less pure and undisturbed (Prescott and Walderhaug 1995). On the one hand it is interesting to note, as a part of these researchers’ reasoning, how the addition of a few new symbols would have completely changed the symbolic content and even the association with a tradition (Bakka 1973: 168; Prescott and Walderhaug 1995: 263). It is also interesting to note that many of the images that were considered to be the result of influence by agricultural societies or the Southern Tradition in Ausevik are also present in Vingen (Hagen 1969: 103; Bakka 1973: 157; Lødøen and Mandt 2012), but this site was never questioned as being anything other than of the Northern Tradition (*e.g.* Hagen 1969: 79; Bakka 1973: 166; Prescott and Walderhaug 1995: 268).

Altered chronologies and changed perspectives

The constantly frustrating dating of these two sites, and their attribution by researchers to such vastly different periods as the Iron Age or the

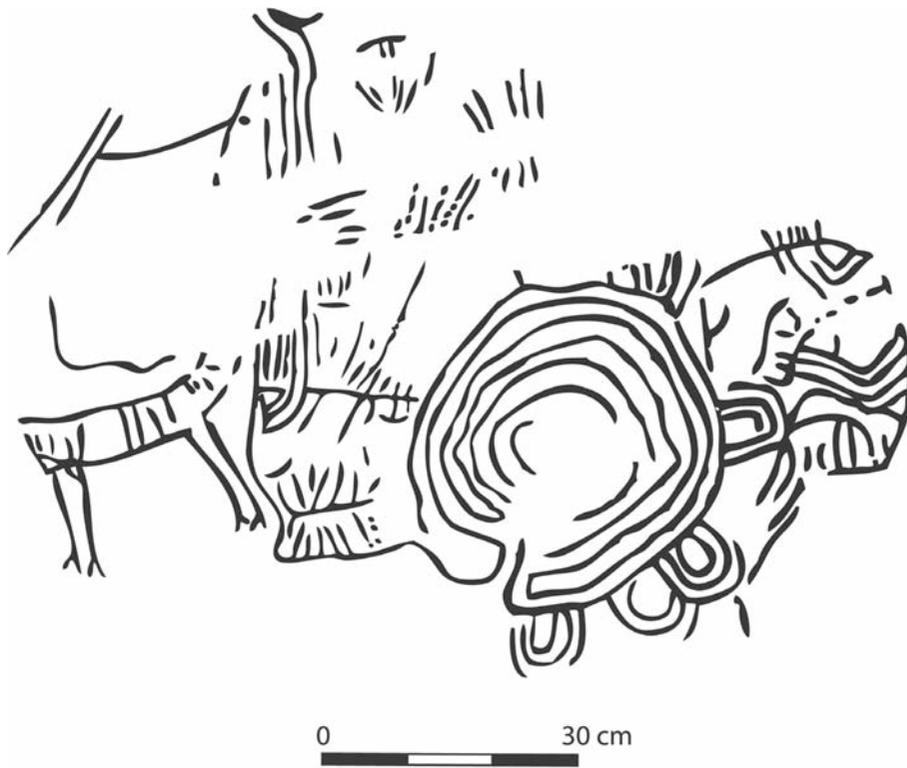


Figure 1.3. Red deer closely associated with a spiral (after A. Hagen 1969).

Bronze Age (Hagen 1969: 113) on the one hand and the Neolithic (Bakka 1973: 173) or the Mesolithic (Bakka 1979: 118; Ramstad 2000: 58) period on the other, led to a number of excavations being carried out at these sites from the 1990s onwards (Lødøen 2003, 2010, 2013, 2014). The agenda behind this approach was partly to try to bridge the gap between rock art and its contemporary material context, but also to produce new evidence, while being fully aware of the fact that the recovery of archaeological remains at these sites and in the immediate vicinity of the rock art panels could either predate the rock art or be the result of post-depositional processes (Lødøen 2013: 25). However, combined with scientific methods such as palynology and soil science, independent data documenting human impact on the environment has been used together with the archaeological material, which has produced results that support the dating of the rock art sites in question (Hjelle and Lødøen 2010).

These efforts dated the Vingen site to the end of the Late Mesolithic, between 4900 and 4200 cal BC (Lødøen 2013: 29). More surprising were the results of the archaeological excavations in Ausevik, which obtained a dating from the period between 5000 and 4600 cal BC (Lødøen 2014: 61–62), implying that the two sites are more or less contemporary, and that Ausevik could even predate the Vingen site (Lødøen 2014: 60). This once again provided a new chronological framework for the rock art of Ausevik, which at the same time was more logical in order to explain similarities in the iconography as a matter of stronger contemporaneity between Vingen and Ausevik. Even more importantly, it has provided a new point of departure for analysing the iconography within the framework of a Late Mesolithic hunting-fishing society and its ideology, and not a farming community. Both sites also suggest that important cultural changes, which have received less attention at least in these areas, took place at the end of the Late Mesolithic (Lødøen 2014, 2015a).

Sites for mortuary practice and regeneration, but for whom and how frequently?

Together with new studies of the iconography and its local distribution, I will claim that the most essential similarities between the two sites are the nature of the anthropomorphic figures, which have barely been discussed to date, and their association with the animal images. The animals are unquestionably the most recognisable and frequently appearing images, which have always received the greatest attention, while there has been less focus on the presence of anthropomorphic images, their character and location. The latter groups, found on the different rock faces, boulders or stones, are often very simple and highly stylised, although a large number of them clearly show ribs, spinal columns and often a conspicuous pelvis (Fig. 1.4). It therefore seems obvious that these were not meant to express living humans, or dead individuals, but skeletons (Lødøen 2014: 66, 2015a: 85–87). I cannot see any sensible reason why skeletons were depicted other than in association with the handling of dead members of past societies, who are clearly displayed as discarnated bodies (Lødøen 2014: 66, 2015a: 87). This has convinced me that the rock art both at Vingen and at Ausevik is not only



Figure 1.4. A herd of red deer seem to be separated from a skeleton by concentric circles. Below, a selection of skeletons from Ausevik (after A. Hagen 1969).

connected to mortuary rituals (Lødøen 2014, 2015a, 2015b), but has to do with secondary burials and the secondary treatment of corpses, something which is discussed in a number of other papers (Lødøen 2014, 2015a, 2015b). It is therefore interesting that research on mortuary practices in central Europe and southern Scandinavia clearly indicates that exarnation and subsequent disarticulation were the main mortuary processes in most parts of Europe in the Mesolithic and in the Early and Middle Neolithic, which consequently resulted in few burials (Cauwe 1988, 2001; Nilsson Stutz 2003; Grünberg 2000). However, exceptions to this practice seem to have occurred at the end of the Late Mesolithic, when a number of cemeteries appear,

and where some individuals were still being disarticulated, but only to a modest degree (Nilsson Stutz 2003). From this point on large numbers of burials have been documented – often as cemeteries – at sites such as Skateholm I and II, Scania, Sweden (Larsson 1981) and at Vedbæk, Zealand, Denmark (Albrethsen and Brinch Pettersen 1976), most of which are single inhumation graves, although there are examples where more than one individual was buried in the same grave.

The nature of these cemeteries, where none of the graves seem to overlap or interfere with each other, together with the completeness of the skeletons, seem to indicate that towards the end of the Late Mesolithic there was a greater respect for the integrity of the body (Cauwe 1988, 2001: 47; Nilsson Stutz 2003: 349). Altogether this may have been the result of religious changes, or was caused by a new cosmological understanding or potentially as the result of a changed ideology. Burials are almost completely absent in Western Norway, but a few have been found, and interestingly been dated to the Late Mesolithic, where even potential disarticulation has been documented (Jansen 1972:58; Lødøen 2014:65; 2015:93). It is therefore compelling to note that the same awareness of decomposition processes and a focus on the completeness of skeletons in the cemeteries is also reflected in the iconography at the rock art sites dated to corresponding periods at the end of the Late Mesolithic. Another interesting aspect is that red deer are a frequently occurring element in the form of antlers (Larsson 1988; Kannegaard Nielsen and Brinch Pettersen 1993; Grünberg 2000; Nilsson Stutz 2003) or bones in the graves (Griegson and Mellars 1987), which clearly parallels how skeletons are surrounded by red deer on the rock panels, emphasising the importance of this species in death processes. Therefore I consider these as potentially being ‘soul animals’ that provided the necessary circle of regeneration (Lødøen 2014, 2015a). But as regards the question of traditions, could it be understood that the societies behind the burials in south Scandinavia belonged just as much to the Northern Tradition as the Ausevik rock art, or for that reason the rock art at the Vingen site? The apparent lack of rock outcrops in the vicinity of Skateholm and Vedbæk or in southern Scandinavia may have led them to leave any iconography they considered necessary on other materials. But how does this fit with the rest of the rock art sites claimed to belong to the Northern Tradition? I will return to this question later on in this article.

The narratives at Ausevik and Vingen are also arranged in a way that may indicate death cycles or regeneration, where animals seem to be led to the sites from a western origin and then return and leave the sites towards the west again, often accompanied by skeletons (Lødøen 2014: 70, 2015a: 87–90). As already mentioned, concentric images are a frequently occurring motif in Ausevik and Vingen, as are spirals, which Hagen claimed was a more recent category (1969: 90), but which seem to be as contemporary as the rest of the imagery at the two sites, and clearly of Mesolithic origin. They are often part of narratives where they seem to be approached by animals (Hagen 1969: 20; Lødøen 2014: 54), and which possibly could be understood as entrances into the rock, something to which I will also return.

Altogether, this opens the way for a new understanding of the rock art of the Northern Tradition, which is now more complementary to studies of burial remains, and where the rock art can provide us with a better insight into thoughts about mortuary rituals and the afterlife, something I have argued in favour of elsewhere (Lødøen 2014, 2015a, 2015b). Understanding rock art in this way seems reasonable, as the rock art of the so-called Southern Tradition frequently occurs inside graves (Goldhahn 1999; Linge 2007; Mandt 1991) on bedrock supporting cairns or underneath grave mounds and in other such mortuary environments (Wold 2005), and where the frequently appearing ships could have been present for the purpose of transporting souls, much the same function as I argue that certain animals had in previous periods.

It is still far from clear who used the rock art sites and for whom they were intended. Although burials can be difficult to locate and many rock art sites are yet to be discovered, these two categories seem to share the characteristics of being few and far between, compared to the numerous habitation sites dated to the same timespan. In the first place, these two categories may be perceived as incomparable entities, but since both practises – obviously graves – are related to mortuary rituals, they seem to hold more connotations that may be useful in understanding their meaning, or at least how they relate to habitation sites and to the rest of the contemporary material culture. This is something that should be explored in much greater detail in the future, for the rock art sites.

The narratives found in Vingen and Ausevik seem to be arranged in a very similar way (Lødøen 2014: 67), along with the type of images they contain (Hagen 1969: 112–119; Bakka 1973: 166, 188; Walderhaug 1994: 88).

This said, there are a number of clear differences, which may indicate that the two sites are representative of bands or groups who had their own specific expressions, but who nevertheless shared a number of similar ideas, or perhaps the same basic religion and ideology. To a large extent this is also the case at the much smaller Vangdal site in the Hardangerfjord area, Hordaland, to the south of Ausevik, where at least one skeleton image is associated with several red deer images which for the most are depicted as moving westward, meaning they share features that are typical of Ausevik and Vingen (Fig. 1.5). These three sites seem to share a number of features, which lays the foundations for isolating a potential western Norwegian variant of the Northern Tradition. For the majority of the other sites that are bundled together as the Northern Tradition, the similarities that seem

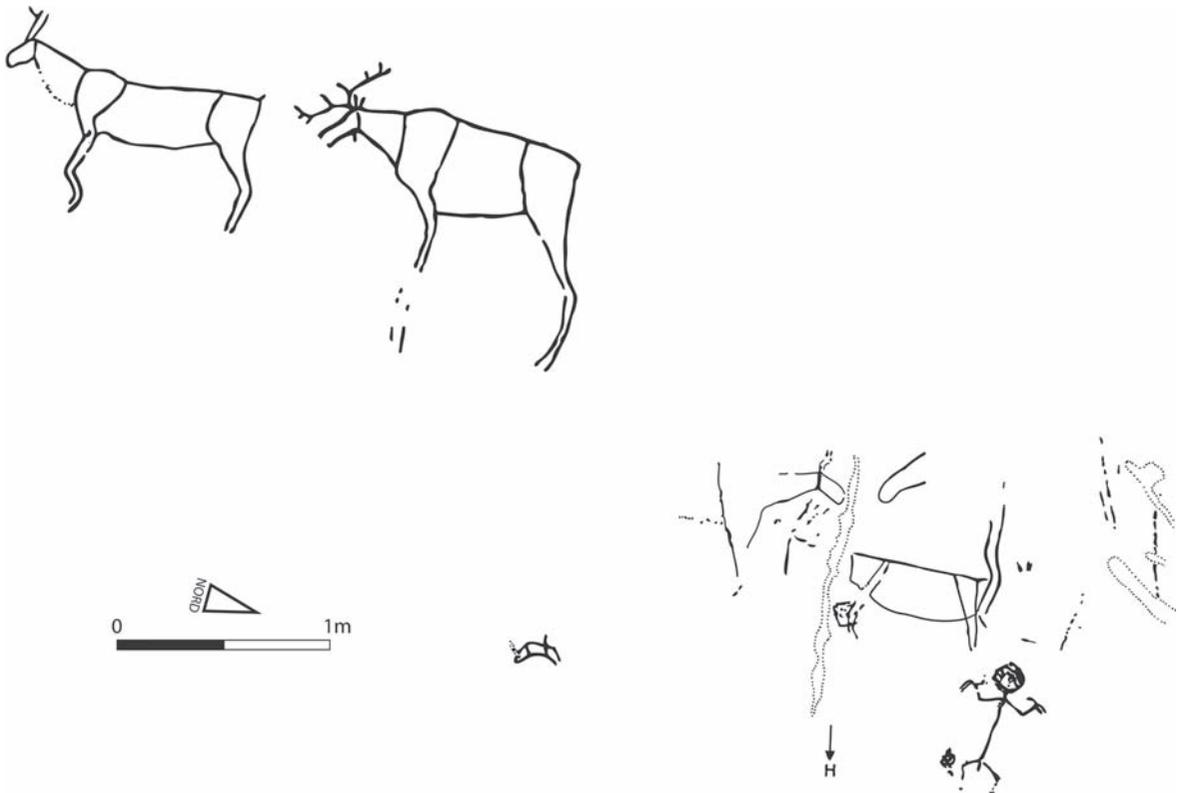


Figure 1.5. A narrative of shared content with Ausevik where animals and skeletons seem to be associated – perhaps soul animals (after G. Mandt 1970).

to be so basic for Western Norway are less apparent, such as the circular movement of red deer and skeletons, or concentric circles associated with animals. Most of the other sites are either represented by single animals, herds of animals, different species or other images that are not comparable to the Vingen and Ausevik sites, but which again are all bundled together as the Northern Tradition, something which will be briefly discussed below.

The character of the Northern Tradition in a wider perspective

To the north of Vingen and Ausevik in the County of Møre og Romsdal, at Bogge, three panels are located above each other (Hallström 1938). Two of them are considered to belong to the Northern Tradition, while one panel with ship images is assumed to be from the Southern Tradition. The two upper panels respectively contain whales and concentrations of animals, possibly red deer. On the latter panel, the individual animal figures have some similarities to the animal images in the iconography at Vingen and Ausevik as regards their form and shape, but have none of the shared features such as skeletons and concentric circles (Fig. 1.6a). One of the animals is depicted upside down with claw-like hooves, which may address some aspects of cosmology or potentially be associated with death, but there is little resemblance to Vingen or Ausevik in terms of the narratives and expressions (Lødøen and Mandt 2010: 118).

Further north, a number of other localities classified as Northern Tradition sites are located in the county of Sør-Trøndelag, such as Bardal, Bøla, Hell, Hammer, Stykket and Holtås (Gjessing 1936; Hallström 1938; Sognnes 1999). Reindeer and elk are the most common species at sites such as Bardal, Stykket and Hammer, but also sea mammals and birds (Fig. 1.6b). There are no concentric circles, but other geometric images can be found at Bardal and Stykket. At Bardal there are representations of anthropomorphs, not as skeletons, but instead they seem to be more vital and probably represent living individuals. Most of these sites have little in common with Ausevik and Vingen. However, the Holtås site (Sognnes 1999), containing a myriad of stylised and schematic animal images, geometric figures and

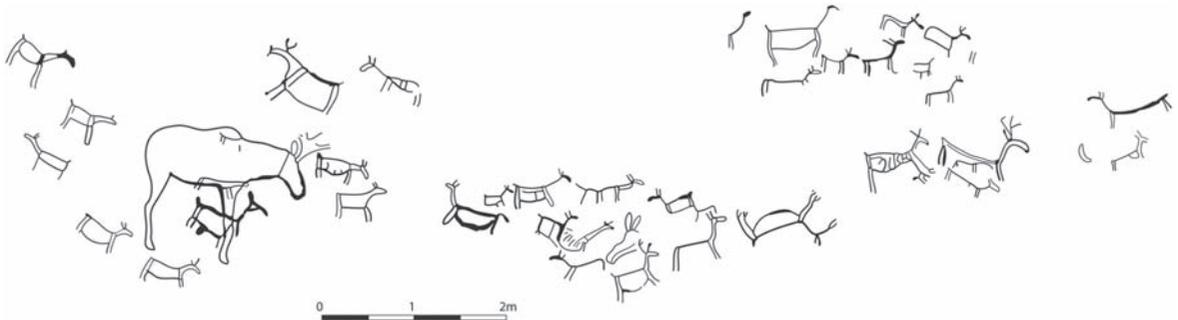


Figure 1.6a. The imagery at Bogge in Møre og Romsdal. Only animals, mainly red deer (G. Gjessing 1936).



Figure 1.6b. Some of the imagery at Bardal in the Trøndelag region (after G. Gjessing 1936).

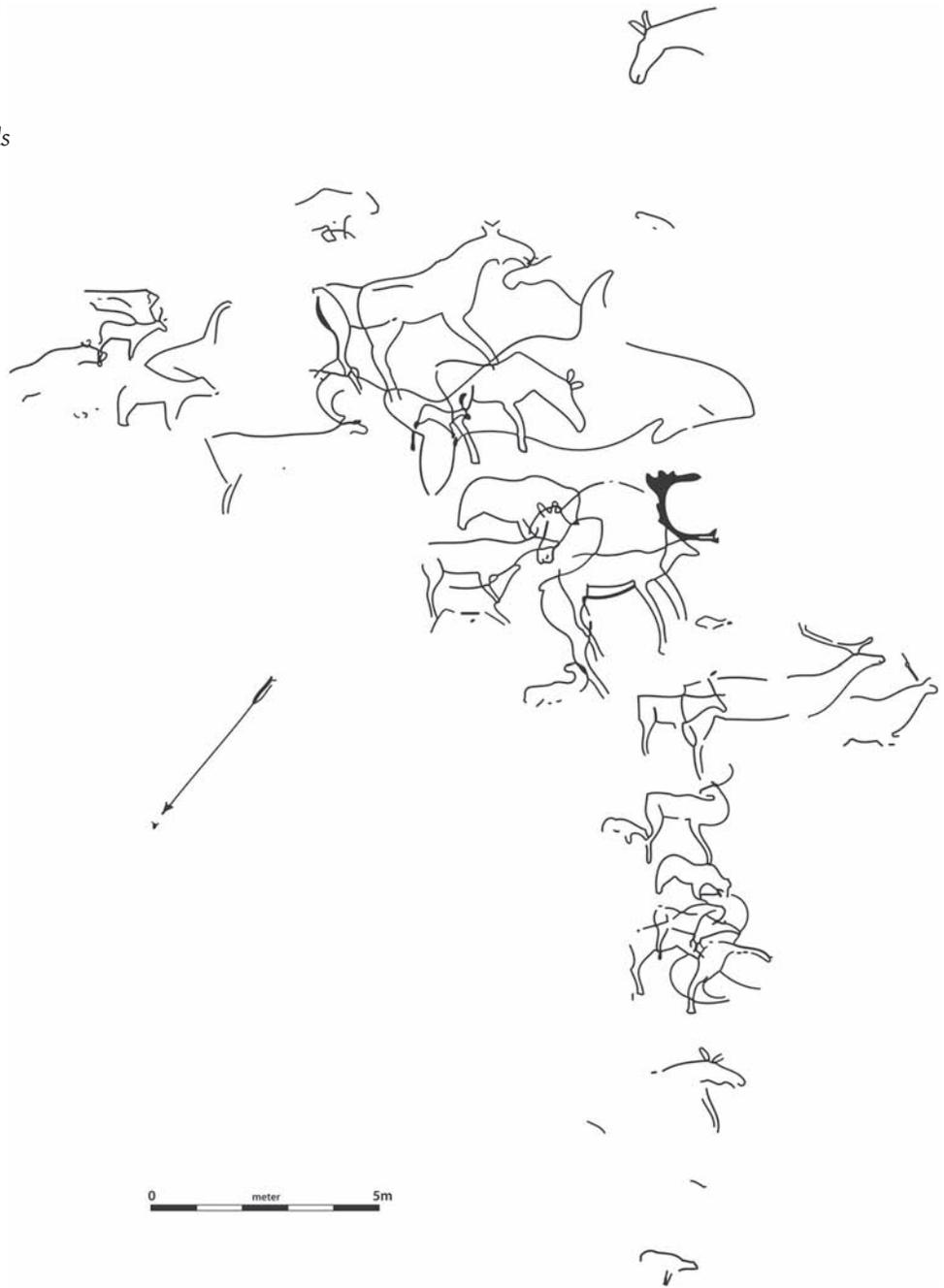
chequered patterns, has some similarities to the way in which the motifs are organised in Ausevik, although there are no skeletons, anthropomorphs or concentric circles (Sognnes 1999). It should also be noted that the Bardal site and a few others in this region contain agrarian art superimposed over compilations of the much older hunters' art.

Moving further north to the county of Nordland, a number of sites with polished rock art have been documented at locations such as Valle, Leiknes, Sagelva, Fykan and Klubba (Hallström 1938) where only animal images are found (Fig. 1.6c). They stand out as apparently being from a unique tradition, of uncertain age, although a number of researchers have argued in favour of these being the oldest type of rock art in Scandinavia (Hesjedal 1994; Gjerde 2010), without any of the features that are so typical in Ausevik, but considered to be of the Northern Tradition. Another location of interest is the Forselv site, further north in Nordland, where a highly visible herd of reindeer images are depicted together with halibut and other types of fish, anthropomorphs, more abstract geometric images and at least one boat (Hallström 1938; Gjessing 1932) (Fig. 1.6d). Here there are also a number of geometric images with a very definite shape: squares, and rhombic patterns with a strong resemblance to similar geometrical patterns at the Bardal site, although without any of the features that are so typical in Western Norway, such as circles or skeletons.

Sites of somewhat similar shapes and sizes can also be found in Troms, which again have their own unique elements, such as Tennes, Åsli and Skavberget (Gjessing 1938; Hallström 1938; Simonsen 1958) (Fig. 1.6e). The common dominator with the other sites mentioned above is first and foremost the animal images, and for many of them it is difficult to identify the species – although it is likely that they are reindeer and/or elk. However, at the Tennes site it is also interesting to note that one anthropomorphic image shares some of the features with the images from Ausevik and Vingen, thought to be skeletons.

The largest concentration of images of the Northern Tradition can be found at the head of the Alta fjord in Finnmark. At several locations, such as Hjemmeluft, Kåfjord and Amtmannsnes, large numbers of panels with numerous animal images have been found which are partly associated with anthropomorphs in larger narratives (Helskog 1999). The majority of the animals are reindeer, elk and bears, and a number of other types of mammals, sea mammals, birds and fish. The narratives vary greatly, and some of the variations are argued to be the results of chronology. Some of the narratives are also thought to express changing seasons, although this may also have to do with regeneration, and may therefore be related to the expressions found in Ausevik and Vingen. Special mention should be made

Figure 1.6c. Polished rock art at Leiknes in Nordland, with a number of different land and sea animals (after G. Gjessing 1932).



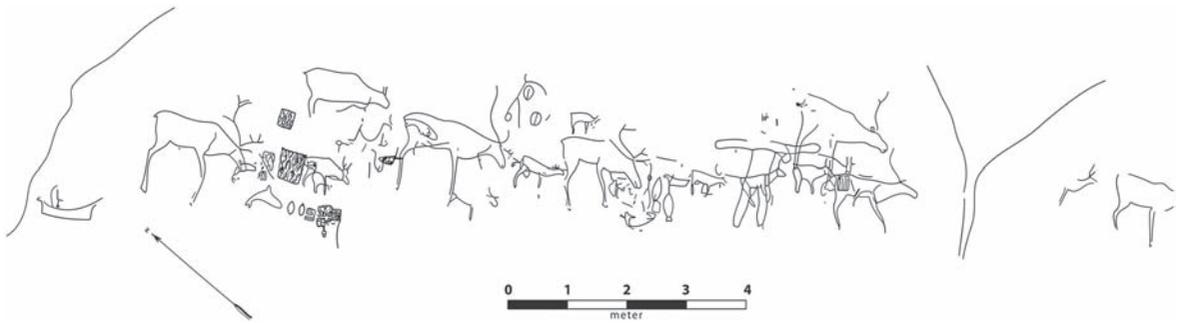


Figure 1.6d. The Forselv rock art in Nordland. Groups of land and sea animals, and also boats and geometric images of a very definite and distinct type. As varied as Ausevik, but of a completely different type (after G. Gjessing 1932).

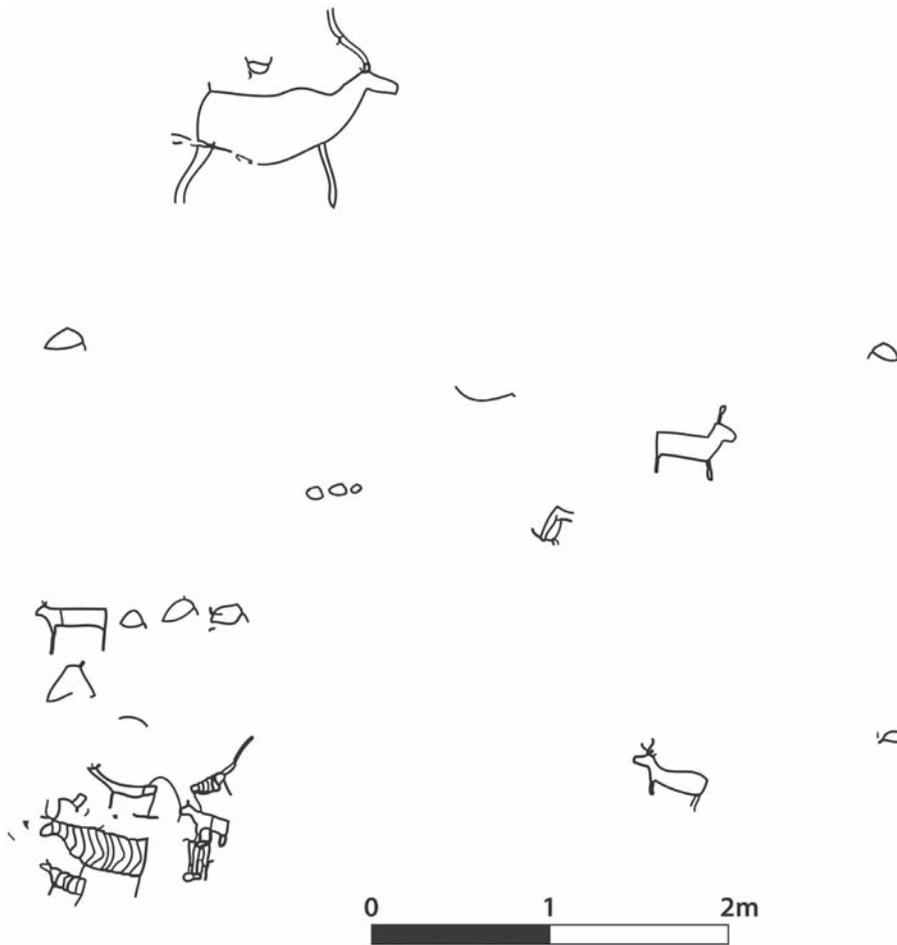


Figure 1.6e. Sea mammals and reindeer or elk associated in what could be a cyclic event, as they are depicted as moving in different directions, with and without body decoration (after P. Simonsen 1958).

Figure 1.6f. Skeleton image from Amtmannsnes with more explicit similarities to Western Norway (T. Lødøen).



of the Amtmannsnes site, which contains images of skeletons and animal-human relationships of a similar kind to those seen in Vingen and Ausevik (Helskog 1999; Berg 2003: 17) (Fig. 1.6f).

Heading to the south of Ausevik, towards the south-eastern part of Norway, a number of smaller sites labelled as belonging to the Northern Tradition can be found at the head of some of the fjords, and from there along corresponding river systems at inland locations (Mikkelsen 1977: 181). None of these sites contain many images (Fig. 1.6g), mainly a few representations of elk and the occasional geometric images of more unknown types, and have few features in common with the hunters' sites in Western Norway.

There are a number of other sites of the so-called Northern Tradition in Norway, but due to limitations of space I cannot discuss all of them here. My main point is to focus on the idea of how it is possible that the varied character of the sites, different animals and contrasting structuring of the iconography fits with belonging to only one tradition. It seems clear that the rock art of the Northern Tradition could be divided into a number of independent groups, as several of the images on the numerous panels found at other sites seem to be arranged quite differently. Some of the locations have sets of images that



Figure 1.6g. The rock art of Skogerveien, Eastern Norway, with its typical depiction of the 'life-line', from the mouth and leading to the intestine. Possible representations of the heart, stomach, lungs or other organs or elements perceived as highly essential to depict in the past (after E. S. Engelstad 1934).

are virtually incomparable with each other, but are still grouped together as the Northern Tradition. Are we still talking about the same traditions both in the north and in the south of Ausevik and Vingen, which at a number of sites have hardly anything in common other than a vaguely similar pecking technique, and the more or less similar shape of different animals? A number of Northern Tradition sites both north and south of Vingen and Ausevik contain only animals, without any anthropomorphic images. While red deer

are the dominant species at Vingen and Ausevik, the majority of the other sites of the so-called Northern Tradition are represented by different species, such as elk, reindeer, bears and sometimes sea mammals, corresponding to the natural habitat of the different species in the past, but which also seem to follow a different syntax than Vingen and Ausevik. Could these have been mortuary sites that were needed to secure regeneration? There are no concentric circles, or any clear circular movement of animals, but some sites are represented by geometric images, which may be related to the geometric images at Vingen and Ausevik. Neither are skeletons as apparent as they are in Vingen and Ausevik, but should all these different variants be characterised and categorised as the Northern Tradition?

There are a number of other patterns that should be explored more thoroughly. Chronology is still a problematic issue in rock art research: we do not know when it was produced, or how often. It has been argued by several researchers that there seems to have been an upsurge in the Late Mesolithic in the number of rock art sites from what is claimed to be the Northern Tradition (Bjerck 2008; 105; Lødøen and Mandt 2010; Gjerde 2010: 395), something I have attempted to consider as being associated with more sedentary habitation, but the often vague dating of the rock art presents a number of challenges. If the rock art was produced infrequently and the concept of the narratives and iconography had to be borne in mind by the performers for a long time, or even transmitted to subsequent generations, as must have been the case in these oral communities, then it seems reasonable to consider that the expressions may have changed, which to some extent explains the differences found amongst many panels which have corresponding frameworks, but with a fairly wide range of datings. This is in line with the ethnographic record, which has specifically shown how rituals that are less frequently performed tend to change considerably over time in comparable societies, since knowledge of a more esoteric nature had to be transferred orally (*e.g.* Barth 1987).

However, on the one hand it seems that the sites in Western Norway have a number of features that are not shared at the other sites, but then there are similarities with the rock art at the Amtmannsnes site in the form of skeleton images. This means that there could be a connection between the size of the sites and the types of images and narratives they contain, or perhaps it could be that the narratives were following a type of syntax

or structure. Again, this is something that needs to be explored in greater detail, and not only understood as a process of leaving a few images on the rock, which may have been based on conditions we still do not fully understand, where the rest of this potential communication with the underworld or other realms was structured by the use of other material remains or immaterial acts, and where the whole process of making rock art or putting it into its proper cultural form varied between the different individuals or societies who produced the rock art. In addition, we need a more developed and nuanced dating of the rock art – something that could be provided by excavations and independent scientific analysis – once again in order to explain the potential differences. Therefore, societies may have shared a number of elements, such as their religion and mortuary rituals, but not necessarily the structuring of rock images. So the question is: are all of the sites mentioned still within the Northern Tradition?

Nevertheless, many of them do seem to share the same type of location as Ausevik and Vingen, located in the interior and away from tidal currents that stimulated the growth of habitation during the Late Mesolithic (Lødøen 2014, 2015a), and which may therefore correspond to a related cosmological understanding. It is still tempting to suggest that all rock art is connected with regeneration and mortuary practices, but then we are left with the question of why the type and nature of the images and the organisation of the different motifs varies so greatly. Although this generally excludes the skeletons, the same applies to the circular motifs that appear so frequently in Ausevik and Vingen (Hagen 1969: 20), and which seem to be absent elsewhere. Most rock art sites from the Northern Tradition in other parts of Scandinavia seem to have a different structure than the rock art in Western Norway.

New dating evidence prevents the Northern Tradition from ever meeting the Southern Tradition

Until recently, the majority of sites from the Southern Tradition in Norway have been dated to the Early and Late Bronze Age, and even the Late Neolithic. However, recent excavations of associated cultural layers in the vicinity of some of the panels associated with this supposed tradition in

Western Norway have provided radiocarbon datings from the Pre-Roman Iron Age or Late Bronze Age (Lødøen and Mandt 2010: 210). This situation, together with the fact that sites that are normally associated with the Northern Tradition, such as Vingen and Ausevik, are increasingly being dated to the Mesolithic (Lødøen 2003; 2013; 2014; 2015a), implies that the two traditions seem to have been separated by more than two millennia for the western Norwegian sites, and therefore there were less possibilities for interaction.

At some places and sites, the rock art from the two supposed traditions in Scandinavia are found remarkably close to each other, either on the same panel or in the immediate vicinity. However, there are no clear indications of interactions between the different traditions in the use of motifs on the different panels, since rock art of the Southern Tradition is consistently superimposed over rock art of the Northern Tradition. If we take the time difference into account, this could mean that these locations, perhaps because of their often conspicuous character in the landscape, were used regularly and became institutionalised for rituals, which did not necessarily leave rock art, while the societies behind the rituals gradually shifted from a hunter-type ideology towards an agrarian way of thinking. Consequently, this would have resulted in Northern Tradition rock art being left at an initial stage, later culminating in rock art of the Southern Tradition.

Where traditions meet: Western Norway, the British Isles, Iberia and the Atlantic Tradition

With the aim of adding more information into the mixture, allowing for a more nuanced understanding of Scandinavian rock art, it is interesting to investigate potential influences in Western Norway, namely, the presence of geometric images, a topic that occupied earlier researchers. It has previously been argued that these images, both in Ausevik and elsewhere in Western Norway, share a number of features with Megalithic art (Marstrander 1972: 63–64; Fett and Fett 1979: 72; Twohig 1981: 134–140; Walderhaug 1994; Vevatne 1996), or ‘Passage Grave Art’, as it is often referred to today, found in the British Isles, in western France and western Iberia.

I still consider that the links between Western Norway and the British Isles and Iberia are worthy of investigation, and it should also be mentioned that a number of studies have been carried out in the latter areas in recent years which have provided a great deal of information about rock art chronology and distribution (e.g. Johnson 1993; Bradley 1997: 190–192; Waddington 2007). Taking the new dating evidence of Vingen and Ausevik into account, it probably excludes the Megalithic art, although new evidence from Galicia argues in favour of a much older dating for this tradition (Bueno *et al.* 2016:



Figure 1.7. Rock art of the Cup and Ring Tradition at Roughting Linn, Northumberland, United Kingdom (redrawn from Beckensall 2001:25).

12–13). However, associations with the older Cup and Ring Tradition of the Atlantic art (Waddington 2007), seems more relevant to include in this debate, and perhaps also reconsiderations in terms of how ideas did not spread towards Western Norway, but instead, from it. Johnson (1993) and Waddington (2007) have both compared Passage Grave art with Atlantic art of the Cup and Ring Tradition in Ireland and Britain respectively, concluding that they belong to very distinct traditions. Although very occasional ‘dot and ring’ motifs occur in Irish passage grave art, there is otherwise no clear correspondence in terms of the form, context, distribution, age or treatment of the rock surfaces between the two traditions in the British Isles (Waddington 2007). It has also been argued that the Atlantic art or the Cup and Ring Tradition predates the fourth millennium cal BC, meaning that it is much older than the Megalithic art, which also implies that the datings of the rock art in Ausevik and Vingen are more or less contemporary and chronologically comparable to this tradition.

Within the context of the Cup and Ring Tradition, animals do not form a part of the imagery, but may have formed a central part of their religion and cosmology. Therefore, circles, or the very occasional spiral found within this tradition could have had a similar meaning to many circular motifs in Ausevik, and may have represented entrances for potential ‘soul animals’ that ensured the necessary regeneration. It is therefore interesting that within the Galician Atlantic style – which is closely related to the Cup and Ring Tradition and documented in the Iberian Peninsula – concentric circles and red deer are amongst the most frequent images (Twowig 1981: 135; Peña Santos and Rey Garcia 2001), and where the presence of anthropomorphs, in a simple form, may represent stylised skeletons. However, the dating of the latter type of imagery or narratives has been frequently discussed and questioned (*e.g.* Bradley 2013: 291), but in more than one sense it seems reasonable to consider that the thoughts behind these images were the same as in Ausevik. Recent archaeological investigations in the vicinity of panels in Campo Lameiro, in the Pontevedra region of Galicia in Spain, have added to this debate. On the one hand it has been concluded that the imagery should be dated to the end of the Bronze Age and the beginning of the Iron Age (Santos-Estévez 2013: 107–123), but scientific analysis has also provided data that may indicate that the human activity in the area could be dated as far back as the end of the fifth millennium cal BC (Martínez-Cortizas *et al.* 2013: 239–253), which

in addition to other arguments has suggested a much earlier dating of Galician rock art to the fourth millennium BC (Fábregas, 2009:71). The latter dating is much more in line with the dating of the Cup and Ring Tradition, considering the similarity and correspondence between geometric images in Galicia and the British Isles. Altogether, this could mean that the dating of sites in southern Europe and Western Norway is barely separated in time, or otherwise by only a few hundred years; thereby indicating potentially shared thoughts and related ideologies between Western Norway and Iberia, or between northern and southern Europe. It is therefore interesting to note that several of the narratives that are found in Ausevik have more shared features with panels in the Iberian Peninsula than with other sites in Scandinavia, some of which have been mentioned above (Fig. 1.8). This opens the way for a new chain of reasoning that may suggest that the sedentary hunter-fishermen of Western Norway shared a number of related ideas with sedentary hunter-fisher-farmers further south along the Atlantic coast, in the Iberian Peninsula. This may also have included the ideology behind the related Cup and Ring Tradition of Brittany and the British Isles, despite the lack of figurative rock art, thereby connecting the Northern Tradition in Western Norway to the Atlantic tradition.

As a result, this raises questions regarding the accepted traditions in Scandinavia. At first glance, some of the images may have another character that could just as easily have been caused by different rock types (in which metamorphosed sandstone and the indirect technique were frequently used in the north, while the direct technique used on granite was the southern equivalent, leading to different appearances), although the thought process behind the imagery – the religion, the cosmology and the ideology – could have been of a much more unified and shared character in these distant parts of Europe. Previous studies conducted by Eva and Per Fett at the end of the 1970s concluded that some of the iconography in Ausevik was the result of an influence from the Megalithic cultures of the British Isles, and so they dated at least the geometric images to the Late Neolithic (Fett and Fett 1979: 72–79). Despite a number of controversies associated with the rock art in Ausevik regarding whether it should be dated to the Late Neolithic or the Bronze Age, most researchers have argued that the appearance of spirals and concentric circles was a result of influences from central or southern Europe. Taking into account the new dating evidence from recent excavations which

Figure 1.8. Red deer and concentric circles that are strikingly similar to the narratives in Ausevik: compare with Figures 1.3 and 1.4 above. Laxe dos Cebros, Cotobade, Galicia, Spain (after Peña and Rey 1993).



indicate that the rock art was produced in the Late Mesolithic, and a number of recent studies of the British and Iberian rock art, this has now altered the perspectives and created a new point of departure. It seems at least plausible to consider that these ideas may have spread from an opposite point of origin. Since Scandinavia seems to have a much longer tradition of creating rock art at open-air sites, the religious or ideological practice of depicting images in rock may have been adopted by cultures further south during processes of contact between groups in northern and southern Europe. This does not necessarily include the thoughts behind the imagery, which may have been more omnipresent for a number of groups or cultures both in the north and in the south, or the result of cultural contact between these past cultures, but instead the physical process of pecking or carving images in solid rock. Much of the material presented above suggests that the ideas behind this imagery may have equally had a more Nordic origin, and that these ideas and the iconography originated in the north. In much the same way as we can discuss influences from the Onega and Kola area in Alta, Finnmark, where the dates do not correspond to the same degree (Gjerde 2010), there should be potential for comparisons of rock art between Western Norway and Iberia, which seems to be even more contemporary and have similarly structured narratives.

Conclusion

And so, in conclusion, I would like to end where I started, expressing the need to reconsider our Northern and Southern Traditions, as I feel I am incapable of understanding what these traditions represent, and whether they correspond to hunting societies on the one hand and farming societies on the other. Nor is it clear whether these types of motifs or the thoughts behind them correspond to my normal understanding of traditions dealing with other cultural remains, where the shared similarities of tools and structures are much more obvious. It is not always easy to define what separates the Southern Tradition rock art from that of the Northern Tradition, and in much the same way it is complicated to define what connects the sites within the different traditions. Is this simple system of categories beneficial, or are they meaningless distinctions that group together things that should be separated, and separate shared thoughts and ideas? The separation into two general groups, something that is clearly a modern categorisation, has provided perspectives in which

the societies responsible for the rock art are seen as being much more closely related to and associated with each other, due to the categorisation, than may have actually been the case in prehistory. On the contrary, as most rock art sites have their own individual character, appearance and iconography that is fairly unique for the different sites, I find it difficult to see the shared similarities for a number of sites within these two basic groups. If we are to accept that the rock art is the result of such contrasting cultures, then how is it possible that they have such a similar practice of depicting images on solid rock, and sometimes even on the same panel? Another issue is that if I were encouraged to maintain the idea of tradition, I wonder if there are openings for a 'Western Tradition' or a 'South-western Tradition' which could bring the Cup and Ring Tradition or Atlantic art into the mix. By widening the scope and evaluating the earliest open-air rock art in Europe, the emerging picture provides a number of nuances that should be further explored in the future. What happened to the once supported eastern influence in Western Norway, supported by previous researchers (Bakka 1975)? Researchers have argued in favour of an eastern influence from the Kola Peninsula at sites of the Northern Tradition in northern Sweden and northern Norway, despite its rather wide dating framework (Gjerde 2010: 393), but these influences are not so clear further south in Norway. There also seems to have been an eastern influence in the spread of rock paintings to Sweden and potentially to the Telemark area of Norway (Lahelma 2008; Slinning 2002). Researchers have also argued that there are similarities between Finnish paintings and carvings at Nämforsen (Gjerde 2010), but are paintings and carvings necessarily comparable? Whatever the case, there is a need to explore in much greater detail the cultural ideas that are shared within areas with sites containing hunters' rock art or rock art from the Northern Tradition, and at what point we introduce the contemporary cultural material context, as this is something that has largely been overlooked, and is a classic problem when associating rock art studies and studies of material culture in archaeological research.

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