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## **Ethnicity, migration and materiality. Forest Finn archaeology**

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## ABSTRACT

Stig Welinder 2014. Ethnicity, migration and materiality. Forest Finn archaeology

During the early 17th century, Finns migrated within the Swedish kingdom from interior Finland to virgin spruce forest areas in Sweden. There they settled in *finnmarker*, areas with Finnish-speaking households conducting large-scale swidden cultivation, *huuhia* in Finnish. Eventually they were called Forest Finns. Their farms were centered around a *rökstuga*, a living-house with a stone-oven without a chimney.

Four Forest Finn farms have been excavated. The article discusses how the Finnish households were integrated in the local and regional market economy, thus acquiring the same kind of things also used by their Swedish neighbours, including status and prestige objects, e.g. display ceramics and window glass panes. At the same time, they continued to live in their traditional *rökstugor*, which owing to different space, light and warmth compared to a Swedish cottage with an open fireplace, conditioned other relations between the individuals of the households. The process of change, Swedification, of the Forest Finns was not unilinear.

Ethnicity is the social process of meeting between two or more groups of people forming 'us-and-them'-relations. The early-modern Forest Finns is an example of complex change as concerns materiality involved in ethnicity, in this case triggered by the meeting of 'the others' as a result of migration.

**KEYWORDS:** Agrarian-technical complex, change, ethnicity, Forest Finns, migration, *rökstuga*, status objects.

# Ethnicity, migration and materiality. Forest Finn archaeology

## The history of the Forest Finns

The *finnmarker* in Norway and Sweden were settled early in the 17th century when Finnish-speaking immigrants cleared and built farms in the forest areas of Mid Scandinavia. They built their log houses in the same way as in the areas they left behind in East Finland, Savolax and Rautalampi (Wedin 2007, 2011). Characteristic buildings were *rökstugor* (stone-oven cottages with chimneyless stone ovens), *rior* (drying sheds for sheaves of rye), and saunas. In addition, they practiced *huuhhta* (large-scale slash-and-burn cultivation) in preferably mature but untouched spruce forests. Accordingly, the Finns in the *finnmarker* were called Slash-and-Burn Finns but are most often known today as Forest Finns, based on their 17th-century living habitat.

The Forest Finns settled in marginal areas well suited to their kind of slash-and-burn cultivation, i.e. *huuhhta*, which contrasted to the traditional inland–outland cultivation by their Norwegian and Swedish neighbours in more central areas. The good browsing areas in the forest, not least on the burn-beaten land meant that the Forest Finns could keep more cattle, sheep and goats than the adjacent Norwegian and Swedish farms.

It should be noted that the Finns actually migrated within the same kingdom (Villstrand 2009). In this article, conditions in Norway, which was part of the Danish kingdom at the time, will not be discussed.

## Ethnicity and materiality

In modern cultural anthropology, an understanding of ethnicity since the 1960s (Barth 1969) is based on the relation between groups of people who

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differentiate between themselves and other groups, that is, “us-and-them”, “the others”. The groups may speak different languages, practice different religions and rituals, or tell different tales about their ancestors. The difference may even be more or less a feeling or traditional knowledge. Thus, ethnicity is a social and cultural construction (Jones 1997). Accordingly, ethnicity is co-existence, with or without conflict. One important feature of ethnicity is that it is constantly open to dynamic change.

To be able to discuss ethnic groups based on archaeological data in prehistory or in general, it is obvious that the “us-and-them” relation in question must be seen through material objects – the materiality of the groups (e.g. Shennan 1989; Roslund 2001; Amundsen *et al.* 2003). Materiality is the relation between people or groups of people involving buildings, objects and actions, what is possible to see, touch and smell – people as material things and material things as people (Mauss 1967 [1925]). The concept of ‘materiality’ is the world of people and people’s internal relations to the extent that they are materially tangible.

Archaeology is based on materiality and living patterns. All interpretation must start from the cultural remains in the landscape and from the evidence acquired through excavations and finds of objects. These things make up humans, actions and interactions between people. Thus, archaeology is the discussion of materiality. In the archaeological material, however, there are only bits and pieces left of what once existed in a living, dynamic society. Based on these traces of material reality, an approximation can be made of how life was in the world of the Forest Finns, their visible and sensible world. The materiality of the *finnmarker* ranges from the landscape with its outlying areas to the infield, the farmyard around the buildings, the buildings themselves, their interiors and people’s objects. The material culture allows us to get in touch with the past and the Forest Finnish households.

Towards the end of the 1990s, Scandinavian archaeology chose to prefer the concept ‘identity’ to the concept ‘ethnicity’ (Johnsen & Welinder 1998; Werbart 2002). Ethnicity had been discussed to a dead end. ‘Cultural identity’, or ‘identity’ for short, was used when discussing material things as ethnic markers in the meeting between us and them. Humans own a personal identity; the person’s choice of ethnicity is her current location in time and space, while social environment is a component within her identity. The concept ‘identity’ refers to a view from the inside, while the concept ‘ethnicity’ uses an outside perspective.

The meeting between the migrating Finns, the future Forest Finns and the Scandinavians in the areas to which they immigrated will be seen by us through the concepts of ethnicity, or identity, and – as will be discussed in this article – materiality.

## The archaeological meeting of two groups of people

From the point of view of the possibilities and limitations of archaeological interpretation and the complex discussion around the term ‘ethnicity’, the inherent difficulties in understanding the Forest Finns based on field and laboratory data derived through archaeological methods are considerable. The question is whether the archaeological study and the discussion based on the archaeological data is a matter of people or of places – of Forest Finns or of *finnmarker*. The latter can be defined and delimited spatially without greater difficulty, but the former is an unruly crowd.

From an inside point of view, that of the people themselves, being a (Forest) Finn was – and is – feeling and experiencing a special identity in relation to the others in his or her vicinity. Being accepted by the others is of course also desirable for an identity to be meaningful. From an outside point of view, for example in historical research, being a Forest Finn means being singled out because of one’s language and lifestyle. The latter is at least in part archaeologically visible, while the former is not at all so. Furthermore, being Forest Finnish is an historical, albeit changeable, tradition.

Forest Finn archaeology is just getting underway. To date, two studies of Forest Finn identity have been published (Pettersson 2002, Holm 2005). Our Forest Finnish archaeology is based on farms documented through written evidence where immigrating Finns lived. These farms were located in what ultimately became *finnmarker*. Other people, both Swedes and Finns, lived on other types of farms in the vicinity, and some Swedes lived within the *finnmarker*. Regardless, it is usually possible, at least in the 17th century, to delimit Forest Finns as people who lived on farms in the *finnmarker* and who followed the typical Forest Finn lifestyle. Difficulties with this delimitation arise when people moved between farms and in and out of the *finnmarker*, and when times changed and life patterns with them.

In a purely archaeological study – that is, a textless one – it is quite difficult to differentiate Forest Finns from other people in any sort of meaningful way. What is invisible archaeologically – language, oral traditions, historical consciousness – are indeed high hurdles to climb over when trying to understand any ‘us-and-them’ feeling in people within the *finnmarker* and in those living close by but outside it. Archaeology can raise the question of how lifestyles looked materially in Forest Finn farms and in the *finnmarker* when people moved in, and how they gradually changed. The present article discusses this matter in relation to the lifestyles in the surrounding areas and to the change in the currents of time.

## The excavated farms

In the following pages, four archaeologically excavated and analysed Forest Finn farms from the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries will be briefly described (Fig. 1).

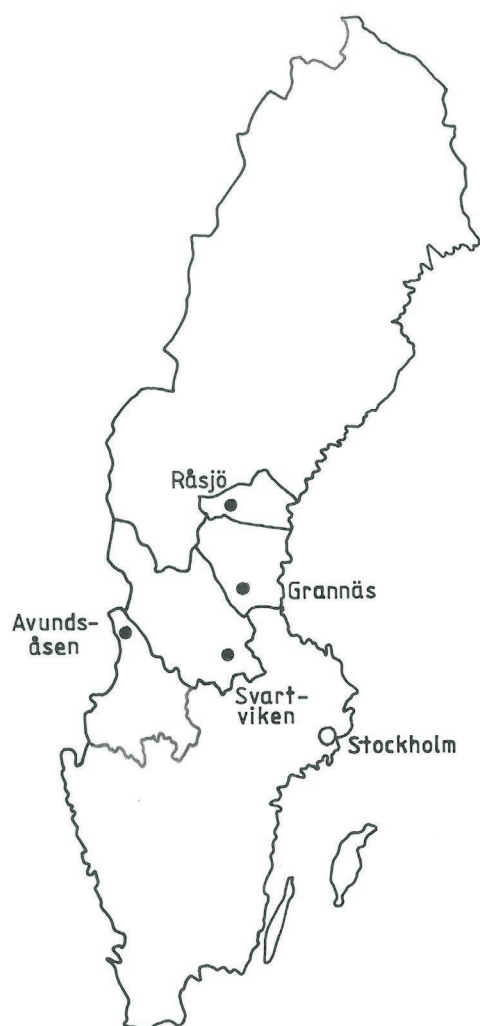


Fig. 1. Archaeologically excavated Forest Finn farm sites in Sweden.

<http://clamator.its.uu.se/uploader/92/Fig1.pdf>

None of them has been excavated in its totality regarding all of the buildings and the surrounding cultivated land. However, together they may illustrate the process of settling and change in the *finnmarker* by the Finns, the future Forest Finns. All the four farms were located on forestland far from Swedish-speaking neighbours living in river valleys and on the plains. Forest Finn archaeology, thus, is outland archaeology (H. Andersson *et al.* 1998). A tentative model based on these four farms will be presented towards the end of the article (Fig. 6).

The question is whether anything that differentiates the immigrant Finns and the *finnmarker* of the 17<sup>th</sup> century from their Swedish surroundings – a (Forest) Finnish identity – can be found in the three archaeologically excavated farms from the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Changes in the Finnish lifestyle can be found in the fourth farm, from the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

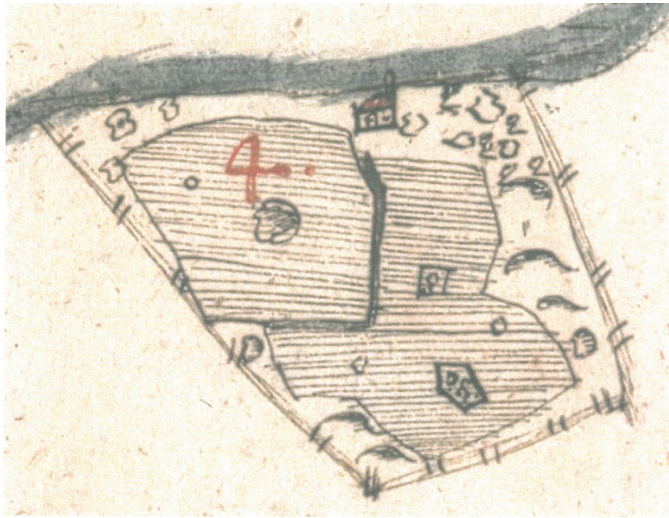


Fig. 2a. The cadastral map of the Råsjö farm from 1639.  
<http://clamator.its.uu.se/uploader/92/Fig2a.pdf>

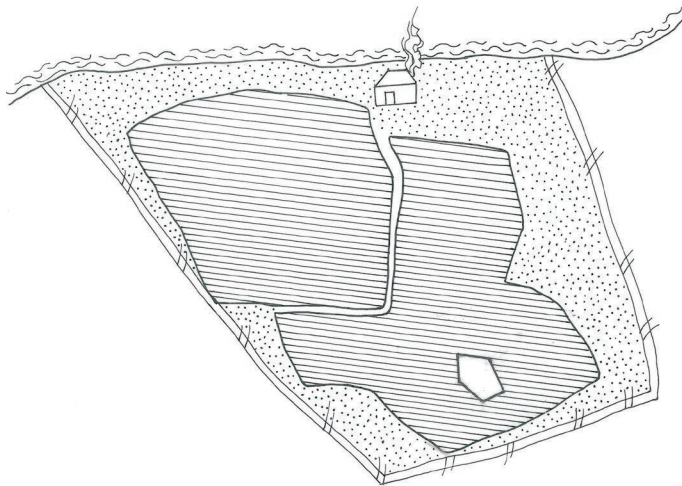


Fig. 2b. Redrawn cadastral map of the Råsjö farm with arable land (hatched) and pasture (dotted) inside the fence facing the outlying land.  
<http://clamator.its.uu.se/uploader/92/Fig2b.pdf>

## A pioneering farm – Råsjö

The first cadastral map of the Råsjö farm, Borgsjö parish, in the Medelpad province, was drawn towards the end of the 1630s (Figs 2a, b). The map shows a farmyard near the edge of Lake Råsjön. However, the archaeologically excavated farmhouse, a Finnish *rökstuga*, is located further towards the south, on the highest point of the infield, surrounded by other building foundations. The house is dated by only one single object, a coin minted for Karl XI (1666–



1698). By the lake, two buildings were excavated with *rösugnar* (chimneyless ovens made by heaping up a pile of loose stones). They are interpreted as being a *ria* and a sauna, and cannot be dated.

The oldest known written document about the farm is from 1620, when it is mentioned in a Royal Letter of Settlement. One thought is that then, and at least until the end of the 1630s, the farm buildings were on the edge of the lake. Whether or not there were more than the two excavated buildings there originally cannot be determined. The main dwelling, the *rökstuga*, further back from the lake could have been built in the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

The infield of the farm was bordered on the south by a marsh. The pollen diagram from the marsh shows that at a depth of 40 cm, a first increase of the amounts of charcoal particles and pollen of plant appears which indicates that the land had been cleared in a previously virgin forest of pine and spruce: grass, juniper, heather and some herbs, and some pollen grains of rye. The charcoal particles, the rye pollen grains and a general decrease in the amount of spruce among the trees indicate that rye cultivation in spruce forests occurred in the area. It is impossible to date and locate the swidden based on the pollen diagram. Rye plants produce great amounts of pollen, which fly in the wind. The slash-and-burn areas could have been located at a distance.

After the first traces of life and movement in the forest, obvious changes occur at a depth of 33 cm in the pollen diagram. The increase of the amount of charcoal particles is evident, as is the occurrence of pollen from grass, heather, juniper, sedge, bellflowers, sassafras, plantain, composite and umbelliferous plants and buttercups. Most of the herbs make their first appearance now, as do pollen grains from barley. Judging by the level, it seems reasonable to place the establishment of the Råsjö farm here, with its cleared fields and meadows as seen on the cadastral map.

Levels 30-28 cm contain a high and delineated spike for pollen grains of rye. The occurrence of charcoal particles is highest at that level, while spruce pollen are at their lowest. Initially, and for a short period of time, *huuhhta* cultivation occurred on the farm for rye, the mythical Forest Finn rye.

These levels in the pollen diagram cannot be dated. A C14-dating to the 17<sup>th</sup> or 18<sup>th</sup> century simply gives a general confirmation that it is reasonable to think that clearing the fields and swidden for rye cultivation occurred around the known time of the settling of the farm around 1620. The pollen diagram, however, cannot tell us either whether the slash-and-burn cultivation occurred before barley was grown in the fields, or if both happened coevally.

The picture of the slash-and-burn farming in Råsjö that comes from the pollen diagram is supported by the written sources. Swidden was carried out in the general area for one or a few decades before clearing the farmyard and infields. The terrain close to the farm is not typical for the Forest Finnish *huuhhta*. It is exposed to frost between a lake and a marsh and had pine trees, not spruce trees. At the time of the clearance of the farm, however, slash-and-burn cultivation occurred there for a short period, possibly 20–30 years, which would mean that the State prohibitions of swidden, the first one from



the 1640s, were actually respected and adhered to by the farm household. Nevertheless, it was also possible that forests suitable for Forest Finn rye no longer existed, even if it was written on the cadastral map that there was good access to forests to be cleared.

Judging by the refuse piles from the cottage, there were significantly more bones of domestic rather than of wild animals. In the houses by the edge of the lake (Table 1), the opposite was true. The most common wild prey was elk, while cattle and sheep or goat were the most common domestic animals.

A fascinating thought arises: that initially, the household lived around the more simple buildings by the lake, with a subsistence based on slash-and-burn cultivation, fishing and hunting. Later on, a complete farm was established with a farmyard including a *rökstuga*, situated on the highest part of the infield. The possibility that the first household was different from the later ones is suggested by the different types of ceramic vessels found in the household garbage (Table 1), but the number of identifiable sherds is disturbingly small.

The local history of the farm may support the idea of temporary conditions for the household during the first few decades. The Finn Jon Jonsson received a Letter of Settlement for the farm by Lake Råsjön in Borgsjö parish in 1620. It is possible that Jon Jonsson was not certain that the Lake Råsjön lakeside site was exactly what he wanted as he is found again in 1621, applying for a Letter of Settlement for another farm in the same parish, along with two other Finns.

It is not certain to what extent Jon Jonsson and his family lived on the Råsjö farm in the following years. Neither he nor Råsjö are named in fiscal or court records. Not until 1628 does the name Jon Jonsson appear in the livestock records, but his place of domicile is not given and he is called a crofter. The family consisted of three adults and the cowshed only contained two cows, one bull and a sheep. They had one barrel of seed corn.

The written sources support the possibility that Jon Jonsson never lived permanently by Lake Råsjön. However, the buildings were there. In a photo from c. 1939, there is a barnlike building at Råsjö with the year 1621 carved into it. Perhaps Råsjö was a place where people only lived during periods of swidden and hunting, and where they kept a limited number of livestock during the grazing period. During the 1620s, the livestock records indicate that the farm had relatively few animals, especially if compared with nearby Forest Finn farms, where in several cases they had far more livestock than in the large Swedish homesteads in the river valleys.

A change occurred in the middle of the 1630s. A court letter written at the local court in Borgsjö in 1634 carefully noted the landmarks along the boundaries of the farm. Based on the livestock records of 1635, it appears that the farm was beginning to prosper, as the number of people and animals had increased. The following year there were five adults in the household and the animals were listed as one horse, one foal, one ox, one bull, nine cows, four heifers and six sheep. There was 1½ barrels of seed corn. In the next following year, 1637, Råsjö was formally added to the tax rolls. In the tithe records of that year, Jöns Jonsson, the son of Jon Jonsson, was credited with 22 pottles of

barley and three barrels of rye, which shows that in addition to slash-and-burn cultivation, conventional arable farming also took place. One can imagine now that Råsjö was a fully built-up farm.

Thus, Råsjö can be tentatively seen as a pioneer farm prior to the 1640s for one or two first-generation immigrants who had not yet established a complete farm; this occurred during the 1630s in the second generation. Some ten years or so later, the farmyard was moved within the infield of the farm and a complete yard and *rökstuga* were made.

Table 1. The household refuse from Råsjö (percent).

	Plates and bowls	Cooking pots	Total (no. of sherds)	Domestic animals	Wild animals	Total (no. of bones, teeth)
The houses at the edge of the lake	20	80	5	46	54	46
The farmhouse	98	2	67	74	26	251

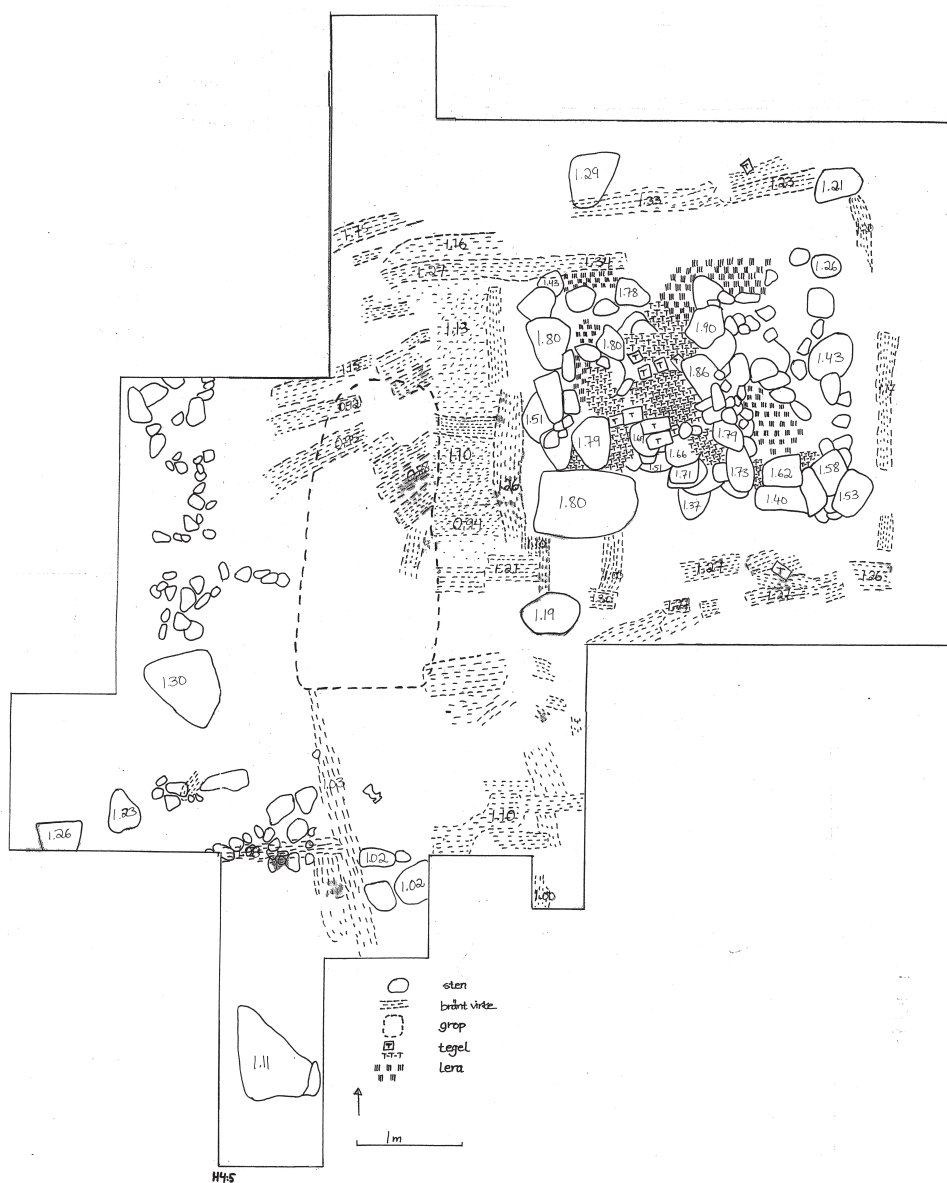
## An established farm – Grannäs

The Grannäs farm was situated at Lake Grannäsen in Alfta parish in the Hälsingland province. Its main farmhouse was possibly built in 1609 judging by a coin found among the fallen stones of the house's stone oven. The farm's Letter of Settlement was written in 1613 for a Finn named Knut Persson.

The archaeological excavations at Grannäs have included the farm's farmhouse. No fieldwork aimed at reconstructing the surrounding landscape was made. When the farmyard was abandoned in the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, it moved some hundred metres towards the lake, and the place became a field with the house foundation used as a clearance-cairn.

The main dwelling house consisted of a *rökstuga* (Fig. 3) and an additional room, mentioned in court proceedings from 1671 describing a domestic disturbance over a pair of shoes, which ended in the death of a drunken farm girl. Some metres from one of the short ends of the cottage was a stone-built fireplace. It is not certain whether this fireplace was part of an independent cookhouse or whether it was in a room that was joined to the cottage to form a single dwelling, which might also have had an entryway. In that case, the house would have been similar to the one at Råsjö, which consisted of a *rökstuga*, a room with an open fireplace and an entry way built over a stone cellar. The house in Grannäs had a cellar hole under a wooden trap door in the floor of the cottage.

The oven in the *rökstuga* differed in several details from those found from the 19<sup>th</sup> century primarily in the Finn Forests in the Värmland province. The oven was built partly of brick, had an arch under the vaulted fire chest, with a stone



prone to catching fire. The house in Svartviken, with an open fireplace, burnt down once (see below).

In addition to the relatively high standard of the dwelling house, several objects in the house's refuse indicate that the Grannäs farm had social status. The farm was by no means isolated in the forest. People living there participated in the market economy of the times, possessing grindstones, flints, glass vessels, pottery and clay pipes. The banquet table had high-status pottery dishes made in workshops in northwestern Germany, for serving imported foods such as wheat and herring. The household followed the aspirations of the times by showing its status through purchased objects. It was important to keep up with the neighbours as far as possessions and consumption were concerned.

The farm most likely based its wealth on successful slash-and-burn cultivation for Forest Finn rye. This autumn crop was work intensive – swidden in the summer, sowing and fencing in, and harvesting and threshing the next summer. If the rye survived precarious winters, it could yield mythical harvests with tens of times, even hundreds of times the amount of seed corn sowed. At times, the Finns paid many barrels of rye to cover their tithes. In the 1670s, however, a legal commission claimed that swidden was no longer practiced around Grannäs. To be sure, this slash-and-burn method had been forbidden for decades.

The farm became wealthy from its livestock as well. A forest farm had good access to grazing land, the new growth on the swidden areas and plenty of winter fodder on the sedge marshes. The livestock records from the 1620s and 30s annually list up to 10–14 cows and 4–6 calves and heifers. Most years there was also a bull or bullock. There were 10–20 sheep and goats, 3–10 pigs and one horse. This is roughly twice as much livestock as in the farms in the Swedish settlements bordering the *finnmarker*.

Bones of game animals comprise a small part of the total amount of bones and teeth in the farm's refuse piles (Table 2). The percentage of elk, beaver and hare bones of the total of mammal bones is c. 10 percent. The fish that is documented, primarily through perch scales, is insufficient to determine its dietary importance. Taphonomic agents have rendered this impossible.

The land was cleared and the Grannäs farm was built around 1610 as a complete, well-established farm. The household aimed at achieving the ideals and status of the times, as did their Swedish-speaking neighbours, although within a traditional (Forest) Finnish framework of buildings and at least in the beginning with the *huuhtha*.

Table 2. Refuse of bones and teeth in Grannäs (number of fragments).

Cattle (1)	38
Sheep and goat (2)	132
Pig	24
Horse	3
Elk	8

Hare	4
Squirrel	1
Bird (3)	90

1. Another 17 bones and teeth fragments come from either cattle or elk
2. Both sheep and goats are present
3. 29 bones come from hens but the proportions between forest birds and domestic hens cannot be determined. There are certainly hazel-hens and possibly capercaillies, one bone comes from a goose, wild or domestic, the other 61 bones are indeterminate bird bones

## Another established farm – Avundsåsen

Avundsåsen is a deserted farm in the extensive Finn Forest areas of Värmland province in Södra Finnskoga parish. With reasonable certainty, the farm can be identified as a Finnish farm documented in written sources (Bladh *et al.* 1992). A pollen diagram shows the presence of browsing cattle and some cereal-cultivation since the 14th century (Wallin 1995).

A large amount of stone foundations of buildings (Fig. 4) was part of this Finnish farm or in a succeeding *fäbod* (summer farm for dairy-production). The farm had most likely a *röktuga*, an animal shed, two *rior* and a smithy. The other foundations are more difficult to pinpoint. The *röktuga* is part of a building with at least two rooms: the one with the stone oven and one with a fireplace. The various farm buildings were loosely grouped around the dwelling house, not in a delineated or otherwise regularly shaped farmyard.

Avundsåsen was documented in writing for the first time in 1658. The oldest coin found was minted already in 1632. Another coin belonged to a series that was first minted in 1719. In 1726, the farm was documented as deserted. The clay pipes that were excavated all seem to belong to the time between 1630 and 1720, which seems to be the historical-archaeological period of use of the farm.

The profiles through the lynchets show that the farmland was cleared by fire at least twice. The ecofacts include barley and oats. There are pollen grains from barley and rye. The rye pollen grains are so few, however, that it is reasonable to assume that the farm did not grow rye in its infields or in the near vicinity, either through swidden or otherwise. Stone clearance in the fields was extensive. There are at least 300 clearance cairns.

Despite the absence of remains of rye cultivation in the data from field and laboratory analyses, rye farming appeared in one form or another in the household, probably slash-and-burn cultivation of Forest Finn rye. The first Finn at the farm, Mats Matsson, once paid a number of barrels of rye as a fine.

Avundsåsen shows what the Finnish settlers strove for: a sufficient number of buildings and a sufficient amount of stone-cleared and ploughed fields in order to get into the tax register, thereby acquiring use and owner rights. The



Fig. 4. The layout of the Avundsåsen farm during the second half of the 17th century. Grey = the excavated house; cross = houses with fire-places; clearance-cairns, lynchets (redrawn from Bladh et al. 1992). <http://clamator.its.uu.se/uploader/92/Fig4.pdf>

demands for tax registration followed the usual norms for Swedish farms in the immigration areas: a farmyard surrounded by fenced-in farmland with fields and meadows surrounded by grazing land and forest.

## An almost Swedish farm – Svartviken

The archaeologically excavated farm called Svartviken in Stora Skedvi parish in the Dalarna province is one of two farms that were built by Finns at the edge of the Stora Lönnvattnet Lake around 1620. In the oldest map of the farms – the cadastral one from 1647 – the farms are found with a single small barley field and some meadows with fences in common with *fäbod* belonging to Swedish farmers. One farm disappeared quickly, while the other remained until 1820.

A dwelling and an animal shed have been excavated. The former is of interest here (Fig. 5). The house was built like a simple log cabin on a stone sill later damaged by ploughing. It is roughly 5 x 5 m with a fireplace in one corner. The stove was partly made of brick with a whitewashed exterior. The door perhaps faced the lake towards the south, and the house had at least one window with glass panes.

In the garbage piles in and around the house and in the manure pile, there are Swedish-made clay pipes from the second half of the 18th century but also two English pipes, of which the older is from the 1690s. The only coin found



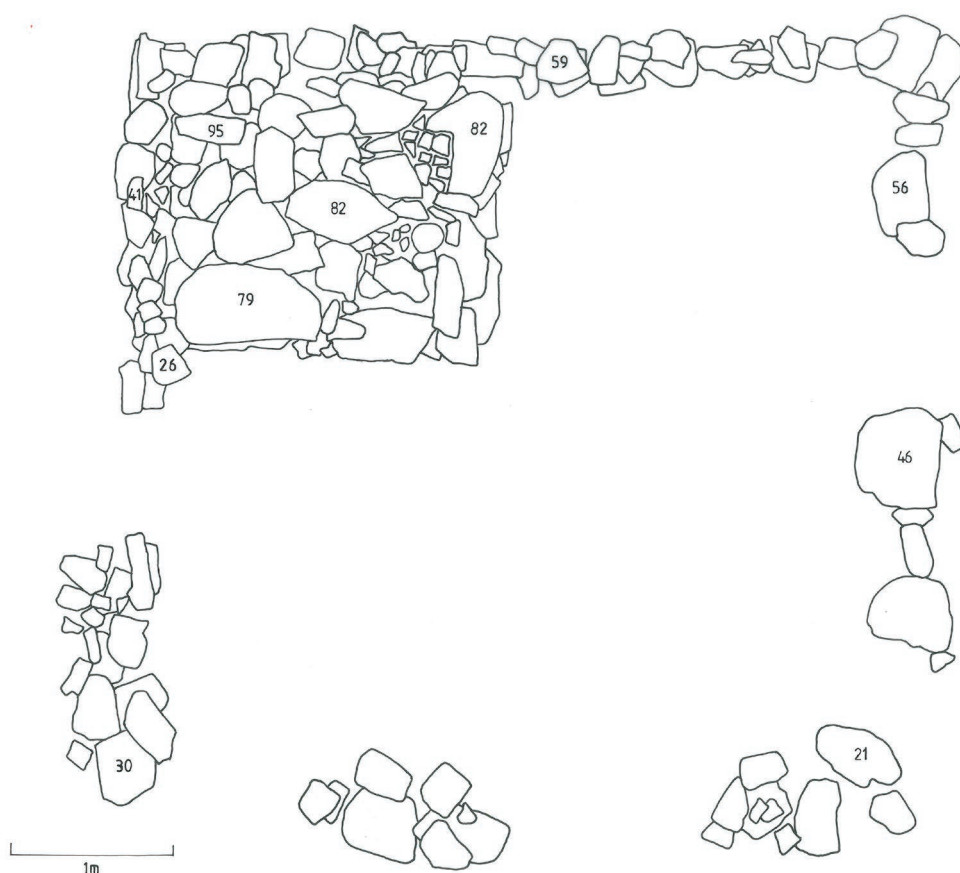


Fig. 5. The stone-foundation of the dwelling at the Svartviken farm built in the 1690s.  
<http://clamator.its.uu.se/uploader/92/Fig5.pdf>

was minted in 1724. A new household was established in 1693 in Svartviken by the granddaughter of the first Finn at the farm and her husband, a soldier. It is a fascinating thought that the house was built by this family in the 1690s. The soldier and his wife – the soldier's background is unknown – chose to build a house in the same style and with the same type of hearth as the Swedish neighbours had had for generations. Thus, they chose not to build a *rökstuga*.

The question is when *rökstugor* went out of use in the *finnmarker* in southern Dalarna. Characteristic for this region was the closeness to cities, mines and mills. Whether *rökstugor* ever existed in Svartviken is unknown. In the neighbouring village of Väderbacken, there is an estate inventory for Hans Larsson, a Finn who died in 1697. There were both Finnish and Swedish households in Väderbacken. The latter were tenants of the Hinshyttan mill.



Hans Larsson at times owned both two and three farms, but the inventory seems to list the buildings of only one farm. It was written at the same time as the house at Svartviken was built in the 1690s:

Cottage with a main room and another small room

*Rökstuga*

Stable

Animal shed

Goat pen

Cereal barn

Cellar

Food shed

Log cabin raised from the ground on poles

Woodshed

Sauna

In the list, there are three buildings with a stove or oven. There was a cottage with two rooms. At a guess, it would seem that this was a normal cottage with a fireplace in one corner and a bricked chimney, a cottage like the one excavated in Svartviken. The other two buildings are more worthy of attention.

*Rökstuga* and *sauna* are both words that can be used for the Finnish *pöörte*, or in real Finnish *pirtti* (Nesholen 2001:103–106). At a guess, the *sauna* in the inventory, which was made by a Swedish-speaking scribe, meant the combination of drying shed for grains and smokehouse for sausages and ham, something that was common for Swedish farms.

There was a *rökstuga* in the yard. Its low value in the inventory implies that it was an old building, more or less fallen into disuse, and replaced by a cottage in the traditional Swedish style. In the 1690s, Finnish *rökstugor* were no longer timely in the *finnmarker* in the south of Dalarna province. Building a house in the Swedish style was self-evident for a new household, like in Svartviken at that time. At other farms, like at Väderbacken, Swedish cottages had been built earlier.

In the 18th century, the Svartviken farm had one or two cereal fields and livestock in the cow-house, mostly sheep and goats, but also pigs and horses. The extent of fishing in Stora Lönnvattnet Lake cannot be estimated. Game was not found there, apart from an occasional hare or capercaillie in the forests around the farm. The parish records show that the farm had received alms on some occasions.

Despite the occasional receipt of alms, the rubbish on the farm is rich in contents. It reflects the closeness to cities but above all else, the changing times and an obviously increasing consumption in the entire society since the 17th century. In addition to the usual pottery dishes, wooden plates and bowls that were the only vessels on farm tables in the 17th century, the cottage at Svartviken had glass vessels, stoneware flasks, faience, flint goods and Chinese porcelain. The buttons in the clothes were made from metal and glass, with ornaments and inlay. In the 17th century, anything other than wooden buttons

was unusual on the farms. Hooks and eyes had become much less common. Clothing would most likely have been made mainly at home from home-woven fabrics and homespun yarns.

The use of slash-and-burn cultivation was long past in Svartviken in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. In fact, it is not known whether it was ever practiced. Evidence for swidden from Väderbacken for both Forest Finn rye and turnips is well documented in a pollen diagram and in court records. Swidden for growing Forest Finn rye disappeared in the 1670s after a conflict with the Hinshyttan Mill. In theory, it had been forbidden since the 1630s, when for the first time the Finns in Väderbacken had been fined for illegal swidden.

Regarding buildings and in the range and type of objects, the 18th century farm in Svartviken cannot be differentiated from any small forest farm in central Sweden.

## Forest Finn materiality

The Forest Finnish farms were surrounded by forests from one horizon to the next, but the forest was cleared and burnt. Large sections were blackened stumps and trunks, with new, green grazing grass shooting up in between. Other sections were recovering birch and spruce forests. This is also how it would have looked around the *fåbodar* in more distant forests, although less black and in the charcoal-producing forests around the mills, and where Swedish farmers had cleared by burning. Central Sweden was poor in forests in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, and the *finnmarker* were not particularly different from the rest, with an open landscape with swidden and grazing areas interspersed in the forests. Everyone had hay-marshes and fishing water.

The Forest Finn farms were inside a fence that separated the infields from the outlying land. In the infields, there were grain fields, some fields lying fallow, and meadows. In the cadastral maps of the time, the Forest Finn farms look just like all the other farms. Whether this was owing to the surveyor's conventions or to the fact that they were in fact similar is difficult to determine. There are not so many different ways that fields and meadows in forest farms can be depicted on a map, nor in reality.

Inside the border between the outfields and infields of the farm, there was also a farmyard and its buildings. In the Swedish farms, there was often a farmyard closed off by four house wings. Outside the wings were dangerous, inflammable buildings such as the smithy and the drying shed, but also the *härbrä* (a log cabin raised on poles), the summer cowshed and others. A Forest Finn farm could also look like this, without a doubt in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and even possibly in the 17<sup>th</sup>, as Råsjö suggests. Outside the farmyard at Råsjö there was among other things the buildings with the stone-pile ovens down by the edge of the lake, one more house with a hearth, and others. Otherwise, the buildings in the Forest Finn farms seem to have been loosely placed in a group

with the farmhouse in the centre. Farthest out were the *riorna*, the sauna and the smithy. Avundsåsen followed this pattern, and possibly Grannäs.

Once inside in the farmyard, a Forest Finn farm had a number of buildings that could not be found on the Swedish farms. The wooden drums on the roofs of the *rökstugor* were very noticeable. The Swedish buildings had stone chimneys. The tall *rior* were also very visible, while from the outside, the Finnish sauna was not noticeably different from Swedish drying sheds or goat pens, except that here, the ends of the leewans were visible. The Swedish farms, on the other hand, had no buildings that could not also be found on the Finnish farms. Exceptions might be single-room cottages with an open fireplace or double cottages with two fireplaces. The former was built in Svartviken in the 1690s. The latter was found in Råsjö and perhaps in Grannäs, but at these places, one room was a *rökstuga*.

Coming into a log building and seeing men, women and children sitting naked on leewans, with birch branches in their hands around a red-hot stone-pile oven is something that would not happen at a Swedish farm in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Entering a Finnish *rökstuga* also felt different and showed a different lifestyle than a Swedish house with an open fireplace. The even warmth radiating from an enormous stone oven under the blackened ceiling was quite different from the uneven waves of heat from a constantly burning illuminating fire. Apart from this, the benches, cabinets and shelves attached to the walls, the table and block chairs, and the chests were the same in both Swedish cottages and Finnish *rökstugor*. If there were textiles or painted wallpaper on the walls, they would reasonably differ in pattern and colours, and the Finnish ones would have been sooty from the stone ovens.

In the farmhouse in Grannäs, a fishing net hung from the ceiling to dry, and splendid pottery dishes were on the table or on a shelf attached to the wall. For the rest, we cannot tell which objects would have caught the eye on entering the *rökstugor* in Råsjö and Grannäs. The things in the refuse from the two Finnish farms that survived the taphonomic processes and ended up in the excavators' bags would not surprise someone wandering into the farms in the *finnmarker* from the parish church village. The exact same things were bought by the people living in the *finnmarker* and the Swedish parish farmers at local markets, works stores and towns. The Finnish households made an effort to keep up with the times and the neighbours regarding acquiring and showing off the latest in material culture.

Things that are not amongst the archaeologists' finds are clothing, the food they ate, and much more. It is not known whether the Finnish women wove different patterns, the Finnish old men made different birch-bark bags or the Finnish men carved different wooden spoon handles than their counterparts in the Swedish households. It seems reasonable that this should be the case. On the other hand, the same kind of buttons was used, the same kind of pipes was smoked, and the same glass was set into the windows. Much of what can be found archaeologically was the same, but much cannot be found.

Seen as an ethnicity gradient, the way in from the outlying land to the Finnish householders' dwellings becomes more and more clearly Finnish, not Swedish, the closer one got to the farmyard. This impression culminated upon entering the cottage and bathing in the different kind of light and warmth in the cottages. However, the details, such as how the table was set, the things in people's hands, the objects on the wall shelves – at least as concerns the visible, archaeologically excavated things – were the same as in a Swedish cottage with an open fire-place. It is uncertain how great the differences were before the breakdown by the taphonomic processes starting with the fires and running through hundreds of years of bacterial activity.

An excavation of a *rökstuga*, where not only objects found in refuse piles can be studied but also the spatial relations between them can be discussed is desirable. The excavations of the houses presented here cannot live up to this. The question should be whether a Forest Finnish household in a *rökstuga* left a different pattern in their material culture from that of a Swedish household in a cottage with an open fireplace. Was there a different Forest Finnish materiality in addition to the buildings in the farmyard and the unknown material culture that has vanished owing to taphonomic processes? The physical objects excavated from the four farms do not answer this question. We have not been able to study the relations between people in the Forest Finnish households with a desired effectiveness.

Instead of a discussion of the spatial division of object types in the buildings, a discussion of the types of buildings and objects follows.

## The Forest Finn cultural complex

In the *finnmarker* in the Scandinavian Peninsula, Finnish-speaking immigrants coming from the Finnish inland had different patterns and norms than their Swedish neighbours (Wedin *et al.* 2001, 2007:137–204). On the other hand, life in general was similar in many ways for people living on a forest farm in the northern European coniferous tree zone. There are only so many ways that the conditions and the possibilities for living from natural resources can vary, without necessarily having to speak about ecological determinism. On the one hand, it is a question of emphasizing what was characteristic for farms in the *finnmarker* regarding language, oral tales and singing, architecture and the world of objects – known archaeologically – while on the other hand, stressing similarities in subsistence economy in the taiga belt.

The Forest Finn immigrants, those who created the *finnmarker*, also had a special way of living in and from coniferous forests compared to the people in the older Swedish settlements in the areas. Clearing and burning, and slash-and-burn were not uncommon in the Scandinavian Peninsula (B. Larsson 1995), but the question is whether large-scale swidden in old coniferous forests – *huuhhta* – created a technical complex that conditioned the Forest Finnish cultural pattern and lifestyle in the *finnmarker*.

Within an agrarian-technical complex, the various components influence each other (Myrdal 1997, 1999, J. Larsson 2009:15–20). Examples are manuring, winter housing for the animals, and use of meadows, scythes and rakes. *Huuhhta* in the *finnmarker* was connected with e.g. Forest Finn rye, a special kind of turnip, swidden rakes, large drying racks and *rior*. The Forest Finn large-scale swidden was very labour-intensive for short periods. Thus, there was a flexible social structure connected with the technical complex, with many itinerant people at the farms. These were the so-called ‘stray Finns’. Lesser known is whether extended families or clans could be found among those Finns who moved to the *finnmarker*. There were clearly groups of siblings working together.

Other components existed in the agrarian-technical complex in addition to the material objects and social order. There was also language, magic and ritual. Words, curses and gestures were connected to the large-scale *huuhhta* and lost their meaning without it.

Thus, the various parts in an agrarian-technical complex affect each other in an intricate fabric. According to the theory, the complex is introduced more or less, ideally more, as a contained package. The complex passes through a cycle of phases from introduction and establishment, via stable use, to decline and disappearance. The Forest Finn complex was introduced in the *finnmarker* through migration from Finland around 1600, existed in the form in which it was introduced for some decades or centuries, and disappeared more or less during the 18th and 19th centuries.

Considered as a cultural complex and not just as an agrarian-technical one, the Forest Finn complex can be seen as an ethnic group based on the history of its origins, its language, its proclivity to marry within the group, and avoiding other lifestyles in the surrounding groups, i.e. the Swedes.

## The process of change and non-change

In the archaeological excavations, the Forest Finn complex possibly existed in the introduction phase in the houses with stone-pile ovens at the edge of Lake Råsjön, in its established, stable phase in Grannäs and Avundsåsen, and in the phase after the decline and disappearance in Svartvik. This process implies changes in the landscape, the infields, the farmyard, the buildings and the world of objects – more or less captured in the excavations – but also in aspects more difficult to capture through excavations: in language, narration, songs and ritual. Expressed in the simplest way, the basic reason for change away from the Forest Finnish life pattern was the closeness to and interaction, seldom conflicts, with the Swedes in the vicinity. This can be seen in those excavated objects that demonstrate an extensive market trade and contact net.

Concepts that are aimed at capturing processes in the meeting between groups of people and changes within one or both of the interacting groups are for example, in alphabetical order: acculturation, assimilation, colonisation,

creolization, ethnicity, hybridization, identity, innovation – in the present case perhaps Swedification would be suitable.

These and other concepts have been used in older and newer Swedish discursive human science. One example is a study on how the traditional Swedish handicrafts have met completely different thoughts about material and techniques from the latest generation of immigrating handicrafts people (Hyltén-Cavalius 2007). What is true handicraft? Another example is the changes in thoughts and uses of hammered copper kettles, which were moved from sheet metal workshops in the Roman Empire to gravesites in Scandinavia during the 4th and 5th centuries AD (Hjørungdahl 2009). Studies concerning meeting and change are legion within Sami archaeology (Olsen 2004; Østmo & Hedeager 2005:320), including studies of the way viewpoints and concepts have changed in a changing contemporary perspective (Yamamoto 2010).

The Finns who were to become Forest Finns can be considered colonists, indeed, pioneers, in areas that were not settled earlier and sparsely utilised, even if this was not always the case.

An analogous situation could be the Swedish colonisation in the mountainous Sami areas in the 19th century, when the colonisers created a kind of boundary regarding 'the others', that is, the Sami – for example, in the socialization of the children into Swedes (Liljequist 1994).

A classic in this area is of course 'The American Frontier' (Harris 1972), taking up the successive colonisation of the present central and western United States and the meeting with the Native Americans, which resulted in the expulsion and almost total extermination of these aboriginal peoples. The European colonisers constituted a strong majority. The Forest Finns in Scandinavia were in the minority. The frontier concept as it was constructed in American historical research assumes an expansion into an uninhabited area, until some sort of natural barrier – mountains, deserts, or oceans – brings it to a halt, or, alternatively, that the climatic tolerance for crops does (Alexander 1977). This could be somewhat of a description of the Scandinavian coniferous forests and the Finns' large-scale slash-and-burn cultivation.

Farmers and cattlemen traveling in prairie wagons across the American West were preceded by pioneers, who hunted or traded or who were simply curious explorers. In Forest Finn contexts, a comparable scenario exists in sagas but not in contemporary sources, although it has been exciting to consider that the stone-pile oven houses in Råsjö possibly belonged to a pioneer farm. A further thought from the American view of pioneer farmers is that "[d]uring the advance westwards, individuals and communities shed much 'cultural baggage', for the society they planted required fewer social, political and economic controls" (Alexander 1977:25). Nothing similar can be proven for the Forest Finnish settlers. Grannäs from the beginning, and Råsjö some decades after its clearance, were complete farms well integrated in the local societal context.

The information dug up by the archaeologists provides few possibilities to discuss the lifestyle in the *finnmarker*, its establishment and the changes in relation to the surroundings. A deeper discussion based on the concepts



above is difficult if evidence from textual sources is not included. However, texts of interest exist only rarely from the 17<sup>th</sup> century, and those that do exist only marginally illuminate the Forest Finnish materiality. To a certain degree, however, this material world does provide certain paths to further discussion.

It is clear that there were differences in lifestyle and material culture between the Swedish Finland and the Finnish Finland in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, when the migration from the Finnish part took place (Villstrand 2009:144–149). The two parts of Finland were not clearly delineated, however, but were woven together (Ahlbäck 1945:9–11). There was nothing in the material culture that would exist somewhere in the Swedish area but be totally absent in the Finnish-speaking areas; further, for the same reason, there was nothing that existed in the Finnish area that was completely absent in the Swedish area (Villstrand 2009:145).

It is reasonable that the same diffuse or non-existent borders defining the material things that were found in the Finland part of the kingdom in the 17<sup>th</sup> century were also found between the *finnmarker* and the surrounding settlements on the Scandinavian Peninsula. This should not be a statement, however, but a research question. The issue should be whether the migrating Finns and the old parish residents showed their identities through material objects or not, and how the material differences were evened out and eventually disappeared.

If the Finns in the *finnmarker* were not integrated into the surrounding communities, they at least interacted with them. In addition to this integration, evidenced by the objects acquired in the market found in the garbage heaps in the Finnish households, it is seen by the Finns' frequent appearances in the courts. Similar to the Swedes, the Finns used the courts as arenas for asserting their honor and for deciding their internal disputes (Österberg 1995; Österberg & Sogner 2000). Finn stood against Finn in the courts more often than Finn stood against Swede, or vice versa. Towards the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, a Finn could be a juryman, and the Finns were conscripted into the King's Regiment if they did not hide away in the forest. The Finns in the *finnmarker* were considered Swedish citizens, as were all other people in the Swedish kingdom. They were expected to be good Lutherans, to pay their taxes and follow the laws and regulations. No laws were written exclusively for Finns. Even though one or another swidden prohibition affected Finns more than other people, they were not written for that purpose.

The Finns' relative degree of integration into the Swedish society is seen materially in their possession of objects that at the time were owned by households that wished to appear equal and maintain their dignity in front of their neighbours, such as fine pottery plates and glass windowpanes. The Finnish households were self-aware, and aware of the demands of their non-Finnish neighbours. They kept up with anyone socially and economically. However, the question remains whether this social expression through material culture already existed in the areas in the heart of Finland that they left. Perhaps it was an attitude towards the household and farm that only developed



after they emigrated and met the pressure of ‘keeping up with the Joneses’ in their new home, and thus was a part of the us-and-them syndrome.

To the extent that the taphonomic process allows us to regard the world of objects at the farms in the *finnmarker*, these objects appear to be time-oriented and changeable beginning in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century. Refuse piles around the cottage at Svartviken show how the household of the Finnish descendants participated in the 18<sup>th</sup> century consumption revolution (Mansén 2011:70). Regarding the buildings on the Finnish farms, an opposite tendency appears to an extent. The type of *rökugnar*, *rior* and saunas that were built by the first generation immigrants around 1600 were still being built in the 18<sup>th</sup> century in the *finnmarker* along the Swedish east coast, and into the 19<sup>th</sup> century in the province of Värmland.

Even if the object culture that archaeology have made visible changed with time, people still lived in the Forest Finn households generation after generation in the inflexible structures created by the *rökstugor*. In a *rökstuga*, the floor space, the lighting and the heating are different from a traditional Swedish cottage with a fireplace and a chimney. How people sat and moved around in relation to each other in a *rökstuga* were different from the way they did in a room with a fireplace. People had different relations to each other – they thought differently about each other.

One question that we do not have enough evidence to answer is whether their diet also created an inflexible structure. This is unknown, and there is really no reason to believe anything else than that food was eaten quite similarly in all the forest farms and in part in most of the other farms as well in the north European coniferous forests. It is notable however, that food was part of the social display as well – herring and wheat were bought by the Grannäs household.

Thus, various aspects of the lifestyle changed in different ways through interaction between people in the *finnmarker* and the Swedish-speaking neighbours in the vicinity. It is notable that the Finns gradually became bilingual – that is, if they were not already so before moving in. Ultimately, they became monolingual, in Swedish. The degree of rapidity of this language change differed greatly in different *finnmarker*, but one or several; in some *finnmarker* many, Finnish placenames were used until recently or are still in use.

The table set for guests, the glass panes in the windows of the cottages, the tobacco pipes clenched between teeth, the buttons on the clothing and maybe also other portable and easily movable objects found in the local markets – all this was adapted in the *finnmarker* at the same time and, as well as can be known, in the same way as in the homes of the non-Forest Finns. At the same time, people maintained their lifestyle in the *rökstugor*, which conditioned living patterns on the members of the household groups. This should mean that the feeling of ‘otherness’ regarding the Finns was different when a Swede met a Finn at the church as compared to the same Swede coming into the Finn’s

*rökstuga*. The Swede might feel he did not belong in the room and perhaps be seen as someone who did not know how to behave as he should.

The Forest Finnish complex or package faded out and disappeared in the course of one or more centuries. The agrarian-technical complex around the *huuhhta* in particular had disappeared for the most towards the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, but slash-and-burn cultivation for Forest Finn rye still occurred around 1900 in for example Rättvik's finmark (Ternhag 1992:74). At that time, *tulimaa* swidden was used for young, mixed forests, which went fine without having to mumble Finnish incantations. Along with large-scale swidden, the flexible, work-conditioned social organisation also disappeared. However, there is no evidence left today to study this as materiality, e.g. how the farmyards were formed.

It must be added to the above that there is actually an on-going discussion about the changeability in the Forest Finn architecture, despite the fact that there are no archaeologically excavated, ethnologically measured or descriptively documented buildings earlier than the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century either in Finland or on the Scandinavian Peninsula. The total lack of knowledge about the first buildings in the *finnmarker* has led to speculation, often of an evolutionist character (e.g. Johnsson 2011). The model is usually the book by Albert Hämäläinen (1945), which when it was published was an impressive and influential work about the Forest Finns' buildings. From that starting point, it is self-evident to discuss how one-roomed *rökstugor*, with possibly an additional room, grew to become a two-or-more-roomed cabin with both a stone oven and a kind of kitchen area with a fireplace (Johnsson 2011:63; Korhonen 2011:31). This idea is not supported by the excavated Forest Finn houses. It is also problematic that it is unknown how the settlements in the Finnish interior in the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century looked (Korhonen 2011:34–35).

With a little good will, the few excavated Forest Finnish buildings can be adjusted to Carolyn Torma's idea of how architecture changes through contact with people in a situation concerning ethnicity (Johnsson 2010:62 after Torma 1991): "In the first stage, the buildings are intended to provide only temporary housing. The second stage is a period of transition in which local architecture is used alongside of the old vernacular architecture. In the third stage, assimilation has taken place; vernacular architecture has been integrated with the local architecture and the old has disappeared." An attempt to follow this is seen in Figure 6:

1. The houses by the lake edge at Råsjö
2. The *rökstugor* at Avundsåsen, Grannäs and Råsjö
3. The cabin at Svartviken

Apart from the fact that the existence of the first phase is uncertain, it is also the case that all three phases were coeval. It is notable that the second *rökstuga* in Grannäs was built at approximately the same time as the room with the fireplace in Svartviken, around 1690. The transition from phase 2 to phase 3

Fig. 6. A generalized – and simplified – model of the process of Forest Finn settlement in the Scandinavian Peninsula in the 17th century.

<http://clamator.its.uu.se/uploader/92/Fig6.pdf>

Stage of settlement	Characteristics	Excavated farms	Time (1)
Established farms	Traditional Swedish dwellings Inland-outland cultivation, stock-breeding, fishing	Svartviken	1690s–1820
Established farms	Characteristic Finnish dwellings Slash-and-burn cultivation, fishing and hunting Inland-outland cultivation Stock-breeding	Avundsåsen Råsjö Grannäs	1650–1720 1640–1720 1610–1730
The initial settlement stage	Simple cabins Slash-and-burn cultivation, fishing and hunting Stock-breeding	Råsjö	1620–1640

(1) = historical-archaeological datings of the excavated sites

occurred at Grannäs some way into the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The model may perhaps serve as a mental aid for the latter two phases – as the first is speculative in Forest Finn contexts – but it also acts as a straitjacket in understanding the existing buildings in the *finnmarker*.

## Forest Finn materiality and ethnicity

Ethnicity is the feeling of belonging to a group, of being part of ‘us’ as opposed to ‘the others’. This feeling can be generated from an historic consciousness, mythical or not, or from different languages or different subsistence economies in an ecologically varied area, or from something completely different, possibly subtle or difficult to understand. Ethnicity can be emphasized in the material world but does not have to be, and these material expressions can vary in time and space.

People in the *finnmarker* felt like Finns in relation to ‘the others’, even after one or two generations of close contact with these ‘the others’ and changes in their images and in the things they used. They built and sat around together in their log cabins, while they lived in forest farms, which for the most part otherwise were no different from all other forest farms. Life in the *rökstugor*

followed traditional ways of interacting with each other that were exclusive to people in the *finnmarker*, continuing in some areas as long as into the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In other places, such as Svartviken, this disappeared in the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

In many ways, the Forest Finns looked, spoke, and behaved like Swedes when they left the *finnmarker* and came to the Swedish-speaking settlements. Back home, however, in their *rökstugor*, they were Finns. This emotional duality began to grow in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and disappeared with the last household who lived in a *rökstuga* in the Värmland province in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The perspectives of the Swedish-speaking people were something else. As late as one hundred years ago, for them, 'the others' could still be 'fucking Finns' (Ternhag 1992:102).

## Conclusions

The Finns who moved to the Scandinavian Peninsula around 1600–1640 and became Forest Finns in *finnmarker* followed a different lifestyle in a different kind of settlement, creating an environment different from the Swedish-speaking inhabitants living in the immigration parishes. The four excavated farms presented in this paper permit a tentative idea of a changing Forest Finnish materiality in relation to their Swedish neighbours – somewhat how materiality was active in their integration with the neighbours, in the 'us-and-them' relation according to the constructivist ethnicity concept.

Taking into consideration the break-down processes in the archaeological material, and without projecting knowledge backwards about the Forest Finns from 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century sources, four main points can be formulated based on the excavations of the farms and the written documents of those times:

1. The Forest Finn households built and used houses that were partly different from the Swedish neighbours' houses. The Forest Finns had *rökstugor*, *rior* and saunas with stone-pile ovens. These log cabins with their stone-ovens created a different type of communal living within the households, with different heat and light conditions in the room, which was not the same as that in the Swedish farmers' cottages with fireplaces. The roles of the household members based on sex and age might have varied.
2. The *huuhhta* required work teams, which demanded a different type of social group in the households than existed for the Swedish farmers. A large labour force was required at some times, less at other times.
3. The Forest Finnish households were incorporated into the monetary and market economy of the times. They acquired and used status and prestigious items such as elegant pottery pieces and window glass. They strived to reach a material image the equal of, and in part similar to, that of the neighbours'.

4. The latest *rökstuga* on the excavated farms was built in the 1680s. In the east Swedish provinces, the stone ovens were in use until the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. In the Värmland province *finnmarker*, stone ovens were still being built in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Some were still being used into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The lifestyle connected with these ovens lived on in part until relatively late.

Large-scale slash-and-burn cultivation disappeared in the majority of the *finnmarker* at the latest in the decades about 1700 owing to the State's restrictions, or simply because the attractive spruce forests were decimated. Work teams made up of clans or other constellations no longer had a function. Family farms with cereal cropping in the infields and grazing cattle on the outlying land, something that of course existed previously, became completely dominant. However, the lifestyle of these families around the stone ovens in their *rökstugor* continued in many of the *finnmarker*, in some places into, and even throughout, the 19th century.

Thus parts of a traditional social pattern, deviating from that in the surrounding Swedish farms and settlements, could exist for 100-300 years. This could be noticed when someone from 'the others' crossed the threshold of a traditional Forest Finnish *rökstuga* and felt that it was different from home. At the same time, the Forest Finns wanted to show off material things from the common marketplaces, which indicates that the households were well aware of and participated in the social exhibition of status. If these objects and phenomena had not been recognizable to 'the other', they would not have had any meaning.

The Forest Finns' material world contained both a changeable exhibition of phenomena, which belonged to and were understood by the Swedes living around them, and things, which with the conservatism inherent in their materiality counteracted lifestyles becoming more Swedish.

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