

JAAH 2023 No 33 Wehlin & Lindblad

Log book

Joakim Wehlin, Joakim & Tova Lindblad, Moving Arrows, Moving People: Towards an understanding of Early Metal Age Settlement Zones in the Boreal Woodlands of Dalarna, Sweden.

Received:	2022-08-15
Length:	<i>c.</i> 9000 words.
1 st Editorial comments:	Reviewers are approached 2022-09-01
Language edit:	Some
Copy rights and credits:	Must be fixed
Author's and reviewer' comments:	Reviewers' comments received 2022-10-17 and 2023-01-20. Author's comments received with revised article 2023-02-03
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Reviewer 1

Peer review of manuscript: Moving Arrows

This paper uses the large Ragnar Lannebro collection as a vantage point for a discussion of the Early Metal Age (c. 2000–1BCE) in Dalarna. Overall, I really appreciate the authors exploration of the research potential to this important collection, which is compiled by an amateur archaeologist. Through the study of this record, the paper also offers valuable insight into a partly unexplored period in Dalarna's prehistory. However, I will recommend that the manuscript only should be accepted if modifications are done (as outlined below).

Comments:

1. It is stated that “the aim [of the article] is to locate settlement sites from the Early Metal Age in Dalarna, Sweden”. I only see this as a first step towards the insight this study offers about the Early Metal Age in the region. The title of the text also promises much more than this specified aim. A clarification of the aims will improve the paper significantly.
2. The section “What is a settlement?” need to be more closely integrated to the rest of the paper. Only some aspects of this discussion are introduced here, while new settlement related aspects are introduced much later in the article (e.g. “dwelling”, “production site”, and “workshop”). Consider reorganizing this.
3. Sometimes it is unclear if Bronze Age is seen as a chronozone or a specific culture.
4. The introduction is written totally without references. References must be added.
5. The record is divided in large and small sites. However, it is not clear how these categories are defined. Are the large sites those with the largest bifacial assemblages, or the largest assemblages overall (from all periods)? Further, it is unclear how sizes of assemblages are related to survey intensity.
6. The maps are difficult to understand by people without detailed knowledge about the region. A map showing the location of Dalarna in Scandinavia / northern Europe is needed. It will also be helpful if locator maps are added to figs. 4, 6, and 8.
7. The authors should consider indicate the northern limit of the occurrence of Bronze Age finds (of south Scandinavian types) in Dalarna, and/or landscape elements that broadly follow this limit (e.g. farmland or elevation).
8. Some formulations in the text are unprecise, or sometimes also misleading. This must be adjusted. See the attached manuscript with comments for specifications.
9. Please also see the attached document for multiple other minor comments.

Reviewer 2

Manuscript title: Moving Arrows, moving people: Early Metal Age Activity Zones in the Boreal Woodlands of Dalarna, Sweden.

Academic Quality of the Publication

Originality

This article represents an interesting and theoretically informed take on the Bronze Age in Dalarna with conclusions that merits to be made available for an international audience. It emphasises a landscape-oriented view as an alternative to a more traditional culture-historical one. It presents a viable attempt at escaping culture-categories by explaining prehistoric reality through settlement analysis and a local perspective. The paper is original in its uses of the settlement perspective and is well thought out in the archaeological material it includes.

Methods & Techniques

The article starts with a well written introduction to the theoretical background and the theoretical framework employed. The methodological angle is a thorough discussion of what a settlement is and what parameters can be used to get at the Bronze Age settlements in the Boreal area of Dalarna. Chipped bifacial arrowheads are selected as indicators of hunter-gatherer settlements in the area. By a comparison with earlier analyses of settlement systems made further north, the authors manage to differentiate the material. Rather than using the catch-all phrase "stone age sites" used by the RAA, the authors try to separate the settlements both functionally and chronologically. This works well to a degree, although larger excavations could have made a more detailed site "typology" based on site structure possible. Such data are of course not available at present, but is to be hoped such excavations can be made in the future.

Logic & Conclusions

The main points and conclusions are argued logically and consistently throughout the paper and I appreciate the clear and effective language employed. The manuscript is logically structured and the arguments are clearly presented, in general a pleasant read.

Illustrations

The illustrations are of good quality and for the most part illustrates the points made in the text (no pun intended). In line with the comments below, maybe the localities of "classic" BA sites or general areas of such settlement could have been indicated on an overall map. There is also one figure missing in my manuscript (and in the figures submitted): fig. 14.

Overall Remarks

I follow the thread well and agree to a large extent when it comes to the suggested importance of bifacial technology as an indicator for Bronze Age hunter-gatherer settlements. Language is

good and the article is easy to read. The different raw materials used in point production are interesting and it would have been of interest with a more detailed consideration of the relationship between the raw material of the BA finds and the local variations of the bedrock (it could be based on Lannerbro's work). Perhaps also a more detailed consideration of aspects of resource use in the different study areas during BA could have enhanced the article. Even if it might be considered somewhat outside the scope of this paper, one thing that also would have been interesting to have in the discussion would be a consideration of the relationship of the HG societies to the nearest areas of Bronze Age agropastoralists. The interaction between these two different kinds of society is a very interesting topic and it seems that the area studied could be important as a base for such an analysis. But these remarks are perhaps more to be seen as suggestions for further articles than a critique of the present paper.

Conclusion and Recommendation to the Publisher

The article is definitely recommended for publication.

Authors' Comments

We are very grateful for the constructive feedback, comments and suggestions from the two reviewers and have taken all comments into consideration. Their suggestions have been followed to a large extent, and the final draft has been improved noticeably after implementing the reviewer's comments.

Correct numbers to the figures have now been added after the comment from reviewer 2 about the missing figure, as well as a new map with Dalarna in northern Europe and locator maps on recommendation from reviewer 1. Both reviewers have remarked that the spread of Nordic Bronze Age finds or sites should be indicated on an overview map. However, we have deliberately chosen not to include a limit or indicator for the spread of the Nordic Bronze Age culture as we believe that it further reinforces the dichotomy of two separate Bronze Ages in Scandinavia. Instead, we want to pinpoint the diversity of societies that existed at the time. Reviewer 1 also pointed out that it sometimes was unclear if we referred to the Bronze Age as a chronozone or a specific culture. In the new manuscript, it should be clear where we refer to the Nordic Bronze Age cultural sphere.

The language has overall been looked over and we have tried to be more precise, especially where reviewer 1 had comments. The aim of the paper has been specified, as we agree with reviewer 1 that this article is *a first step* towards locating sites from the early metal age in Dalarna. Clarifications about how the large and small sites are defined have been marked in the comments in the new manuscript. Sizes of assemblages related to survey intensity is discussed in chapter "the Lannerbro collection". Reviewer 1 suggested that the section "What is a settlement?" should be more integrated in the whole text. With this comment in consideration we have done some smaller changes at different parts in the paper. We think these changes make the text clearer without reorganizing larger paragraphs. Regarding the references in the introduction, we have asked the editors whether this should be done or not and from what we understand it is not necessary. Reviewer 1 made some other minor comments in the draft which we have answered in comments on the attached new manuscript.

We agree with reviewer 2 that the raw material in point production in relation to local bedrock and aspects of resource use in the different study areas are very intriguing subjects, but they are too broad to be included in the scope of this paper. Hopefully, these subjects can be elaborated more thoroughly in further research.