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# 1.1 S/ RESITANCE IN THE PAST AND IN THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH

KRISTINA JENNBERT

## Introduction

What is left behind in our days is coloured not only by the social practice in the past but also by our own abilities to understand, as we are biased in our academic disciplines and in contemporary society. As archaeologists we have our special *habitus* in our research communities. My point of entry in this article is inspired by the archaeological research habitus of Erik Brinch Petersen, a research that is often questioning, often very provocative, and with clearly stated problems. But, in what way are there problems in Palaeolithic and Mesolithic research? And what kind of possibilities exist? With a realization of problems and possibilities in this highly source-critical research field, this field grew and developed, by asking new questions, finding new methods and new theoretical perspectives.

The aim of this paper is not simply to discuss and reflect on Palaeolithic and Mesolithic research. That is why prerequisites and conditions in research are discussed from several aspects. I will refresh some critical issues in doing research, initially formulated within early post-processual archaeology. This is still highly relevant, as research consists of several conflicting ideas, nearly endless discussions, and debates about materials, methods and theoretical perspectives. It is worthwhile to reintroduce the concept of resistance as a trigger in rethinking and finding some underlying principles in Palaeolithic and Mesolithic research.

The concept of resistance came up in my mind when reading the articles by Brinch Petersen in his efforts to understand the excavated archaeological material of the Dragsholm burials in Denmark (e.g. Brinch Petersen 1974, 2008; Price et al. 2007). The concept opens up opportunities to rethink the research process but also the past, and how images of the past are mediated to the public. It is time to return to this concept, and so vividly used some decades ago (e.g. Miller, Rowlands and Tilley 1989), to understand people in past and present societies.

Principles of resistance help us to turn and twist our habitual thoughts and give us a consciousness about power relations in the past and in the practice of archaeology. Are we as researchers always aware of our research habitus and scientific paradigm? And what happens with us, as researchers, when we have to consider other ideas? Do we have a resistance against

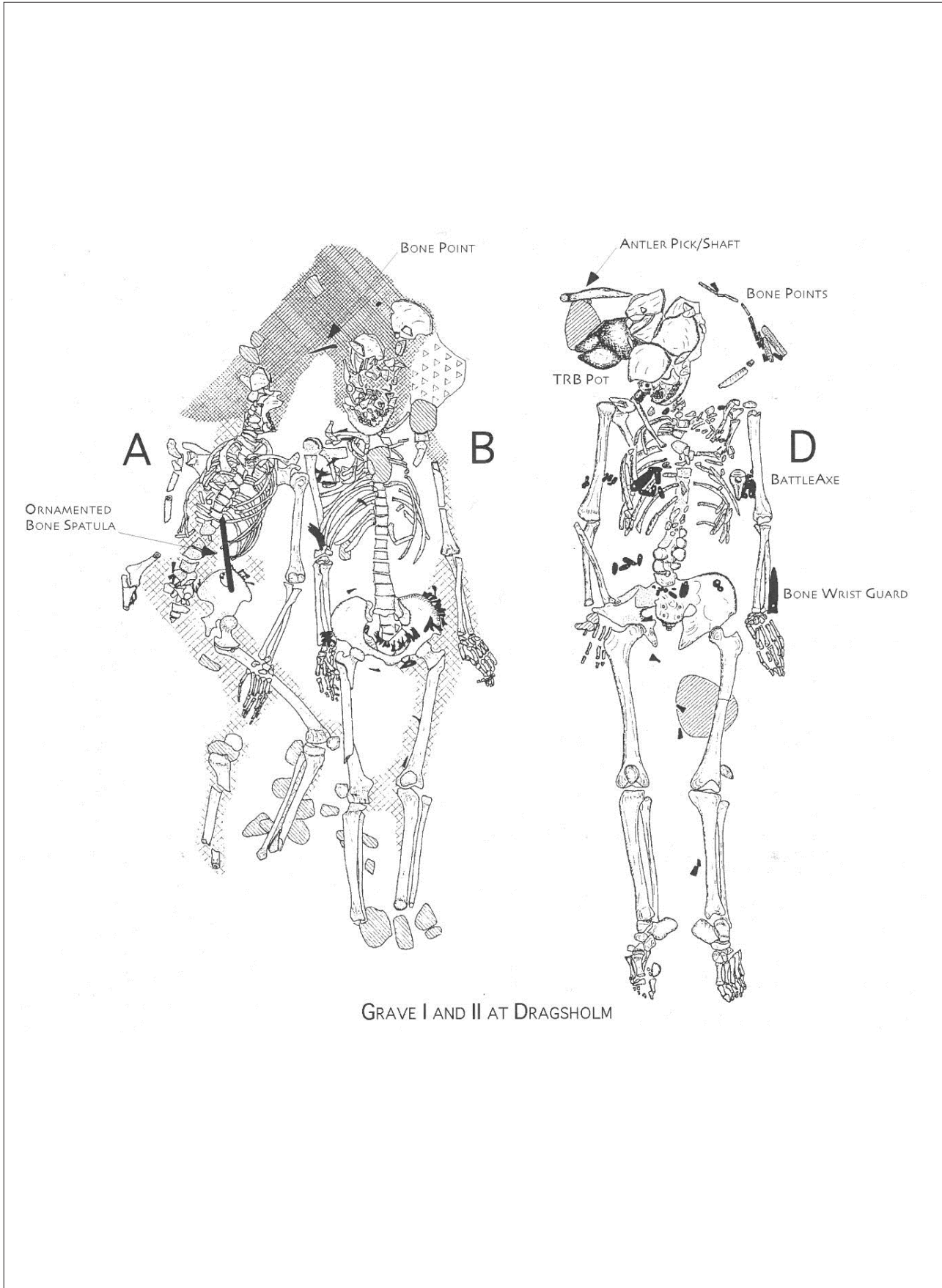
other interpretations, against considering other theoretical perspectives, a different research focus? And if not, is the research climate open-minded enough to accept new and surprising interpretations? That is the reason why the concept of resistance could be useful as a trigger in reflections on our research communities, on social structure and organization, and what brings people together.

I will emphasize the many possibilities in research when I begin to discuss the concept of resistance as a tool to understand the past, the research and the archaeological remains. Then I will briefly present my exemplification, the Dragsholm burials in north-western Zealand in Denmark, before I discuss aspects of Resistance in the past and in the archaeological research. I will then broaden the discussion and summarize a wide range of perspectives with references to often disparate scholars as regards theories and concepts, in order to bring out strategies within Palaeolithic and Mesolithic research. This article is specifically about Palaeolithic and Mesolithic archaeology but also about archaeology in general, as Stone Age archaeology is enclosed in the overall trends in archaeology and contemporary society.

My own privilege as an observer of Palaeolithic and Mesolithic research rests on the power of now being an outsider by wearing lenses from other archaeological research fields. As far as I have experienced doing archaeology, a reflexive consciousness about the production of knowledge and communication strategies is fundamental to increase our knowledge and to use our knowledge about the past. The awareness of subjectivity in the production of knowledge helps to understand what problems and possibilities there might be in Palaeolithic and Mesolithic research. Therefore, critical aspects with self-critique and reflexivity form the necessary core in archaeological research, as Erik Brinch Petersen also clearly states. In this considerations, the concept of resistance acts as a trigger to give insights into Palaeolithic and Mesolithic research.

## The concept of resistance

In the Dragsholm publications there is a growing eagerness within the research team to understand and interpret the archaeological evidence. They searched for new approaches. The team is interdisciplinary,



**Figure 1.**  
Dragsholm burials (after Price et al. 2007: 194, figure 1)

with archaeology and natural sciences. And there was a kind of resistance in the material concerning how to go further in the research process. As it appeared, new investigations due to developments in physical anthropology, radiocarbon dating, and bone chemistry gave new insights about the buried persons. The progress in archaeological research distilled from the Dragsholm publications illustrates the many steps in the research process. It illustrates the various degrees of resistance in the past, as well in the present.

The sociological concept of resistance is about communication within a group of people that “highlights the interactional nature of resistance” (Hollander and Einwohner 2004: 548) and has a central role of power relations. Even while resisting power, individuals or groups may simultaneously support the structures of domination that necessitate resistance in the first place. Resistance is about intentional overstepping of limits in the politics of everyday life. It underlies assumptions of ambiguity and fluidity. Resistance is power-related and has a dialectical relationship with domination. Michel Foucault writes: “Where there is power, there is resistance, and yet, or rather consequently, this resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power” (Foucault 1978: 95).

Usually, resistance refers to social movements, protests, contentious politics, violence, working slowly, and feigning sickness, wearing typical kinds of clothing. However, the sociologists Jocelyn A. Hollander and Rachel L. Einwohner typologize the concept of resistance as e.g. overt, covert, unwitting, target-defined, externally-defined, missed and attempted behaviours. Their typology broadens the concept in order to understand human acts. Individuals or collective groups, widespread or local, can resist, for example, expectations, accepted rules, and institutional power. The scale and direction of resistance is cultural and socially infinite (Hollander and Einwohner 2004: 544). That is why the concept of resistance is useful to understand social acting not only in the past but also current research activities.

The many typologies of resistance offer sociological interpretations of the archaeological remains. Likewise, it is useful to study the research process and the researchers, as the concept of resistance is associated with human agency and communication. Therefore, it refers to human life in the past as well as today. Resistance and domination is part of the interaction between people and it seems that the interaction is related to social structures and to human minds. What people actually do is to subordinate social roles with socially learned behaviours in political and ideological contexts. So, in the complex nature of resistance, actors, their targets, and observers are involved (Hollander and Einwohner 2004: 536).

The concept of resistance is used here as a metaphor to understand archaeological remains, but also as a tool to understand social dimensions in the past and in the practice of archaeology today. As resistance and domination in research are power-related, theoretical perspectives are certainly loaded with values that set the agenda for present-day understanding about our knowledge of the past. The key words in the typology of resistance open up for turning and twisting our understandings of the past, our archaeological materials, and archaeological research and politics.

### The Dragsholm burials

The Dragsholm burials in northwest Zealand in Denmark exemplify the many aspects of the concept of resistance. The burials were excavated in 1973 and 1974. In grave I two women were buried (A, 18–20 years old; B, over 40 years old). In grave II, burial D was a roughly 30-year-old male (Figure 1). The bodies were in supine position with arms parallel to the body, burials B and D with their legs stretched, and burial A with bent legs. Burials A and B had 144 animal tooth pendants, a decorated bone dagger, a bone point, and were covered with red ochre. The D burial had 20 amber beads, a stone battle axe, flint blades and projectile points, an antler pick or shaft, a bone spoon, a wrist guard, a pot from the Early Neolithic Funnel Beaker culture (Brinch Petersen 1973, 1974, 1979; Price et al. 2007) (see figure 1). Already in his first article Brinch Petersen wrote that “the excavation of the two graves actually raised more questions than it solved” (Brinch Petersen 1974: 119), and many years later was written “the two graves with the three individuals have haunted archaeologists ever since” (Price et al. 2007: 194).

For over 40 years Erik Brinch Petersen and his colleagues have recurrently attempted to find out about the burials. In each article there is a new step resting on the one before. Of course, not all the information one could wish for is available, which is the normal situation for archaeologists. The record is fragmentary. Above all, several of the articles express the frustration of the archaeologists and scientists working with the burials. They realized that the taphonomic situation, the preservation and documentation limit the actual empiric archaeological material. Finally, new investigations at Dragsholm provided an updated interpretation of the age, with anatomical characteristics of the burials, their bone chemistry and diet, the archaeological context of the graves and settlements in the area, and the Holocene geology of the region (Price et al. 2007: 213).

The new radiocarbon dates and stable isotope measurements show that the two graves are approximately 1000 years apart in age and that the two females date from the Mesolithic Ertebølle and that the male is in

the Early Neolithic. The females with a marine diet were from the local region, while the male with a terrestrial diet with maybe up to 15% marine food may have been born outside the region (Price et al. 2007).

Can we understand the persons in grave I and grave II? The modern view of Stone Age people changed dramatically due to the publication *Man the Hunter* by Richard L. Lee and Irven Devore (1968). Yet in the mid 1970s we still thought of friendly and peaceful hunter-gatherer societies. And until the Vedbæk burials just north of Copenhagen were found and excavated (Albrethsen and Brinch Petersen 1975) we were not quite sure about norms and values at the end of life. Did they bury dead people at all? Shortly after the find the Dragsholm female became the late Mesolithic stereotype of coastal dwellers living off the sea, while the male exemplified an inland Neolithic lifestyle. The reason was a new method to measure the  $\delta^{13}C$  values of bone collagen to find keys on their respective diet: the Mesolithic females on a marine diet and the Neolithic male on terrestrial diet (Tauber 1981). The new method confirmed the dominant and conventional idea of separate lifestyles. The renewed investigation gave a similar result, but with a much more nuanced result saying that the man also had a lower percentage of marine food in his diet. However, the idea of separate lifestyles is still dominant (see below).

Who was the buried man from Dragsholm? And who were the women? Where did they come from? And was the man a warrior with all his tools and pendants? The females might be close relatives, if not mother and daughter, perhaps sisters according to Pia Bennike's new investigation of the skeletons (Price et al. 2007: 201). The three of them did not meet, we know for sure from the radiocarbon datings. But we don't know whether the people who buried the young man knew about earlier people on the site. They are so closely situated on the small hill that it could actually have been the case. In the following, the discussion will follow the male individual as an exemplification of the importance of material, methods, and theoretical perspective.

As Erik Brinch Petersen writes: "these farmers came to be buried as archers/warriors not because they spent all their time on the warpath, but because it was as warriors that they had made their impression on their kinsmen left to bury them" (Brinch Petersen 2008). If resistance is brought into the discussion another understanding of the complexity of actors in the past will appear.

The typology of resistance helps us to find clues to interpret the complexity of the burials. Of course, the rationale behind the male burial in Dragsholm is hidden. But we can discuss whether certain individuals

or collective groups were treated after death in similar manners. We can discuss whether the death ritual was widespread or local. But the scale and direction of expectations, accepted rules, and institutional power is difficult to answer. Likewise, the concept of resistance opens up for the scrutiny of human agency in the past, for instance concerning the story of the buried man in Dragsholm. When he came to the place, was he part of a social movement, or did he wear his clothes, his pendants, and his weapons in protest? Was he violent or did he lurk around in an overt or covert movement? Did he have a target, or was he an observer? The peaceful image of hunter-gatherers had to be modulated.

Moreover, quite recently, conflict-based and aggressive hunter-gatherers have started to show up (Sponsel 1998; Roksandic 2006). The new methods of isotope analysis certainly help us to understand migrations. From the character of the axes, beads and flint objects one can find out about networking and conflicts. The warrior at Dragsholm, grave D, fits very well in this briefly presented a shift in research focus towards conflicts, which was not possible to express forty years ago. But the Dragsholm male is also a very good example of the source-critical aspects and research qualities. Evidently, a close collaboration between different specialities is necessary to be able to interpret radiocarbon calibration, stable isotopes of carbon and nitrogen and strontium isotope ratios (Price et al. 2007).

Erik Brinch Petersen wrote: "The most interesting thing about a burial is perhaps not what we can see with the naked eye, but what we can make inferences about, what must have been there. So far, no longbow has been mentioned in most of these burials. Is it not safe, however, to assume that a powerful longbow may have accompanied the many transverse arrowheads?" (Brinch Petersen 2008: 37). Perhaps, a kind of silent resistance was embedded in the archaeological material. We know that as archaeologists we study fragments of the past, and although we cannot reconstruct the sequence of events with movements and sounds, or ask about the underlying intentions, we can study and draw conclusions about how cultural expressions were shaped and reshaped. In such an analysis we have to use concepts, theoretical tools and models to advance the interpretative process. Certainly, there is a resistance in the archaeological material. And for the research team on the Dragsholm project this kind of hidden resistance might have been the trigger to be open-minded enough to look for new methods and new theoretical frameworks. To answer your questions and find out the actual story you have to twist and turn theories, methods and material that bring new perspectives and new knowledge that challenges the preconceived view of the burial.



The Dragsholm articles show the importance of a critical approach and the use of concepts, e.g. cultural identity and how to present the interpretation of the man as a warrior. As Erik Brinch Petersen points out, the Dragsholm burials strengthen the need to integrate scientific methods with the social and cultural understanding of tools and pendants, the archaeological material culture as agency (e.g. Brinch Petersen 2008).

Therefore, the discrepancy between interpretations in research and contemporary perceptions of the Stone Age in other fields of science and the public is problematic. Palaeolithic and Mesolithic research has many possibilities to apply a critical perspective to modern images of Stone Age people, as the research behind our images is filled with assumptions, source-critical considerations, as well new methods and results.

What about the objects in the Neolithic Dragsholm burial? Did they play active roles in the person's life? Or, were they important for those who buried him? In current research traditions archaeologists tackle the task of interpreting abstract and mental phenomena on the basis of material remains. Questions and assumptions about materiality, along with, for example, concepts of memory, identity, power, violence, gender, and lifestyle, are also some of those perspectives in current research on the Palaeolithic and Mesolithic (e.g. Larsson et al. 2003; McCartan et al. 2009).

But what if there is a silent resistance embedded in the archaeological material culture? Is the character of the archaeological material culture in hunter-gatherer societies extraordinarily silent? We know for instance that missing and perishable materials (Hurcombe 2014) decrease the ability to grasp the total material culture. Also, the cultural filter about the objects involved in death rituals is challenging to observe for archaeologists. Therefore, the methodological awareness in the research is strong, and theoretical perspectives and anthropological comparatives are indispensable. We also know that our discourse and practice affect our understanding of the actual archaeological context. Thus, the archaeological material culture offers innumerable options to interpret hunter-gatherers' actions. Even if the archaeological interpretation is grounded in source criticism, the perceptions of humans and attitudes to other people are the most important ingredients in the archaeological research process.

No, material culture is not a passive reflection of social reality, but an active component allowing people e.g. to define themselves in relation to others. Or, as Brinch Petersen writes: "To have hunters represented as a professional group in the Neolithic, also seems a bit far fetched and to me they fill the role of warriors much better" (Brinch Petersen 2008: 36). Materiality in itself is as much an active social force as an expression of

skill in handicraft and technology. In more general terms materiality may signal identity and ownership, knowledge and quality, but also behaviour, characteristics, and the appearance of individuals; material culture is to be understood as a social force (Miller 1987). Material culture can also be historically situated and events discussed from particular locations (e.g. deposits in burials). The increase in source material during the last few decades has meant that we can sense human intentions and actors, rather than just general abstract processes (Boivin 2008). In earlier research, material culture acted as a passive component in social agency; material culture in a postmodern perspective socializes humans. Thereby, material culture is understood as a conscious expression challenging and remodelling social roles. The frustration of the resistance in the archaeological material culture might instead be converted to "the material turn", as subjects in the shaping of the world. That is why the objects in Dragsholm burial D became vital in understanding the person himself.

The traditional scholarly models of e.g. Neolithization are nowadays called in question. Much more aspects of humans and societies have to be integrated in the framework. Therefore, the models of societies derived from the different theoretical perspectives are the clues for understanding and interpreting the archaeological material culture. A range of theories, especially phenomenology, social theory and actor-network theory, are helpful for understanding material culture and human agency. These theories are important to archaeological theory and they challenge researchers to reconsider ideas about the nature of things (Latour 2007; Olsen 2010). The research question about human agency in the explanation of social phenomena, the relationship between exploitation and domination, and economic relations to political/ideological structures involves concepts and theoretical perspectives from a broad spectrum of intellectual domains.

Likewise, the concept of entanglement could be used to express the interrelationship of humans, landscape and things. Long-standing entanglements are irreversible and increase in scale and complexity over time (Hodder 2012). Entanglement offers a possibility to rearrange material culture in time and space in order to highlight the complex perspectives of time and human agency, and to enter the chaos and complexity in the archaeological material culture also during the Palaeolithic and Mesolithic periods. To take the male in Dragsholm once again as an example, his way to Zealand might have been caused by a cluster of events and random encounters that may have triggered a chain reaction of events that ultimately led him to the Dragsholm region.

### Mesolithic or Neolithic?

One problem in the Dragsholm burials was the dating and the question of contemporaneity between the two graves. Were they Mesolithic or Neolithic? With that follows the whole idea about the complexity of our classification of archaeological material into periods and cultural groups.

This is a classical problematic issue within archaeology. Research on Neolithization has been strongly affected by the abstractions denoting cultural groups, periods, and economic activities. Considerations about the complexity inherent in the use of culture concepts and period subdivisions are useful in renewed attempts to grasp the Neolithization process (e.g. Jennbert 1984; Thomas 1991; Fischer and Kristiansen 2002, Price et al. 2007; Sørensen 2014). The Dragsholm burials indicate the complexity in chronology, as the radiocarbon dating and calibration caused major problems. Earlier datings separated graves I and II by 500 years; an interlude made them contemporary; the latest solution placed them 1000 years apart (Price et al. 2007).

So, what are we looking for in the classification of archaeological periods? Of course, there are many reasons to order objects and events in a chronological sequence. Analyses of particular sources may indicate continuity over several periods, while others may indicate discontinuity within the defined periods. Different time horizons and source material influence the interpretation of the historical course of events – they produce different stories. The *Annales* school and the history of mentalities, along with theories of ritual in sociology and comparative religion, are a fruitful source of inspiration for studying the relationship between material culture and time in the prehistoric conceptual world. It is above all the idea of social structures and the long, sluggish history of everyday life, *la longue durée* as opposed to *la courte durée* (the short span), the *histoire événementielle* that inspires interpretations of relations between people and societies from a mundane perspective (Braudel 1980). The individual short-term perspective, a mythical perspective and an analytical long-term perspective will give perspectives on human agency.

The *Annales* approach suggests many perspectives to archaeology (e.g. Knapp 1992). For instance, to place the Dragsholm burials with the individual short-term perspective, the social movement in the marine and terrestrial landscape perhaps required other skills in daily life. The scale and direction of possible resistance in life pattern is cultural and socially infinite, and problematic to interpret from the archaeological material. Using the other long-term temporality, the analytical long-term perspective puts the Dragsholm burials into a long chain of events that could have been widespread or local and integrated individuals or collective groups.

Perhaps they resisted ritual innovations in death rituals but in the end accepted certain novelties, as for example the collective burials in megalithic tombs.

Erik Brinch Petersen's articles on the Dragsholm burials (Meiklejohn, Brinch Petersen and Alexandersen 2000; Brinch Petersen and Meiklejohn 2007, 2009; Price et al. 2007; Brinch Petersen 2008) illustrate the complex archaeological interpretative work. However, the interpretative work is not just sorting out data, but having an idea about possible events in the past. This basis for improvement and reinterpretation in necessary reflexive feedback on the research process. A critical approach implies a large measure of conflicting ideas. In the Dragsholm burials the conflicting ideas rest on the problem of contemporaneity between the females and the male. The problems of radiocarbon dating and calibration combined with the understanding of the Mesolithic versus the Neolithic are the recurrent problem in the publication of the Dragsholm burials.

To continue on social movements and societal change as the concept of Neolithization implies. What happened when the warrior in Dragsholm burial D came to Zealand? Our models of movements, migrations, networking, and cultural encounters have grown during the last few centuries. Central concepts are creolization as regards cultural complexity, diaspora as regards the life of exile and nostalgia, and hybridity as regards post-colonial identities and cultures (Hannerz 2010; Hylland Eriksen 2010). The term creolization is a way to describe the merging and the cross-fertilization that takes place between different cultures when they interact. A local community chooses certain elements of incoming cultures, gives them meanings that differ from those they had in the original culture, and then creatively combines these with indigenous traditions to yield completely new forms. Creole cultures have been shaped by multidimensional cultural encounters with a dynamic that has continuous repercussions and transforms cultural patterns shaped by different social and historical experiences and identities. Creolization is a finite process, which ends when a new group identity has been formed with reference to cultural heritage and ethnicity (Cohen 2007).

To carry on with models about landscape, animals, and ecological biodiversity, our theories of "Nature" could be challenged. The modern idea that, for example, animals in the Palaeolithic and Mesolithic surrounded people in a "natural" way in untouched nature has been advocated. Animals are often assumed to have been an inexhaustible resource and hunting has been interpreted as a survival strategy. This is more important the further back in time we go. This functional interpretative paradigm of a hunting society has dominated research on the Palaeolithic and Mesolithic. Nor does

the domestication of local resources qualify cultures to be “Neolithic”, since a hunter-gatherer society also practises resource manipulation (Grøn 2012). Humans certainly shaped the landscape and it in turn shaped people’s attitudes to nature and to animals. Economic activities in this culturally created environment, with its animals and plants (wild and later domesticates), required knowledge and cultural stances.

Because of that, a broader understanding of gender roles and social dynamics in everyday life, in alliances and other contacts between people would be a valuable perspective. Contact networks and gift systems or flows of ideas are significant for encounters between people and societies. Reflecting networks and exchange, the now well-known concept of the gift as developed by the French sociologist Marcel Mauss, referring to the honour of both giver and receiver, is always worth examining (Mauss [1924] (2000).

Another model could be that patterns of cultural action were rooted in local topographical conditions, dependent on the location of water and the composition of the vegetation. This does not mean that the external environment determined social practice, but the environment was composed of the different elements of nature to which people were related. I myself suggested that social dynamics and exchange of gifts were central in the plot of Neolithization. Since people cannot live in isolation, there must be contact areas between groups of people. Gifts and return gifts can be important elements in the contact network. Gift exchange often depends on prestige or diplomacy, or is motivated by both. Gifts can circulate, or they can be handed over as a tribute. They can be given for reasons of both peace and war. They are not in themselves functional. Another important aspect of exchange relations is the exchange of women or men in marriage alliances. I therefore saw marriage alliances as a significant feature of the pattern of alliances that must have existed between Neolithic societies in Europe and the Ertebølle period in southern Scandinavia (Jennbert 1984).

Obviously, several interpretations based on aDNA methods (e.g. Skoglund et al. 2012) neglect the importance of social and cultural theories on the construction of identities and societies. There is an unwitting resistance of cultural and social theories. In order not to use scientific methods uncritically in the constructing of “ethnic groups” (e.g. G. Kossina) a discourse on theories of archaeological reconstruction of societies is needed (Müller 2014). Archaeology requires new innovative scientific methods. However, the danger is not to consider the social and cultural implications.

With source-critical considerations and questions of representativeness, the archaeological problem

becomes very clear in the interpretation of the Dragsholm burials. It also leads to a critical reading of the evidence for Neolithization in Southern Scandinavia, Holstein and Mecklenburg (Petersen and Egeberg 2007b: 460). The importance of this kind of critical archaeology becomes very obvious, as a path to develop new knowledge and perspectives on the Neolithization.

### Research communities

The archaeological research field is a kind of expedition into the past, where attitudes within the research field are as important as attitudes to humankind in the past. The production of knowledge and scientific facts works within a thought collective. Each scholarly culture has its own research habitus, with the researcher concentrating on questions that fall within the framework of the subject’s research traditions (Bourdieu 1992). However, the communication between different groups of researchers with different research habitus is often very sharp in evaluating concepts, methods and theoretical ideas. Also, because research takes time, your own models have to be questioned and renewed. And sometimes there is a resistance against new ideas. Because of that, never-ending critical questioning is of the utmost importance in the scientific work.

When the concept of resistance entered my mind, other fundamental principles for doing research followed. Research, defined as a social act, involves resistance in daily work, in articles, in debates, whether with silenced voices or in open discussions. To think through resistance and domination give a healthy outlook on practices and habits. Thinking through the concepts of resistance and domination raises new perspectives on our interpretations of the past, and on how archaeological research has evolved. Likewise, sociological theories concerning individual, cultural, and societal agency give perspectives on the past as well as on Palaeolithic and Mesolithic research. Theories of political science with a focus on social organization, and what brings people together, are thus added in this article to find some underlying principles for Palaeolithic and Mesolithic research. The relationship between control and resistance is important in this type of critical post-modern framework (Dutta 2012: 10).

Obviously, humans make their choices within the cultural and social norms and values concerning how to act, how to participate or how to not be part of an action. And so do researchers. What kind of models are in question in ongoing research? Is it possible to ask questions about something we don’t know anything about? Who sets the agenda? In the following, I will use the sociological concept of resistance in order to find some principles in the archaeological research on the Palaeolithic and Mesolithic. In addition,



other concepts of knowledge production, such as Pierre Bourdieu's major ideas about field, habitus and reflexivity (Bourdieu 2010 [1984]), will be used to capture the problems, the possibilities and the challenges in the research field.

Formulated in another way, the possibilities in research lie in our attitudes, experience, and knowledge of how to do research, and in the freedom to ask whatever questions we choose. This is because the archaeological material is silent, and theoretical perspectives are necessary. The perspective on resistance in the past and in scientific research includes power and control, inequality and difference. To do this it is necessary to belong to a social context.

Turning again to sociology, there are loyalties and reactions against the results in research among researchers in the field. Perhaps there are also sentiments in the verbal and cognitive understanding of the results produced. The resistance is not always pure, but integrated in norms and values in society (Hirschman 1970). Maybe the concept of resistance as a central sociological analytical concept might be applicable to Palaeolithic and Mesolithic research? Following Hollander and Einwohner's typology of resistance, humans had quite a range of possibilities to act. If, as Michel Foucault says (Rabinow 1984: 94), "Where there is power, there is resistance", societies have a lot of resistance strategies, and may contribute to the exercise of power. Resistance opens up for actors in another way than is normally seen in archaeological studies. The archaeological research network might affect and control our ways of thinking, feeling, and acting. Thus, our ways of doing research become empowered and disempowered within different networks of power relations and different forms of resistance (Medina 2011). Being silent, breaking silence, not citing or applauding is also power-related with its Foucauldian cyclical relation between resistance and domination.

How do archaeologists perceive their research? What happens among scholars in the research field? What kind of social order is there in the research field? As doing research involves the production and circulation of knowledge, there has to be a lot of communications in the field of research. The international conferences on "The Mesolithic in Europe" have an enormous impact on the research community. The conferences and the publication formulate boundless research habitus without regard to nationality. Likewise, new technology with the development of the Mesolithic Miscellany has challenged the traditional infrastructure. The Web 2.0 technologies have developed into an important tool for the dissemination of knowledge, in academia, the media, and society (Hadley 2010).

The past forty years of archaeological research have resulted in changed and improved source material in southern Scandinavia and elsewhere in Europe. This, combined with new archaeological and scientific methods and theories, allows a much more detailed and historicizing interpretation of the Palaeolithic and Mesolithic. Moreover, the research has had the good fortune to be followed through the many impressive conferences on "The Mesolithic in Europe" (Kozłowski 1973; Gramsch 1981; Bonsall 1988; Vermeersch and van Meer 1990; Thévenin and Bintz 1999; Larsson, Kindgren, Knutsson, Loeffler and Åkerlund 2003; McCartan, Schulting, Warren and Woodman 2009).

Nowadays, quite a big group of researchers are working with these archaeological periods. There has also been increased regional participation in the international Mesolithic conferences since the first meeting in 1973 (Hadley 2010: 31). Research questions have changed, and today they are far from the initial typological-chronological focus. Today, questions of ecological environments, technological innovations, symbolic and ritual contextualization, human and social agency have emerged. Excellent surveys and retrospectives have been written examining the scientific Palaeolithic and Mesolithic research (e.g. Kozłowski 2009; Larsson 2009; Price 2009; Hadley 2010).

Is research in varied forms a collective action or based on individual outcomes? Hardly anyone would assert the importance of the individual driving force, and none would attribute the emphasis of success or failure only to a research group. Rather, as the historian of science Thomas S. Kuhn explains a scientific paradigm, there are "universally recognized scientific achievements that, for a time, provide model problems and solutions for a community of practitioners" (Kuhn [1962] 2012: x). The archaeological theories referring to cultural-historical archaeology, processual archaeology, and post-processual archaeology imply a shift of paradigms. Fundamental epistemological outlooks on the archaeological evidence, between objective and subjective interpretations are elaborated as overt and target-defined resistance between and against researchers.

As resistance is related to domination, research also express power-relations within the research communities. Of course, the social dynamics within the Palaeo-Meso research communities are not always overt. And within the research community there are social movements, and groupings of people and friends holding together (formerly wearing typical types of shirts, vests or knives in the belt) but seldom are there vocal protests or violence. However, my personal impression is that there are a few dominant researchers, for example the organizers and the chairmen, who are important in the conferences on "The Mesolithic in Europe".

They are influential and affect research and interpretation on the Palaeolithic and Mesolithic.

Is there a well-defined and homogeneous research habitus in Palaeolithic and Mesolithic research? Can we define a certain archaeological mode of operation? One way to find answers is to start with the concept of paradigm, and see whether we can find resistance towards new paradigms. A paradigm is a set of standards or beliefs in a specific scientific community that affects the researcher's perception of what to do research on and how to do it. It defines a scientific perspective, a research approach or research strategy based on the researcher's role, on reality and worldview. According to Kuhn, a paradigm determines the questions to be asked and not asked and the answers that are relevant (what results can be expected) (Kuhn [1962] 2012). In that respect there is a specific archaeological knowledge in relation to the Palaeolithic and Mesolithic, very much circling around the archaeological material and the scientific methods. But it looks as if researchers on the Palaeolithic and Mesolithic have had different scientific ideals, and occupy different ideological positions.

Theories and methods from the humanities, social sciences and the natural sciences are a shared precondition for analysing the past. The scientific methodologies and theoretical perspectives undoubtedly differ in the various disciplines and research areas. In the 1970s archaeology, especially the variety known as processual archaeology, became dependent on the natural sciences for its theory formation, and many major collaborative projects developed (Trigger 1989). With post-processual archaeology, which emerged in the 1980s (Hodder 1985), other theoretical perspectives were formulated and there was less collaboration between archaeology and natural science subjects. Moreover, it became important for archaeology not only to pursue research on problems within the discipline, but also to emphasize the significance for contemporary history.

Today, archaeologists scrutinize their own times, and how the past is used in the present, with more distinct sources of inspiration from other subjects in the humanities and social sciences than before. Since the turn of the millennium, cooperation between researchers in the humanities and the natural sciences has once again become relevant. Palaeolithic and Mesolithic research, like research in other archaeological periods, has interdisciplinary and multi-period approaches. Therefore, underlying strategies in Palaeolithic and Mesolithic research concern not only the choice of theoretical perspectives but also a truly interdisciplinary approach to analysing resources and making use of interdisciplinary methods.

Without the communication and dissemination of results and knowledge, research is meaningless, even unethical. Thus, the concept of resistance also acts as a metaphor for communication strategies, involving all kinds of resistance and also acceptance of controversial knowledge and perspectives of the past. As a researcher or a curator at a museum you have to choose the representation of humans of the Palaeolithic and Mesolithic culture without getting caught in a myriad of archaeological sites and objects. The representation is power-related and it is relevant to talk about the typologies of resistance mentioned earlier in the article; making visible, not telling, being silent, breaking silence, not citing, or applauding, all fall within the ethical consequences of communication and dissemination.

Even if it is tempting in novels and movies to exploit Stone Age stereotypes, the scientific models of the societies show the difficulties of bringing the actual societies into stories. Lately, an improved reflexivity as a methodological tool in research grew as part of a more general self-critique attempting to understand the situation of an archaeologist (e.g. Brinch Petersen and Egeberg 2007; Grøn 2012). Attitudes and values in the archaeological material, in our methods and in our ability are vital to understand the agency of humans in the past. However, the possibilities lie in our attitudes, experiences, and knowledge about how to do research, and in the freedom to ask whatever questions we find necessary.

### **Strategies in Palaeolithic and Mesolithic research**

Research on the Palaeolithic and Mesolithic periods as in general archaeology is a combination of extensive archaeological investigations, methodological developments, and new theoretical perspectives in a highly interdisciplinary archaeology. Since the early nineteenth century, archaeological knowledge and the interpretations of Late-Glacial and Post-Glacial hunter-gatherers have applied many perspectives in order to understand human beings, human agency and social changes on the basis of a restricted and fragmented archaeological material culture.

The archaeological field of knowledge encompasses a wide variety of intellectual domains, including sociology, anthropology, gender studies, philosophy, ecology, and zoology. We use source material, methods, and theoretical approaches from the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences. It is important in critical research to include a scrutiny of our terminology, and the tyranny of our classifications. This is because research is biased and our system of classification limits our reflective thinking, as it is usually based on early twentieth-century approaches. The realization that the representation of the past is a modern construction

reflecting mentality and values in our own time opens up for critical reflection on our Modern Age.

The main perspectives in Palaeolithic and Mesolithic research are focused on ecology, technology, economic conditions, and social power structures. Methodological developments in the natural sciences and new theoretical perspectives have helped in a reassessment of the Palaeolithic and Mesolithic periods. Methods from both the humanities and the natural sciences work together in analysing human environments. The research traditions from the natural sciences, humanities, and social sciences both enrich and complicate the scholarly dialogue. For example, evolutionary biological perspectives and genetic studies of plants, animals, and humans attempt to clarify certain aspects of the period while the humanistic and social frameworks of interpretation in studies of archaeological source material contribute to the understanding of the cultural context.

Scandinavian Palaeolithic and Mesolithic research has seen many approaches, however, from cultural-historical interpretations covering large areas to more specific regional approaches. Basic archaeological questions about chronology, space, and function have been increasingly expanded to include questions about symbolic values and connotations of the mental human life-world in the 1990s. In recent decades post-humanist approaches with new materialism, symmetrical archaeology, actor-network theory have been considered on a very small scale. Consequently, a critical attitude is in many ways essential to the entire discipline of archaeology. Unless we take time for self-reflection, unless we ask ourselves what sort of knowledge it is that we reconstruct and reproduce, archaeology will be reduced to an internal discussion. The risk is that e.g. archaeologists will use their elaborate classifications to wall themselves in from the disorderly world outside, but their intramural problems will be numerous (Grøn 2012; Hamilakis and Overton 2013).

In Palaeolithic and Mesolithic research, breakthroughs have comprised the archaeological material, new methods and views on hunter-gatherers. Beyond principles of classification and typological positioning, problems in dating methods and environmental issues have raised internal debates. Regional environmental data in relation to ice core proxies and the archaeological material affect the interpretation of social change.

Also, problems in defining and employing the archaeological “culture concept” have developed in terms of a realization of the interpretation of open social structures and concepts of migration and pioneers in all kinds of landscapes and geographical areas. However, the categorization of “farmers” versus “hunter-gatherers” inhibits rather than opens up for an understanding

of social agency. The shortcomings are due to the categorization of subsistence, a research focus from far back in the 1900s which maintains the stereotypes of a “farmer”, and a “hunter-gatherer”. The consequence is that problems emerge in understanding the complex social and cultural interactions in the landscape. Thus, the focus on subsistence in Palaeolithic and Mesolithic research complicates the finding of social models of how people might have acted. In this, the archaeological material is problematic, as is the credence in scientific methods and uncritical models. A narrow-minded categorization creates more problems rather than offering constructive ideas to answer questions.

Yet another problem is doing regional surveys. With some exceptions, we still have maps that follow national borders, for example the border between Denmark and Sweden (with some exceptions, e.g. Brinch Petersen 2015: 34, 37). Thus, regional differences in archaeological materials and the problem of interpretation are stuck in the modern classification of landscapes.

As Palaeolithic and the Mesolithic societies were non-literate cultures, people perceived time and distance in a multidimensional way, a way that does not exist in a literate culture. Oral narratives about myths and cosmological origins in non-literate cultures can therefore span over a very long time (Ong 1982). Therefore, analogies are of special importance in Palaeolithic and Mesolithic research, not least in connection with questions of rituals and symbolic meanings. The interpretations of rituals, for example, should not be based on the assumption that rituals express some kind of religiosity, but instead on a claim that the motives can be found in other societal interests or cannot be ascertained at all. Rituals in connection with, say, burials or depositions in wetlands can therefore be viewed from different theoretical perspectives in sociology and other social sciences. The motives behind the action may lie in other aspects of society than in religion, such as with the body and the senses, or with ideology and power structures. This opens an archaeological study towards even more intellectual domains, while simultaneously challenging us to maintain a critical attitude as regards the questions that can be studied archaeologically.

For the same reason it is important to emphasize geographical space and geographical distance in order to obtain a perspective on communication, transport, and possibilities for contacts with other people. Landscapes, environment and nature should not only be understood as material entities but also as human and cultural intellectual constructs that are manifested through people’s perceptions and through the practices whereby people comprehended and transformed their surroundings. Social space and spatial practices, representations of space and representational spaces

with individual movements during daily activities are important analytical perspectives (e.g. Hägerstrand 1970; Tuan 1977; Lefebvre 1991; Tilley 1994; Schama 1996; Ingold 2000). Questions about regionalism and cultural variation give energy to new questions about the archaeological material culture, as stated by many archaeologists.

### **Conclusion**

Research on the Palaeolithic and Mesolithic periods has some underlying strategies that concern theoretical perspectives, interdisciplinary methodology, attitudes to humans, and ethics. In a way, from our present lookout the past is emerging as a representation of ourselves. The importance of source criticism is a central scientific approach to understand the representativeness of the source material and the formation processes cannot be stressed enough. Likewise, deliberately making the process of interpretation visible and being conscious of the subjective nature of knowledge production validates the interpretation.

The complexity of resistance and domination shows manifold perspectives on humans and societies that might be useful when describing and interpreting the past as well as understanding current archaeological research and research communities. So, archaeology is about never-ending interpretations and recurrent flows in understanding human agency.

In conclusion, the most important underlying strategies in Palaeolithic and Mesolithic research concern the need for theoretical perspectives because the archaeological material is very silent without operational concepts. The choice of the concept of resistance in this article highlights human life in the past as well as within the present research community, and it emphasizes power-related interpretation of the past and dimensions in researching.

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