

EXAMPLES OF THE RESEARCH POTENTIAL AT INNS ALONG COASTLINES

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Abstract

The article deals with the research potential of inns along the coastline in Sweden and the Åland Islands. Very little research has been done on this kind of establishment in Sweden and Scandinavia. The inn on the island of Koffsan off Sweden and the inn on Rödhamn, Åland Islands, Finland, stand out as examples of what the sites and the archaeological material combined with written sources can tell us about the function of inns in society and about the food and beverages at these establishments. The author also discusses the possibilities to reinterpret some of the earlier results from the site on the Åland Islands.

Key words: inns, coastlines, archipelago, interdisciplinary, food, beverage.

Introduction

How long inns along the coastlines of Scandinavia and around the Baltic have existed is very difficult to say; however, the first written records we have about them in Sweden come from Olaus Magnus, in his accounts about the Nordic people in the 1550s. Olaus' own references regarding this kind of establishment date back to 13th-century Germany. According to him, the first of these kinds of inns were built on the ice, and were in use until the ice broke in the spring. After some time, inns were built on the shore instead of on the ice, and could be used all year round (Olaus Magnus 1975, p.58).

Very little research has been done in Sweden and Finland on this kind of establishment, even though some essays in the field have been written in archaeology at Stockholm and Södertörns universities. The essays have a different kind of focus, such as the inns' geographical locations, what kind of food and beverages were served, and the research potential for the inns (Haglund 1996; Kutounen 1993; Mattison 1994; Virgin 1997, 1998; Söderlind 1999). This article will try to highlight the research potential at these sites with two examples, one from Sweden and one from the Finnish Åland Islands (Figs. 1-2).

Koffsan, Sweden

Koffsan is a small island in Lake Mälaren, in the parish of Järfälla, in Sweden. During the 17th and 18th centuries, a tavern or inn was located on the island. The Swedish botanist Carl von Linné visited the island on midsummer's night in 1731. With him were 20 students from Uppsala. While the students congregated at the tavern and started to drink beer and fall

asleep, Linné himself explored the surroundings, and wrote his first flora on the island. All that remains of the building today is part of the foundations (Söderlind 2008). (Fig. 3)

The site and its location

The site was excavated in 1993, and the reason for the excavation was that a major water company in Sweden was going to build a new bridge that was going to cross the remains of the tavern and destroy it. The excavation was therefore a rescue operation. The results of the excavation are a very good source for finding out what was served, regarding food and drink, to the guests during the 18th century, even if no excavation was carried out underwater. If we combine the archaeological material with written sources from the period, we can also find out how the food and drink was prepared, and sometimes even what it tasted like. Thanks to the excavation, the site is the only tavern that has been excavated in Sweden to date. The location of the tavern was very close to the water, which was common during the 18th century. Foundations of comparable buildings may be seen along the coast and lake shores all over Sweden (Söderlind 2007, p.202; 2008).

The only part of the tavern foundations that were visible before the excavation was part of a wall with measurements of ten by ten metres, and a height of approximately 0.4 metres. Slowly, the construction of the foundations emerged. The measurements were between nine by 5.5 metres, and the stove was 2.4 by 2.55 metres. The stove also included an oven. The foundations were made out of stone, bricks and a kind of mortar. After the foundations were completely exposed, they measured 15 by five metres. During the excavation, a sewer was found (Söderlind 2007, p.202; 2008).

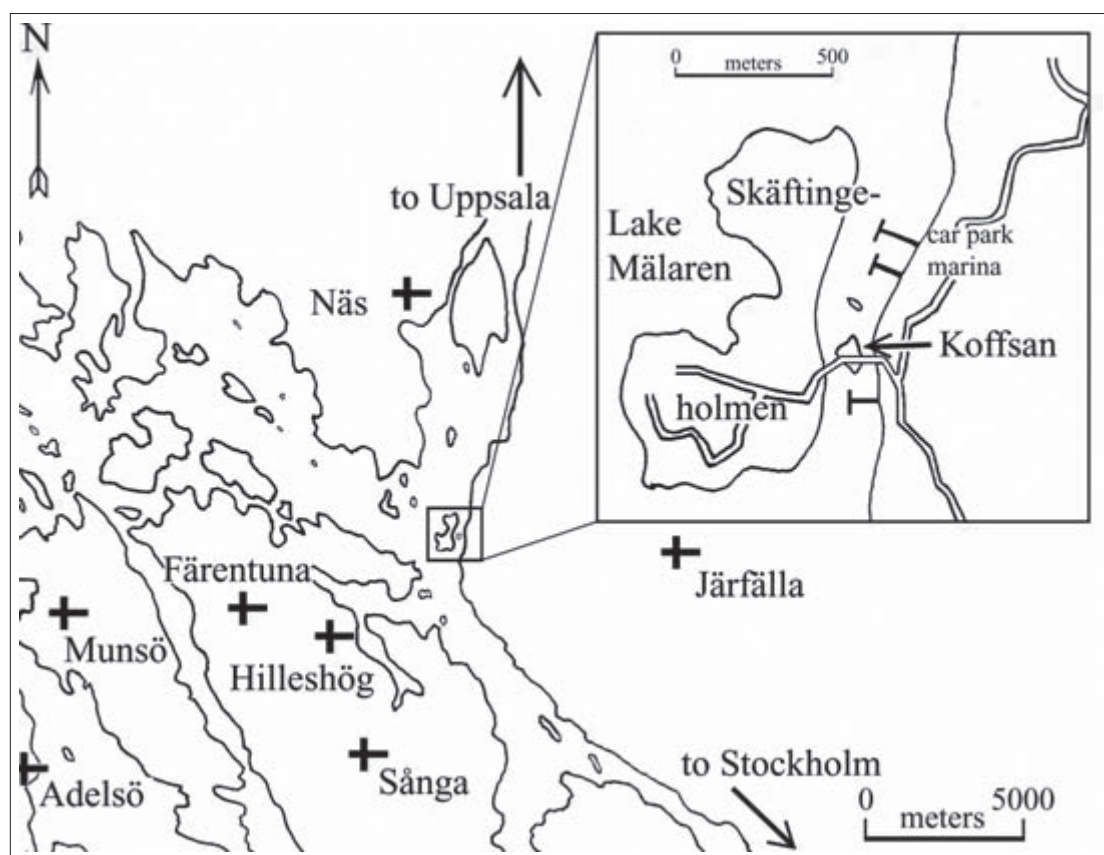


Fig 1. A detailed map of the Koffsans geographical location (prepared by U. Fransson).

During early modern times, visitors to the establishment came by boat, either in small private ones or on larger boats that ran between Stockholm and Uppsala. The boats left Stockholm and Uppsala at similar times, but only made the trip on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. During the period April to August, the departure time was 4 am; during the period September to October it departed at 6 am; and during November, at 7 am. During the remaining winter months, there was no traffic on the route. Unfortunately, there is no information on how long the trip between Stockholm and Uppsala took with these ships (Rudbeck 1933, pp.297-299).

During the 18th century, Järfälla parish was a wealthy community with a large harvest of different kinds of crops, and the most important manor in the parish was located not far from the establishment. When we study old maps from the 18th century, we find that the manor had its own gardens, with various fruits, herbs, hops and a brewery. The accounts from the manor indicate that products from the different gardens were sold in Stockholm (Gustafsson 1975, pp.662-675). It is very likely that the owner of the establishment on Koffsan also bought products from the manor to use for cooking, or seasoning schnapps, and so forth. Very close to Koffsan, several mills can be found on old maps, so it

is also likely that the owner could buy newly ground flour in the neighbourhood (Söderlind 2008).

The findings

Here I will concentrate on the archaeological material that can be linked to food and beverages from the site. During the excavation of the site, many pieces of glass, ceramics, porcelain, coins and animal bones were found. Most of the bone material was discovered in the stove. There were no whole bottles found, but there was quite a large amount of pieces of bottles, comprising mainly necks and bottles. These pieces are different in size, colour and quality (Söderlind 2008). Many of the pieces of glass came from the windows of the tavern, and show that the glass in the windows was green and yellow (Mattsson 1994, p.21).

The pottery from the site is domestic ceramic production, and is of high quality, with a range of colours, reflecting a great deal of imagination on the part of the potters. There was an increase in the production of ceramics and tiles in Sweden during the 18th century, when the most popular items were plates in different styles and shapes (Lindqvist 1981, p.83). Potsherds from coffee cups made of tin-glazed earthenware from the Swedish Rörstrand company were found. Other

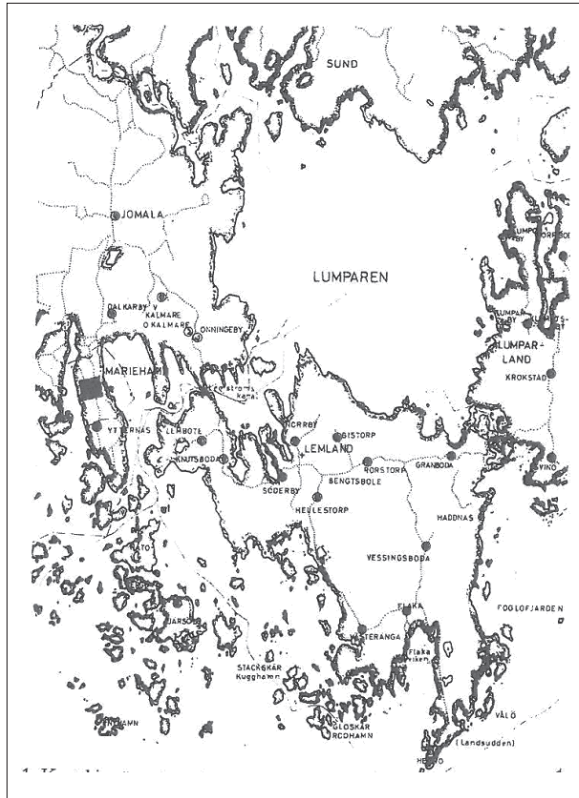


Fig 2. A map of the geographical location of Gloskär on the Åland Islands (after D. Papp, 1977, p.44).

shards of porcelain came from the Swedish Marieberg and Gustavberg companies. Swedish porcelain and tin-glazed earthenware companies faced tough competition from porcelain imported from China. The imported porcelain was of a much higher quality than the domestic kind. Shards of Chinese porcelain were also found at the site during the excavation (Söderlind 2008).

Table 1. Animal bones found in the stove during the excavation of the inn on Koffsan. The osteological analysis of the bones from the stove was made by the osteologist Jonsson, Gustav, Sweden, 1999

English name	Latin name	No
Beef/veal	<i>Bos taurus</i>	15
Rabbit/hare	<i>Oryctolagus cuniculus</i>	4
Sheep/goat	<i>Ovis/Capra</i>	15
Pig	<i>Sus scrofa</i>	23
Ringed seal	<i>Phoca hispida botnica</i>	1
Perch	<i>Perca fluviatilis</i>	2
Pike-perch	<i>Lucioperca lucioperca</i>	2
Species of carp	<i>Cyprinidae sp.</i>	1
Duck	<i>Anser sp.</i>	1
Hen	<i>Gallus sp.</i>	2

A variety of animal bones was found at the site, although pig was most common. This was followed by beef, veal, sheep/goat, rabbit/hare, hen, perch, pike-perch, different species of carp, ringed seal and duck. The parts from the pigs, cattle, sheep/goats are the cuts that would have had the most meat on them. One reason why there appear to have been so few species of fish from the location may be that the types with more fat in them decomposed over the years. It is very common on archaeological sites that fattier species vanish from the archaeological record, especially fish containing small bones. The occurrence of ringed seal is rather surprising, because it is a species of seal without outer ears which lives in arctic and sub-arctic waters, the Baltic Sea, Lake Ladoga and Lake Saima. The ringed seal has never lived in Lake Mälaren, since it needs saltier waters. During the summer and autumn, the ringed seal is hunted using rifles, while in the winter clubs are used (Söderlind 2008).

Carl von Linné's flora

From Carl von Linné's first flora Flora Koffensiensis (1732) and notes from the location, we can see that Linné listed 88 different species on the island. Among these 88 species, there are 18 that are suitable for use in preparing food and drink. Out of the 18 species, nine are also medicinal herbs, which were also suitable for the proprietor (she was a woman, but her name is unknown) of the establishment to use in preparing her own schnapps. This schnapps could also be seasoned with berries, like hawthorn and wild strawberries. She could make pies out of strawberries or seasoned water, and then the water could be used to flavour other food dishes. She could make jam out of the strawberries, along with berries like redcurrants and gooseberries, and these berries would also have been very good for making wine or juice. Another possibility for these kinds of berries is that the owner stirred some sugar into them and served them as a dessert or as condiments with a main course, mainly meat dishes. Dandelion could be prepared and served as a vegetable, or it could be made into wine. If the roots were dried and ground, it made good flour to use in cooking meals. Dandelion is rich in vitamin C and several minerals. Another plant rich in vitamin A and C, potassium, calcium and iron is the stinging nettle. Leaves from the young stinging nettle could be used as a vegetable, served as a soup, or made into tea. Bird cherry could be used to make juice, liquor and seasoned schnapps (Söderlind 2007, p.203ff).

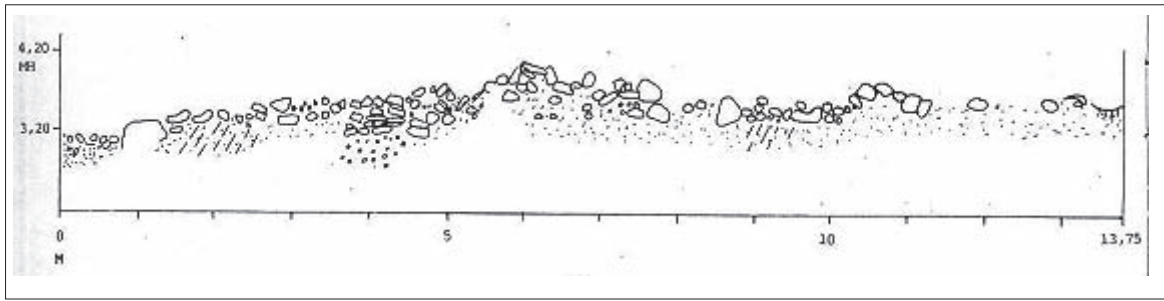


Fig 3. Sweden, the Järfälla Kultur of the inn on Koffsan (drawing by M. Skarelius).

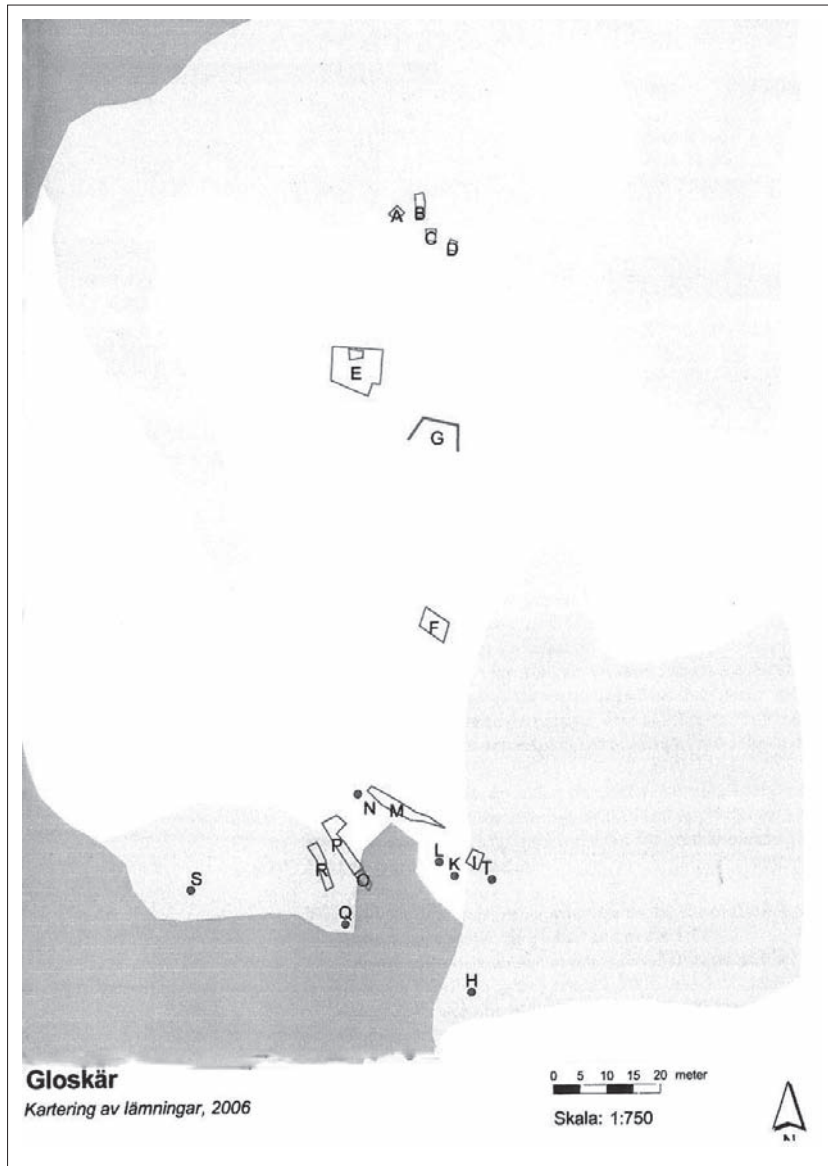


Fig 4. A map of the geographical area of the inn on Gloskär, Åland Islands: A the foundations of a stove; B the foundations of a stove or a rubbish dump; C, D the foundations of stoves; E the inn (the latest one); F an earth cellar; G a terrace; H a measure point; I the foundations of a stove; K, J measure points; M a jetty/dyke; N a measure point; P a jetty; Q a measure point; R a jetty; S a measure point (prepared by M. Lindholm).

Rödhamn, Åland Islands, Finland

Generally speaking, the Åland Islands can be divided into an eastern and western part. In the eastern part, the landscape is shaped by the archipelago, and consists of a lot of small islands. The western part is made up of larger land areas that are joined by bridges. In the southern part of main Åland, there is a parish called Lemland. Lemland is delimited in the east and in the north by two open bays, Lumparen and the Bay of Föglö. In the southwest part of Lemland, a large archipelago can be found that is delimited by the Åland Sea. The Åland Islands in itself are located at a geographical point of intersection for different kinds of trade in the Baltic Sea area. As far back as humans have been involved in trade, different kinds of seafarers and ships have passed the Åland Islands from east to west or the other way round (Fig. 4). Rödhamn and Gloskär are located in the outer archipelago in this parish (Papp 1977).

A short history of the inn on Rödhamn

After studying old maps of the area, it is clear that an inn as a business establishment was in use on Rödhamn during the first half of the 17th century. At the end of the 18th century, it was a good business, and the owner, called Per Lindholm, paid more in tax than the largest inn in the parish located in Granboda. The inn was in use until 1939, when the last owner passed away (Papp 1977). The area that will be discussed in the text consists of two islands that are very close to each other, Rödhamn and Gloskär.

Excavations of the area

In 1979, an archaeological inventory was made at the site, and it was concluded that a foundation was discovered, and it was listed as the foundation of a chapel dating from the Middle Ages. Rock carvings were also observed (Planeringsrådet 1980).

The first excavations took place in 2005 and are still going on. Early on in the fieldwork season in 2006, it was clear that artefacts under the water in the natural harbour area on Gloskär were in danger of disappearing. The reason for this is the strong currents from the ferries that pass several times a day. The currents were measured at three to four knots. This means that underwater work is difficult and time-consuming, since the

water in the harbour is very shallow. The strong currents in the area put small items such as parts of clay pipes in danger of disappearing very soon. The currents are so strong that large items like full wine bottles that were not visible to the eye during one dive are fully exposed two hours later. Test pits were made in a foundation that is directly connected with the harbour. It is not absolutely clear what the building was used for, but there was a fire and a construction emerged inside the foundation that seems to have been a large oven of some sort. Some distance from the harbour, located in wetlands, the remains of a freshwater well were detected (Söderlind, Tskvitinidze 2009, p.39ff).

The foundations on Rödhamn which in the earlier inventory were described as a foundation for a chapel are located in the northern part of the island, very close to the harbour. The walls of the construction that run in a north-south direction are between 8.15 and 8.53 metres, and the walls in an east-west direction measure 9.75 and 10.45 metres. In the eastern corner of the foundations, there is an opening that measures 0.80 metres. Inside the foundations there is also a collapsed wall. The collapsed wall indicates that the building had two rooms. The foundations are located very close to a so-called stone field. The area around the foundations are full of rock carvings. The rock carvings have been documented on a one-to-one scale, and their locations have been measured, and so far slightly over 20 carvings have been found. Very small natural wells of fresh water could be detected on the island (Söderlind, Tskvitinidze 2009, p.39).

The findings

The findings so far from both the sites are items that can be linked to the business of running an inn with visiting customers. In general, we can say that the artefacts are shards of bottles, plates and drinking vessels, both in glass and ceramics. The locally produced earthenware is of high quality, and there are also imported goods such as faience. Approximately 75% of an earthenware bottle for vodka was found that had a seal/label from Lithuania. Whether the bottle was imported or was dropped from a ship lying in the area is not easy to determine. Among the findings are parts of wine bottles from the 17th century in different colours. Other items are parts of clay pipes with ornamentation that is datable, one of the finer clay pipes is one so-called revolutionary pipe from the days of King Gustavos III (Söderlind, Tskvitinidze 2009, p.40). (Fig. 5).

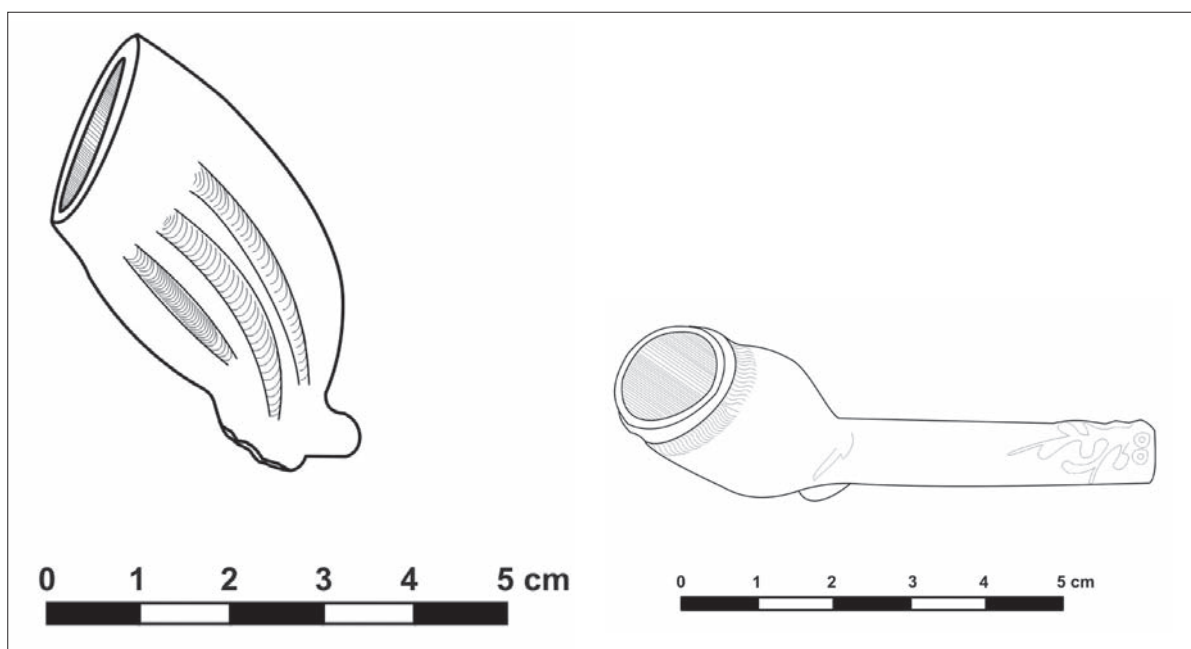


Fig 5. Parts of clay pipes found during the excavations on Koffsan (drawings by N. Tskvitinidze and Z. Tskvitinidze).

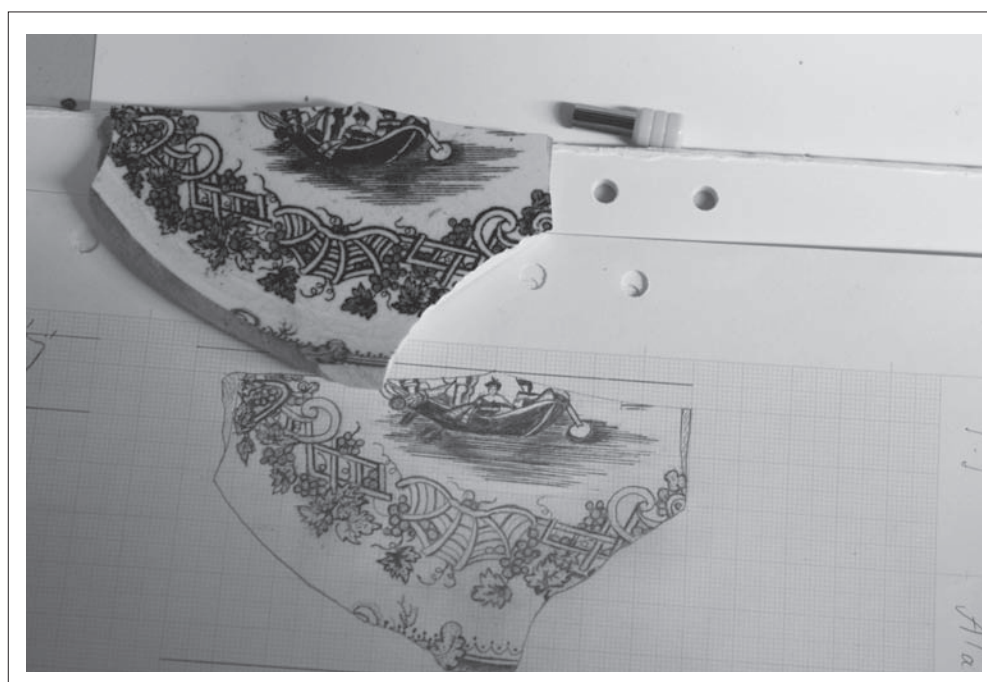


Fig 6. Documentation of sherds from a faience plate found in the harbour area on Gloskär (drawing by MA student of archaeology Paata Donadze; photograph by D. Paata)

Table 2. Findings from the ongoing excavation on Rödhamn, Åland Islands. After Söderlind, U, 2005, 2006, 2007

Material	Number
Glass	156
Porcelain	99
Faience	9
Ceramics, red clay	57
Bricks, clay	7
Roofing tiles	6
Birch-bark	7
Clay pipe	42
Bones	84
Teeth	8
Limestone	4
Sandstone	1
Iron/Metal	32
Textile	1
Leather	5
Wood	2
Coins	1
Grindstone	3
Flint	1
Wine bottle	1
Stoneware	4

A lot of animal bones were found, species such as seal, sea birds, cattle, sheep/goats, pigs and other cloven-footed animals. What is interesting is that most of the bones came from young animals. From a historical point of view, societies that did not live in good economic conditions did not slaughter young animals,

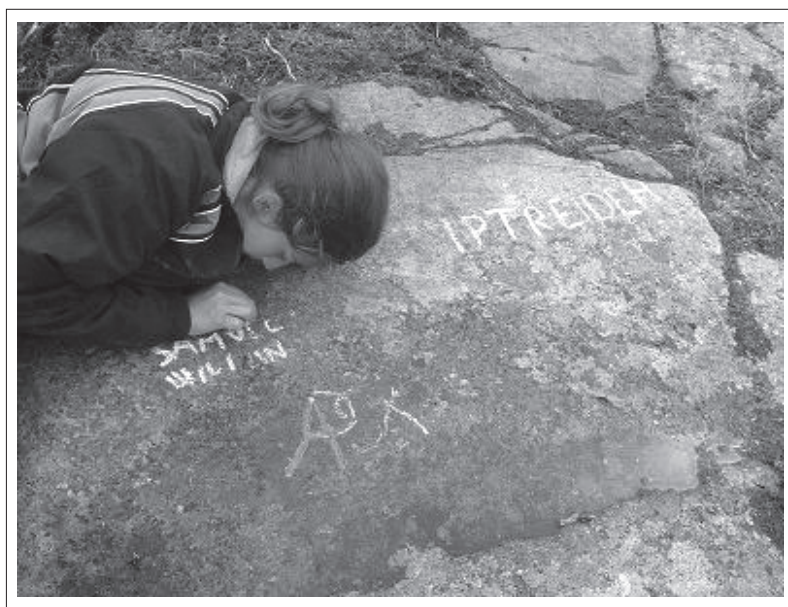


Fig 7. One of the group members (Rubi Jaramillo) documenting the rock carving on Rödhamn, Åland Island, Finland (photograph by H. Alopeus).

so the bones from the young individuals from the site indicates that Rödhamn was a wealthy society in past times (Söderlind, Tskvitinidze 2009, p.40ff).

Closing discussion

The inns that were used as examples in this article were very common in Sweden and Finland, and probably in all of the Baltic area since at least the Middle Ages and at least up to the age of steamers.

They were often located close to seashores and on small islands in lakes and in the archipelago. The clientele of these inns is not known, but most likely they were passengers on boats on their way to another final destination. The speed of the journey and the opportunities to sail from one place to another depended on the wind.

The archaeological material from Koffsan gives us a fairly good picture of what was served at this kind of establishment in Sweden during the 18th century as regards food and beverages. The artefacts from the site are a mixture of domestic production, like pottery, porcelain and tin-glazed earthenware, and imported fine porcelain from China. The domestic production is of very high quality, and was used, for example, for large storage jars. The large jars give an indication that the number of patrons was not insignificant. If the customers came in small numbers, there would have been no need for large storage jars.

The archaeological results of the excavation give us new clues as to what kind of food an establishment like Koffsan served. The stove had an oven, and that gave the owner many options for preparing a variety of dishes. She could bake them in the oven, roast them over an open fire, fry them in a frying pan, or make boiled dishes. The osteological material from the stove shows that the inn served different kinds of fish, ringed seal, and different kinds of meat and fowl (both domestic and game). These products could be served as sausages, stews, roasted whole, fried or boiled, with different seasonings from local plants and vegetables grown nearby. The owner could also season her homemade schnapps and beer with local herbs and berries.

The artefacts for food and cooking, the animals' bones, Linné's flora from the site, the location itself and

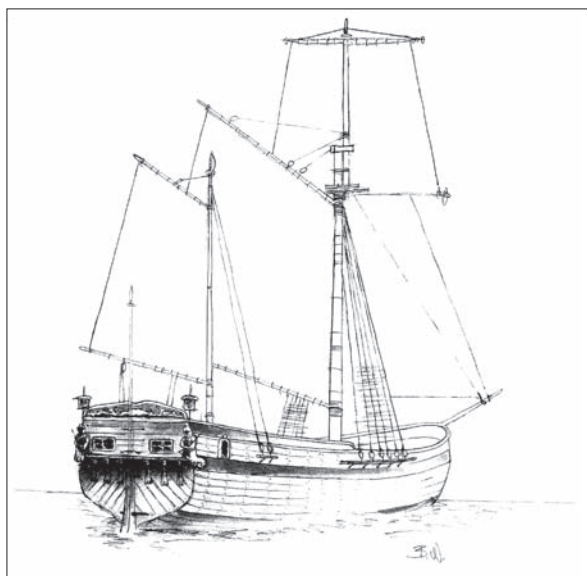


Fig 8. Linné and his students travelled from Uppsala to Stockholm on a vessel like this on the night of midsummer's day 1731 (drawing by B. Wallbom, Värmlands museum, Sweden).

its surroundings, and the proximity to the parish's most important manor and the mills suggest that the proprietor of the inn did not need to travel to Stockholm to buy the necessary staples for cooking. All that was needed could be bought in the local area. If we combine the archaeological material from the site with written records, we can also reconstruct some of the dishes that were served.

Even if the area at Rödhamn has not yet undergone a total excavation, either on land or underwater, it is clear that the area and the artefacts are of great interest. What the building was used for in the harbour at Gloskär is too early to tell, but it is very likely that it was either a smithy or some kind of bakery or smokery. The building contains a huge oven, and the space between the oven and the walls is very narrow, just enough for one person to move and walk around. It is not uncommon for buildings that include a hearth and a fire to be placed close to water, and a short distance away from the main buildings, due to the fire hazard.

The area at Rödhamn is a more complex site than the one on Koffsan, since it consists of two islands very close to each other. It is my belief that it is time to redefine the foundation on Rödön, which has been described as the remains of a chapel from the Middle Ages. The foundation on Rödön has no similarities to what is known about chapels from the Middle Ages on the Åland Islands. The chapels had one square room, the sacred area was surrounded by a wall, burials were carried out at the sites, and there are no traces of carvings close to the chapels. There is no wall in

the foundations on Rödön, there are no signs of burials at the site. The foundations indicate that it consisted of at least two rooms, and they are more rectangular than square. The foundations are located very close to a stone field, so there would have been no problem in building a wall around the building if necessary. The closest carving to the foundations/building is located approximately only 1.5 metres away. When the area from the harbour up to the foundations of the building was cleared of bushes, a path emerged. The carvings are done in such a way that they are easy to read if someone walks from the harbour up to the building. One of the carvings attracted a lot of interest, since it is a clock with crosses. These clocks are very uncommon in Finland, and are dated to the Catholic era, before the Reformation. The hours of the clock, which is marked with crosses, are the same hours as when prayers were said to give grace for the food on the table during the Catholic era. I am of the opinion that the foundations are the remains of an inn instead of a chapel. Since there is very limited access to fresh water on Rödön, I think that the establishment at one point moved to Gloskär instead, since there is much more fresh water on that island. The move of the establishment most likely took place no earlier than in the 18th century, since there are carvings from the late 17th century on Rödön. The remains of the building itself, and the artefacts that were found during excavations, indicate that the inn was established on the site much earlier than what written records tell us.

The next step in the research on Rödhamn is to map out the travelling patterns on the Åland Islands for visitors to this kind of establishment. This can be done by studying the guest books for travellers which are kept in the Landsarkivet in Mariehamn. Even if these records date from the 18th and 19th centuries, it is an indicator of the travelling routes for earlier times as well. Further excavations on the site will provide us with more answers regarding the establishment's role in the society of the time, and the constructions that made it up.

I am convinced that this kind of establishment can be found all around the Baltic area, and it would be very interesting if excavations could take place at these sites.

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Santrauka

Nuo kada ir kiek ilgai egzistavo smuklės Skandinavijos pakrantėse prie Baltijos jūros, sužinome iš istorinių šaltinių. Pirmų užuominų apie smukles aptinkame XVI a. kartografo, istoriko ir katalikų arkivyskupo Olaus Magnus darbuose. Istorikas teigia, kad pajūrio smuklės Vokietijoje buvo žinomos jau XIII a. Pasak jo, pirmosios smuklės buvo statomos ant ledo ir buvo nau-

dojamos iki pavasario. Vėliau smuklės buvo statomos jūros pakrantėse ir veikė ištisus metus. Šiame straipsnyje aprašomi dviejų smuklių archeologiniai tyrimai: Koffsan vietovėje, Švedijos teritorijoje, ir Alandų saloje (Suomija). Koffsan smuklė (arba taverna) buvo pastatyta XVII a. Mälaren ežero saloje ir naudota iki XVII a. Ją 1731 m. aprašė švedų botanikas Carl von Linne. Ši užėiga archeologų buvo tyrinėta 1993 m. Pastatas buvo su krosnimi, turėjo kanalizaciją. Tyrimų metu aptikta stiklinių indų, keramikos, porceliano, monetų, žuvų ir gyvulių kaulų.

Kita užėiga (taverna) buvo tyrinėta Rödhamn vietovėje, Alandų salose, Lemlando parapijoje. Ji egzistavo nuo XVII a. pirmosios pusės iki 1939 m. Taverna buvo tyrinėta 2005–2006 m. Tyrimų metu aptikta butelių, lėkščių, taurių ir daug keramikos. Tarp osteologinės medžiagos aptikta ruonių, jūros paukščių, galvijų, ožkos/avies, kiaulių kaulų. Įdomu, kad visi gyvūnai, naudoti maistui, buvo jauno amžiaus. Šie smuklių tyrimai rodo, kad to meto užėigų lankytojai įvairių kelionių metu buvo aprūpinami maistu ir nakvyne.

Vertė Algirdas Girininkas