



"Dwellings, Settlements and Logistics" in the Yamana-English dictionary. A study of historical source about the Canoe peoples of Patagonia, and their relevance to the archaeological records from Tierra del Fuego and Norway

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What

This MA project is a part of the Norwegian-Argentinean research project Marine Ventures (<http://www.ntnu.no/vitenskapsmuseet/marine-ventures>). My project will look at what the written sources can say about dwellings, settlement and the logistics surrounding the settlement structure/system. In this thesis I will also look at the theoretical discussions about the use of analogy and historical sources. I will make comparisons to the archaeological records from Tierra del Fuego and Norway and see how historical sources can expand our understanding of the archaeological records.

The reason why it's relevant to compare Tierra del Fuego and Norway is because these two areas have similar coastal landscape and a maritime adaptation. They are also too far apart to have any contact between one another and any similarities in development/adaptations to the land and sea are not the result of influence from each other.

As the main source in this thesis I will explore the Yamana-English dictionary. This book was compiled in the second part of the 19th century by Thomas Bridges, a missionary in Tierra del Fuego that developed a close relationship with the Yamana's. This dictionary gives a unique insight into how the Yamana peoples in their own words described their world and way of living. It can give details about the way of life which are difficult / impossible to find in the archaeological records. I will look at what this dictionary can tell us about the Yamana's dwellings, the settlement, and how they are combined in an overall structure. To be able to analyze the dictionary, the book will be scanned and made searchable. As the dictionary is only Yamana-English and not the other way around, the searchable text will be imperative for the analysis.

I will use the Yamana-English dictionary and other historical sources (overview in Orquera & Piana 1999) to see what they can tell us about the dwellings, settlement and logistics of the Yamana people. I will also compare these to the archaeological records and see if there are similarities and to what the dictionary can offer to the archaeological records. Here I will also discuss the use of historical and ethnographical sources; what are the problems that can occur and what advantages can be gained.

I will also explore the experimental archaeology with huts/dwellings that Ernesto Piana (CADIC-CONICET, partner in the Marine Ventures project) have done in Tierra del Fuego (Piana and Orquera 2010).

This thesis has a marine perspective. We see both marine adaptations in Patagonia and Scandinavia. I will look at the coastal sites in both in Tierra del Fuego/Patagonia and Norway/Scandinavia.

In the archaeological records I will look at the Mesolithic Stone Age in Norway/Scandinavia about 9000-4000 BC, here we see a marine adaptation with mainly settlement placed near the coast and on islands (Alsaker, 2005). In Tierra del Fuego the archaeological finds show a clear maritime adaptation after about 6,600-6000 BP, before this time archaeological evidence

is scarce (Briones & Lanata, 2002). The Yamana favored stretches of beach, and this is shown by the many great shellmiddens found here (Lothrop, 2002).

Scandinavia's fish-based tradition eventually resulted in stable settlements at tidal currents, while Patagonia relied heavily on shell resources and consequently a mobile settlement structure related to widespread harvesting of shell beds.

<http://antiquity.ac.uk/projgall/bjerck333/> 02.01.13

I will start with reading and searching through the Yamana-English dictionary and see what it has to say about dwellings, settlement and logistics. What type of words is used and do they have different meanings in different situations? More than a thousand shellmiddens are known on the Argentinean side of the Beagle Channel Region, are there words to describe the shellmiddens in the dictionary? Do they have different words for the different house types and or seasonal variations? Do they have words that describe how they move about (migration patterns), what types of words describe the transport of people and things? And what does it say about word for communication?

After I've found out what the dictionary has to say I will see how this compares with some archaeological records and discuss and the relevance for the study of this book with archaeology.

In the final part of my study, I will compare my results from Tierra del Fuego with information on dwellings and settlements in Mesolithic Norway and see what similarities and dissimilarities there is.

My main research questions are:

- How are the dwellings, settlement and logistics described in the Yamana-English Dictionary? Are there any similarities with the archaeological records?
- How did the logistics affect the settlement structure? Migration patterns, transport, communication and the boats influence.
- How have a maritime lifestyle effected the development and organization in Tierra del Fuego? What can the shellmiddens tell us?
- How is Tierra del Fuego/Patagonia in comparison with Norway/Scandinavia? Can we get a new and/or deeper understanding of the archaeological records by looking at the historical sources?

Theory and methods

I will do a comparative analysis between the written records to the archaeological records and between Tierra del Fuego and Norway.

An important part of my master's thesis will be to discuss the use of historical and ethnographical sources. The historical source, Yamana-English dictionary, give us an insight in a world and a way of life which does not exist anymore and can be a great tool in

interpreting archaeological finds. I will also be using analogy, where I will interpret the past with the help of the “present” because of similarities between them.

I will gain some firsthand experience through participation on archaeological excavations in both Norway (Vega), and Tierra del Fuego.

What material I will use

The material that I will be using consists of written records of different kinds. I will use historical and ethnographical records from and about the Yamana people in Tierra del Fuego, mainly the Yamana-English dictionary. And archaeological records from both Tierra del Fuego and Norway.

Time Schedule

Autumn 2012

- Courses ARK3110, ARK3320, ARK3000
- August-September
 - o Look for literature and read
 - o Make research questions
- October
 - o Fieldwork at Vega, Norway
- December
 - o 23.11-21.12 Home exam ARK3110
 - o Write project description

Spring 2013

- Courses ARK3210, ARK3220, ARK3320, ARK3000
- January
 - o Write project description
 - o Preparations for the trip to Argentina
 - o Scanning the Yamana-English dictionary
 - o Look for more literature – find archaeological records from both TdF and Norway
 - o Establish methods for analysis of dictionary
- February
 - o Trip to Tierra del Fuego, Argentina
- March-April
 - o Look for more literature and read
 - o 19.03-19.04 writhing home exam for ARK3210 and ARK3220
- April-May
 - o Field course with ARK3220 and report writing
- June
 - o 03.06 exam in ARK3320

Autumn 2013

- Courses ARK3321, ARK3000
- July-August
 - o Make a skeleton of the paper, what chapters should it have and what should they be about.
- September-October
 - o “Hospitering” Internship ARK3321
- November-December
 - o Start writhing research history

Spring 2014

- Courses ARK3000
- January-May
 - o Write write write!

Literature

Alsaker, S. K. (2005). *Steinalderen I: Bull, I. (ed): Trondelags historie Bind 1. Landskapet blir landsdel. Fram til 1350*. Trondheim: Tapir akademisk forlag.

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<http://antiquity.ac.uk/projgall/bjerck333/> (Sist besøkt 02.01.2013)

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Lothrop, S. K. (2002). *The Indians of Tierra del Fuego: an account of the Ona, Yahgan, Alacaluf and Haush Natives of the Fuegian Archipelago*. Ushuaia: Zagier & Urruty publications.

Orquera, L. A. & E. L. Piana (1999). *La Vida Material y Social de Los Yamana*. Eudaba

Piana, E. L. & L. A. Orquera (2010). Shellmidden formation at the Beagle Channel (Tierra del Fuego, Argentine). In D. Calado, M. Baldia, & M. Boulanger (ed.), *Monumental Questions: Prehistoric Megaliths, Mounds, and Enclosures* (p. 263-272). England: Archaeopress