

## Evidence on Summer Farming and Land Use History at Different Altitudinal Levels in Mountain Areas of Western Norway

### *Abstract*

The vegetation history of mountain summer farming areas in Sogn, Western Norway, has been investigated with particular attention to the development of the cultural landscape. Different patterns of vegetational changes have been recognized which probably reflect different practices of land use. In this manner human impact on the vegetation and settlement at the summer farms have been dated.

During the interpretation of the results it has, however, been necessary to take several principal and methodological problems into consideration. How to distinguish between summer farming and ordinary grazing ? Does the same kind of vegetation always indicate the same manner of land use ? As many of the most commonly used « human indicator species » in pollen analysis do not grow at these altitudes, what features can be used to separate the effect on the vegetation of grazing from the impact of trampling and refuse discarding at a prehistorical dwelling site ? Is it possible to distinguish between summer farming and high altitude permanent farm settlement ?

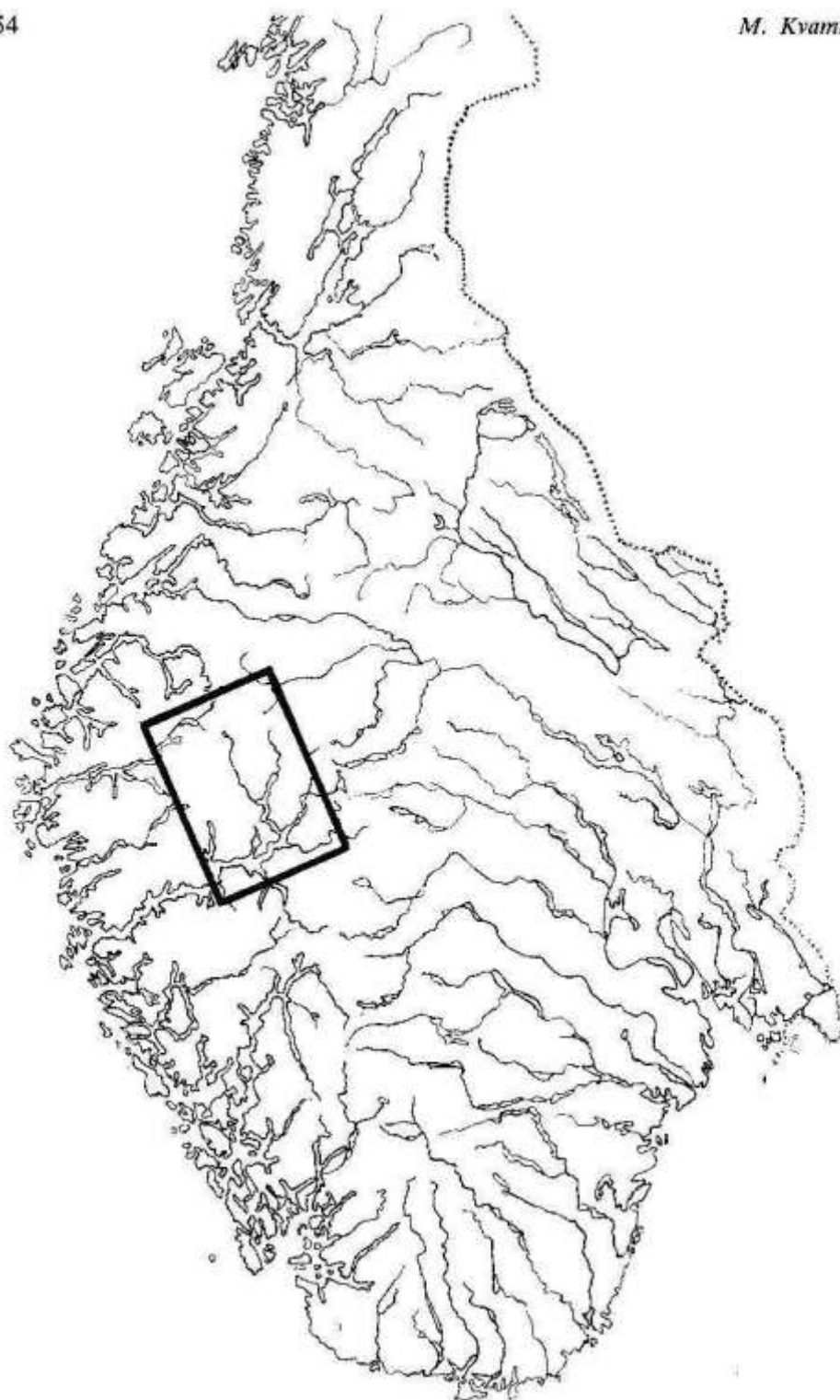
The investigations indicate that the development of summer farming in Western Norway was connected with the development of the system of permanent farm settlement in lowland areas. Earlier opinions that it originated from early agricultural nomadism must be regarded as rather improbable.

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### REFERENCES

HISTORICAL MUSEUM, Univ. of Bergen : Several interdisciplinary projects reports (in Norwegian).



*Fig. 1. Survey map of southern part of Norway showing the area studied.*

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- KVAMME, M., 1988, *Lokale pollendiagram og bosetningshistorier*, in *Folkevandringstiden i Norden. En krisetid mellom eldre og yngre jernalder* (NASMAN, U. and LUND, J., eds), Aarhus Universitetsforlag, Aarhus, p. 75-114.

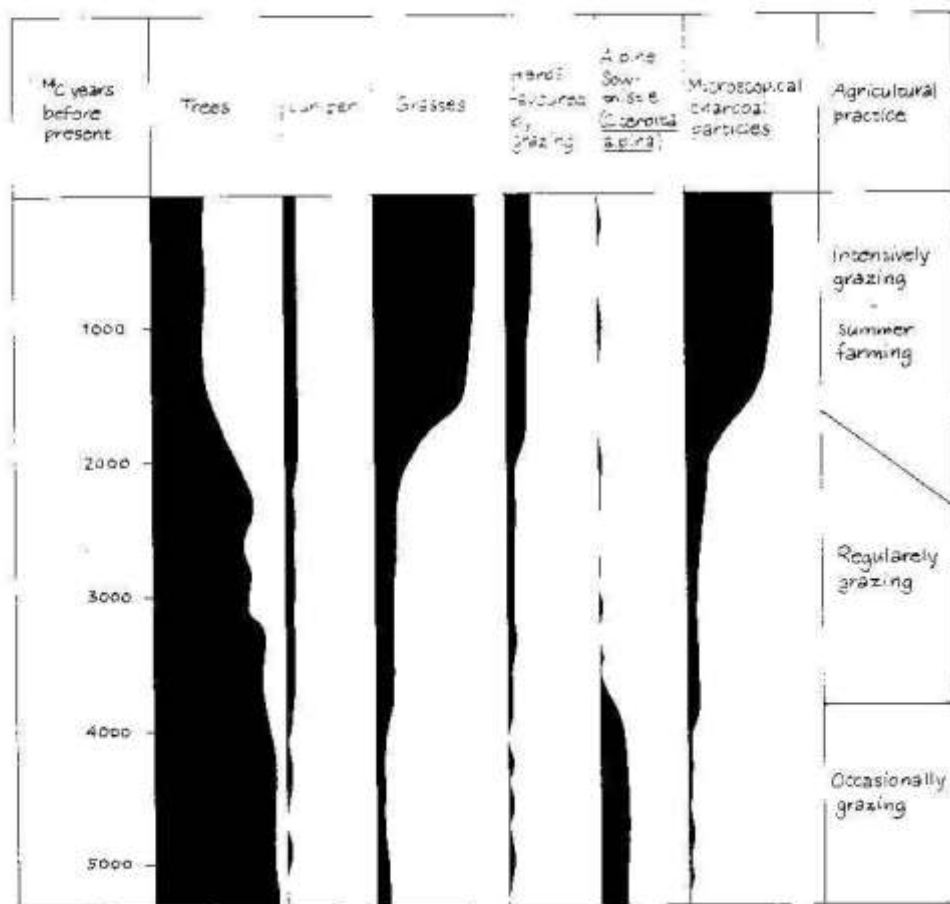


Fig. 2. Simplified summary diagram based on the results from approximately 20 pollen diagrams within the research area in Sogn.