

Uppåkra, a Central Place in Skåne during the Iron Age

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Abstract

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The purpose of this paper is to give an account of the archaeological investigations of the settlement site at Uppåkra and to present problems and hypotheses for future research. The site is situated about 5 km south of Lund. It was discovered and small parts excavated in 1934. This excavation and some later investigations have revealed a very large Iron Age settlement with occupation layers with a thickness up to 3 m. Prehistoric settlements and cemeteries, several gold finds and an offering bog at Gullåkra are documented in the area around Uppåkra.

A problem for future research is the relation between Uppåkra, discussed as a central place, and the Iron Age settlements on the Uppåkra plain between the Højeån and the Segeån rivers on one hand and the settlement in other parts of south-west Skåne on the other. Another problem is the relation between Uppåkra (mentioned in 1085) and the city of Lund and also the political connections with the Danish Kingdom.

A project concerning the structure and change of the Iron Age settlements in southern Sweden has started at the Institute. The large settlement at Uppåkra is central in that connection.

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Introduction

A large number of excavations of Iron Age settlement sites and cemeteries over all Skåne is the background to the recent studies of the political landscape and the hypotheses of regions (cf. Stjernquist 1978, pp. 256 ff.; 1994; Larsson *et al.* 1992; Callmer 1984; 1991; Fabech 1993). In the network of important sites there are two, Uppåkra and Vå, which have a special position. Both have been discussed as centres from economic, social and religious viewpoints: Vå in a north-eastern and Uppåkra in a south-western region (Fig. 1) (Callmer 1984; 1991; Fabech 1993).

The Iron Age settlement at Vå is important as an element in the development of the site from a prehistoric settlement to an early town (Stjernquist 1951; Thun 1965; 1967; Thun &

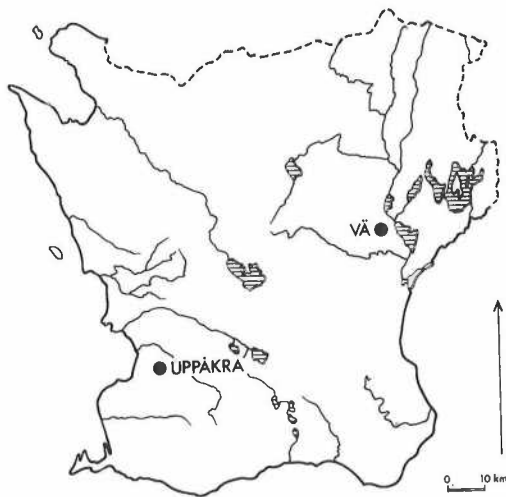


Fig. 1. The location of Uppåkra and Vå. Drawing Christina Borstam.

Anglert 1984). It was a large one. In 1966, at the request of the planning authorities, reconnoitring work was made by the present author as a complement to the excavation. Remains of house foundations were documented not only at the places where the excavations were carried out but over most of the height, which was recorded. Vä is very important in Callmer's investigations of the social and economic development of the settlement of the Kristianstad plain during the Iron Age (cf. Callmer 1991).

Uppåkra has thus a central position in the discussion concerning the social and political structure of the province during the Iron Age. The archaeological investigations of the settlement site are so far very limited but they have revealed thick occupation layers with finds which speak for a settlement of long duration during the Iron Age (Vifot 1936; Stjernquist 1951; 1988; 1994). However, most of the problems concerning the settlement site and its role in the

Iron Age society are unsolved. The purpose of this paper is to give an account of the investigations made and to present problems and hypotheses for future research.

The position and the geographical circumstances of the Uppåkra site

The settlement of Uppåkra is situated ca. 5 kilometres to the south of Lund at Uppåkra church, 34.45 m above sea level (Fig. 2). The river Højeån flows at a distance of about 2 km to the north of the site. It is an outflow of the Häckeberga lake. It stretches to the north-west and passes between Uppåkra and Lund on its way to the sea at Lomma, which was a town in the early Middle Ages (Skansjö 1980). The location of the settlement is a rise which extends from the church in the direction of Gullåkra village to the south-east (Fig. 3). An old road running from Lund passes Uppåkra and also



Fig. 2. Uppåkra church, where the Iron Age settlement is located. One of the barrows and the mortuary are visible. Photo Bertil Centervall.

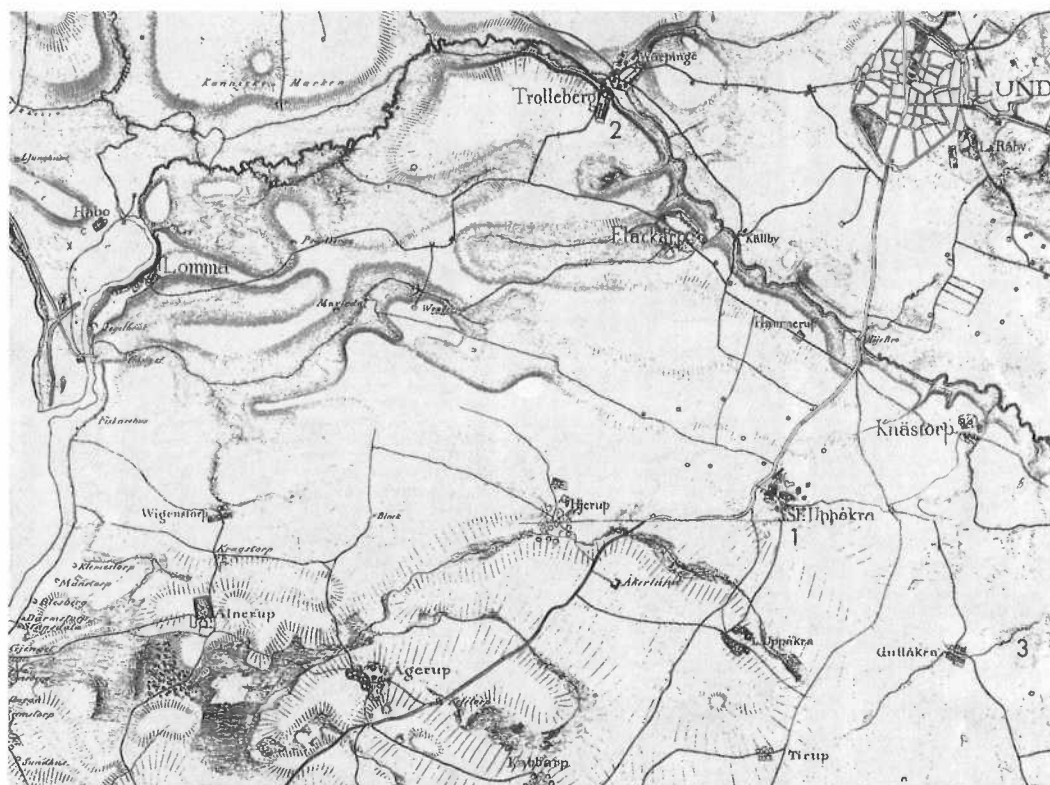


Fig. 3. The *Skånska rekognosceringskartan* of the year 1815. Scale ca. 1:60,000. – 1. The Iron Age settlement at Uppåkra. 2. Find-place of a big collar of gold. 3. Gullåkra bog.

Hököpinge on its way to Trelleborg on the south coast, where a geometric ring fort of the Viking Age was recently discovered (Jacobsson 1989). Before 1855 the road went through Uppåkra (Sköld 1963; Ingers 1978). Uppåkra is mentioned in Cnut the Holy's deed of gift of 1085 (Skansjö & Sundström 1987, see below).

The south-western part of Skåne, where Uppåkra is situated, is partly covered by fertile moraine clay alternating with ridges of gravel and sand (Berglund *et al.* 1991, fig. 1.2:3; Ekström 1936; Emanuelsson *et al.* 1985). The area around Uppåkra church is a part of the south-western Baltic moraine, a broad belt which stretches from the sea in the west to the Romeleåsen ridge with its woodland in the east. It is fertile and has been used for agriculture for a very long time. The Höjeån river is central in this area, which is the central part of the district

called the Lund-Landskrona plain (Berglund *et al.* 1991, fig. 1.2.6:5). To the south is the Segeån river and to the north the river Kävlingeån.

The first finds of the Iron Age settlement at Uppåkra

N. G. Bruzelius mentions in a paper from 1878 that a grave-find was discovered in a barrow at Uppåkra (Bruzelius 1878). It is included in the collections of LUHM (No. 3055) and consists of beads of glass and amber and a fragmentary comb (Vifot 1936, p. 101, fig. 2:3) (Fig. 4). Furthermore, there is information about cremation pits with small pottery vessels, which are said to have been found at a distance of about 50 m to the south of the church.

In the year 1927 a pottery vessel with handle and



Fig. 4. Grave-find from a barrow at Uppåkra. Ca. 2:3. Photo LUHM.

a socketed axe of iron were found at the churchyard (Vifot 1936, p. 101, fig. 2:2; Stjernquist 1955). The find has been interpreted as a grave.

Vifot's investigations

The occupation layers

The habitation site was found in 1934 during digging for new buildings at the farm Uppåkra No. 8, Uppåkra parish, which is the vicarage. Vifot attended and supervised the digging and

did some rescue excavation in the area located between two barrows (Vifot 1936, pp. 97 ff.), which have been registered as Bronze Age barrows and called Storehög (diam. 20 x 19 m, h 3 m) and Lillehög (diam. 7 x 9 m, h 1 m). They are situated near the church and south-west of it (Fig. 2). On the *Skånska rekognosceringskartan*, drawn up for this parish in 1815, they are marked as small round hills (Fig. 3).

During the excavation five trenches for houses and for other functions were dug, called A, B, C, D, G, and a test pit P. All these trenches were

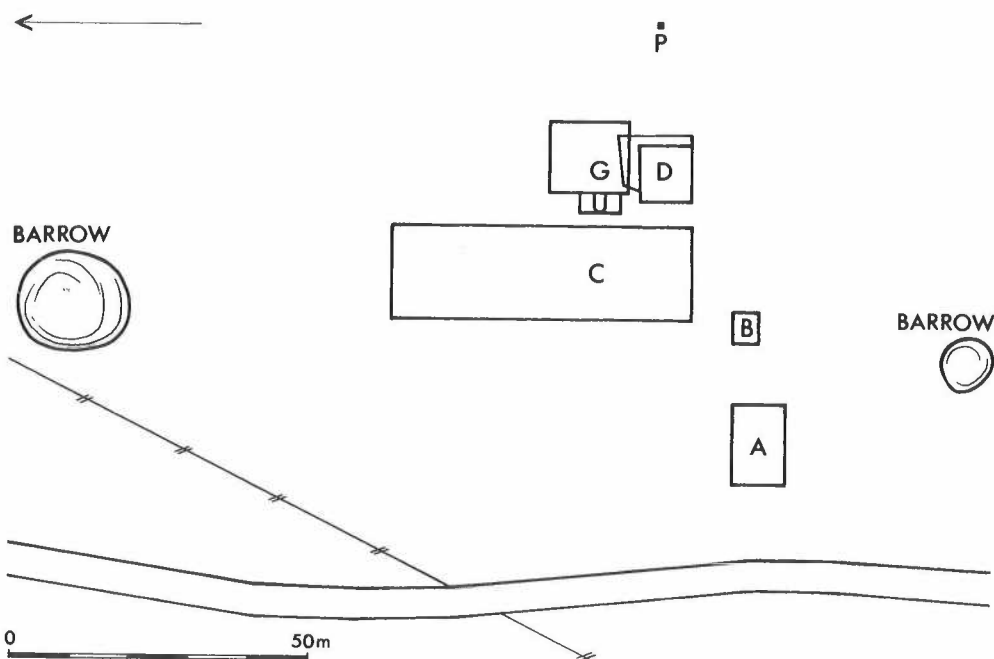


Fig. 5. Uppåkra. The trenches excavated in 1934 (after Vifot 1936).



Fig. 6. Sword-hilt of iron found in 1934. 2:3.
Photo Bengt Almgren.

situated near each other (Vifot 1936) (Fig. 5).

Trench A was ca. 13.5 x 9 m, trench B ca. 4.5 x 4.5 m, trench C 49.5 x 15 m, trench D ca. 10.5 x 12 m, and trench G ca. 12 x 13.5 m. A small expansion of G was called trench U. As can be seen, the largest excavated area was in trench C. The occupation layer, which could be studied in these trenches and in the test pit, had a thickness varying between 1.6 and 3 m. Small test pits outside the trenches showed variations between 0.2 and 3.7 m depending on such circumstances as uneven bottom. It was also established that the occupation layer extended over a large area which Vifot estimated to about 100 x 110 m as a minimum. In his paper he has written that it probably was larger, up to 300 m N-S, because of layers discovered at the churchyard and also to the north of it. Later investigations have shown that the layer is larger than the maximum mentioned by Vifot (cf. below).

Vifot's investigation demonstrates that the occupation layer consisted of collapsed houses

covered successively by new house constructions. The sections show horizontal layers of clay and hearths and also earth and sods which were probably formed by the walls of the houses, when they were demolished (Vifot 1936, p. 102, fig. 3). The layers consisted of burnt or unburnt clay, charcoal, and burnt daub. They were covered by a thin deposit of charcoal and were interpreted as floors of disturbed houses. Hearths in the house foundations could in some cases be uncovered.

The occupation layer was very rich in finds of all kinds – quern stones, crushing and grinding stones, whetstones, loom-weights, spindle-whorls, combs and fragments of combs, raw material and semi-manufactured products of bone and antler, lots of objects of metal, especially of iron but also of bronze, pottery sherds, and animal bones – showing the richness and the variety of the finds (LUHM 28336).

Trench A had a thick but uneven occupation layer. There were several interesting finds: sword-hilt of iron (Fig. 6), fibula (Fig. 7), and parts of



Fig. 7. Fibula of iron found in 1934. 1:1.
Photo Inger Kristensson.



Fig. 8. Armring of bronze found in 1934. 1:1.
Photo Bengt Almgren.

knives and scissors of iron, combs of bone, spindle-whorls, crushing stones and lots of worked antler pieces. It seems to have been a working place in the trench or nearby. A disturbed hearth with stones and a layer of charcoal was found at the bottom, ca. 2 m below the level. Other hearths were found: in test pit P, in trench B ca. 1.3 m below the level, in trench D ca. 1.9 m below the level. They were combined with layers of charcoal and of clay showing that they belonged to house foundations. The trench was partly disturbed during the digging for new buildings. Finds such as an arming were collected and the sections investigated (Fig. 8).

Trench B was also disturbed during digging for clay. An inhumation was found at a depth of 1.2 m. The male skeleton was well preserved, oriented N–S with the head to the N. Three pottery vessel were found to the north of the head (Fig. 9). Several finds were collected from the soil, most of them typical of an occupation layer of a settlement: pottery sherds, iron fragments, pieces of antler, parts of whetstones, etc. Parts of a comb may however have belonged to



Fig. 9. Grave-find, a vessel, from trench B. H 18 cm. Photo Inger Kristensson.



Fig. 10. Part of a comb found in trench B, probably belonging to the grave. 1:1. Photo Bengt Almgren.

the grave (Fig. 10). The sections and the bottom layer were investigated.

Trench C was partly investigated. Many finds were collected such as a knife and fragments of iron, spindle-whorl, crushing stone of flint, whetstones, loom-weight, comb cover, and antler pieces with traces of sawing.

The most interesting construction was found in *trench D*. Parts of a house foundation were excavated within an area of 9 x 9.5 m (Vifot 1936, p. 106, figs. 4–5; Stjernquist 1951, pp. 48 f.). It was oriented east–west and had internally a breadth of ca. 6–7 m. It was only partly excavated (the western part with a length of 12 m) and the full length could not be determined. The floor consisted of trampled earth and clay with small stone-settings. It was covered with a deposit of charcoal with lots of finds. The deposit of charcoal was covered by a thick layer of pieces of burnt daub, which show that the house had burnt down. The pieces of daub had impressions of branches. These branches were at least partly willow (*Salix*). The walls had been constructed of wattle and daub between posts and had partly stones as a basis. The hearth, located in the western part, consisted of stones (Fig. 11).

Some finds give a dating to the very late Roman Iron Age or the beginning of the Migration Period, for instance sherds of a pottery vessel found at the hearth and a fibula of bronze



Fig. 11. The house foundation excavated in 1934. Photo B.-M. Vifot.

with iron needle which was found in the charcoal layer (Vifot 1936, fig. 8:1 and fig. 10:11). A simple fragmentary fibula of bronze located to the east of the hearth is difficult to date exactly. Some fibulae, however, found lying together in the layer of charcoal over the floor and to the north of it are easy to date (Vifot 1936, fig. 10:1). It is two fibulae of bronze of crossbow type with triangular foot dating from the early Migration Period and parts of other fibulae also of bronze (Strömberg 1961, Taf. 54: 1a–1g) (Fig. 12).

The layer of charcoal covering the house foundation and the layers of the foundation contained lots of pottery sherds which have been reconstructed to about ten vessels, partly large barrel-shaped storage pots with a rim diameter of more than 20 cm and partly smaller. Most of them are of coarse ware without decoration. The layers also contained iron slag, worked bone and

antler pieces, and other objects, including burnt grains. Some of these were found in the charcoal layer but most of them at the floor to the east of the hearth. They have been analysed by Hakon Hjelmqvist, who also looked for and described the impressions of grains in the daub from the walls (Hjelmqvist 1955, pp. 81ff.).

In the first layer of the house foundation there was a key of bronze, which has been studied by Vifot (Fig. 13). This type with four teeth is unusual in Scandinavia but well known on the Continent during the Iron Age (Vifot 1936, fig. 10:6). Steuer, who has treated this type of keys intensively, has shown that they are usually found two by two in graves and interpreted them as some kind of symbols (Steuer 1982). A fibula of bronze from the same layer has mouldings and an animal head on the foot. It can be dated to the beginning of the Migration Period (Vifot

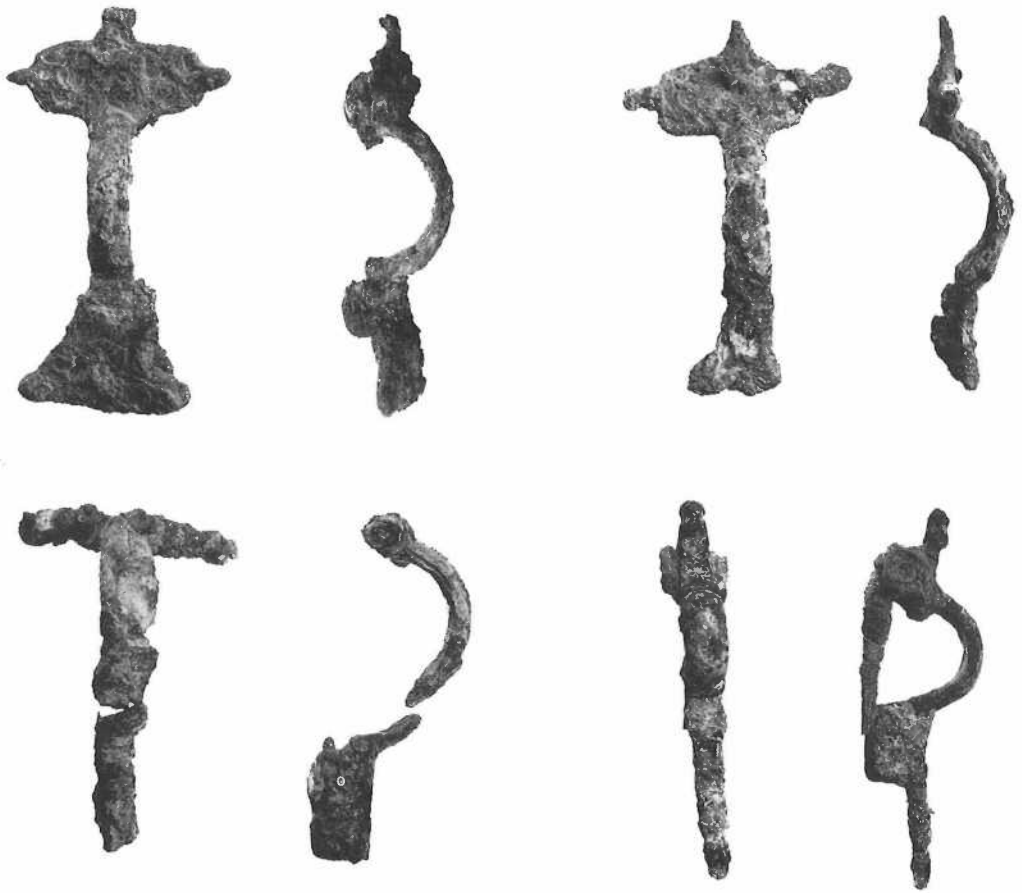


Fig. 12. Fibulae of bronze from the house foundation in trench D. 1:1. Photo Bengt Almgren.

1936, fig. 10:10). The lower level had other very interesting finds such as sherds which have been reconstructed to a storage vessel with a height of 0.5 m (Vifot 1936: fig. 17). There were also sherds of a vessel with handle shaped like a bird's nest and a fishhook of iron.

Trench G was taken up north of trench D and nearby. The most interesting finds were a lancehead of iron (Fig. 14), a knife of iron and sherds of a decorated pottery vessel. To the west of trench G and in connection with it a small *trench U* was dug and some finds were collected by the workers, including many pottery sherds, a whetstone, part of a pair of scissors and, finally, animal bones and antler pieces, which were sawed.

Finally, a *test pit P* of one square metre was dug

17 m to the east of trench D. There were parts of a stone-setting at a depth of one metre and at the bottom of the occupation layer a hearth with fire-cracked stones covered by a layer with charcoal. Several sawed antler pieces were found lying together.

The rich quantity of sherds and vessels is central material for the dating, especially because of the thick occupation layers which give information about the stratigraphy of the finds. Vifot has discussed the pottery intensively on the basis of the decoration and classified it into an earlier and a later phase, with the limit about 200 A.D. with reference to the tendril brooch of iron found in trench A at a depth between 1.15 and 1.55 (Fig. 7). The dating of this type of fibula of



Fig. 13. Key of bronze found in 1934. Ca. 9:10. Photo LUHM.



Fig. 14. Lancehead of iron found in 1934. Ca 1:1. Photo Bengt Almgren.

iron with the string above the bow is difficult, however. Some of them, of iron and as big as the one from Uppåkra, seem to be rather late in the Roman Iron Age. But Vifot is certainly right in his classification and also in the dating of the two levels of pottery. The stratigraphy at Uppåkra is complicated, however, because of the rescue excavation with difficulties to see the limits between the layers and also the connection between the layers of the different trenches. As a consequence of this, there may be, sometimes, a mixture of finds from different layers.

There is comparative material from other sites which sustains Vifot's grouping of the pottery from Uppåkra. One can mention vessels and sherds from the settlements at Hötofta and Vä and also pots from several graves with the Simris cemetery as an example. In the Simris publication the pottery material from Skåne during the Roman Iron Age is discussed intensively (Stjernquist 1955).

The pottery from the lower (early) level at Uppåkra is characterized by thickened and fac-

eted rims and a scanty decoration (Fig. 15). Simple lines and angles are common. There are also storage vessels without decoration but with traces of faceted rims. This pottery has some parallels among the material found at the settlement of Hötofta from the early Roman Iron Age but seems to be a little later than the early material from that settlement (Stjernquist 1969). Comparison can be made with pottery from

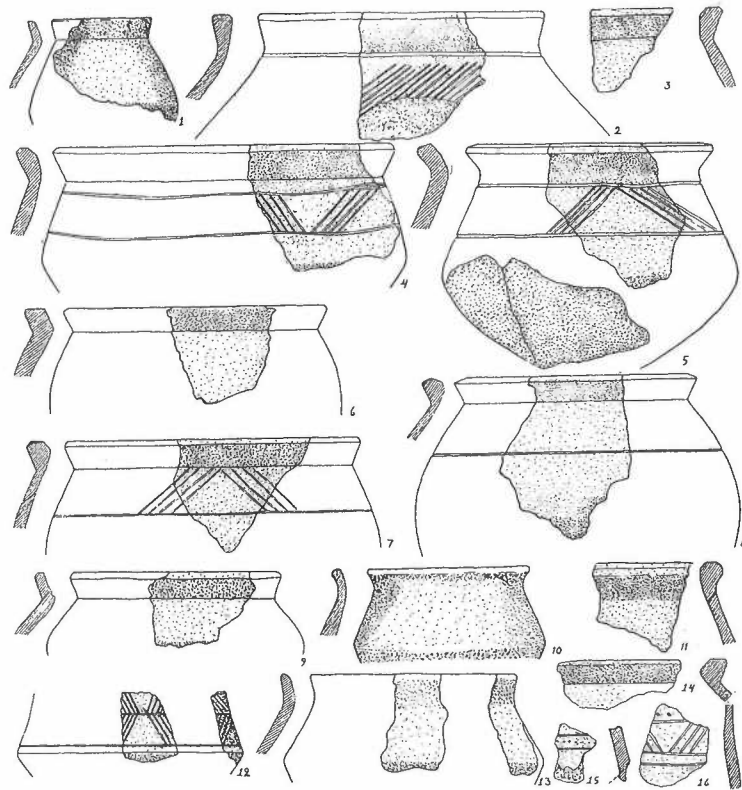


Fig. 15. Pottery sherds from the lower level (after Vifot 1936) 1:3.

Sjælland published and classified by Liversage (Liversage 1980, pp. 93 ff.). The early pottery at Hötofta belongs to Liversage's Nissehøj phase dating from the beginning of the Roman Iron Age (ca. 0–A.D. 60 proposed by Liversage). The pottery from the early level at Uppåkra is assigned to the Gurede phase, which is a little later (AD 60–120). A little later again in his classification is the pottery from the settlement at Vå as belonging to his Hemshøjgård phase.

Liversage's dating can be accepted in broad outline, but there are many details to be discussed. The limit backwards for the Nissehøj phase seems to be unsure, especially with the information we have about the stylistic variation of the pottery (rims and decoration) which can be noticed in the material from Sjælland as published in 1992 (Jørgensen 1992). Another

problem is that the find material from Hötofta and Vå seems to represent not a very short but a rather long period of time.

The pottery from the upper level at Uppåkra which must be later than that of the lower level is characterized by plastic decoration in the form of furrows and grooves arranged both horizontally and vertically, hatched ridges, angled lines, and dots (Vifot 1936, fig. 18). There are also coarse sherds without decoration from storage vessels with straight or slightly S-shaped rims. As has been mentioned above, there are some very big vessels and a vessel with the handle like a bird's nest. The last one seems to date from the Viking Age.

The grave

The fine pottery from the upper level has much in common with the vessels from the grave found

in trench B: a jug (Fig. 9), a handled vessel, and a small cup. The jug was decorated with horizontal hatched ridges, lines running horizontally and angled, and a row of bows. The beaker-shaped pot with strap-handle is ornamented with encircling grooves on the shoulder. The cup is not decorated. The vessels are discussed in 1955 and dated to the Late Roman Iron Age (Stjernquist 1955, Pl. XXXII:5).

Later excavations and finds

Later investigations have helped to delimit the occupation layers at the site and to give information about the extent of the cemetery (Fig. 16).

In 1968 a mortuary was built to the south of the church at the wall of the churchyard (see Fig. 2). During this work layers of burnt clay and hearth were found and removed. Archaeological investigation of the sections was performed afterwards when the pit was dug. The occupation layer was thick and two house foundations, one above the other, were documented. The finds collected during this investigation were to a large extent animal bones, pottery sherds, a plain spindle-whorl, a spherical amber bead, and iron objects. In connection with a concentration of pottery sherds at one of the floor levels lots of burnt grains were collected which are hulled barley and four-rowed barley (*Hordeum vulgare*) (Ohlsson 1968; 1972; cf. Hjelmqvist 1955; 1979). The layers are dated from the late Roman Iron Age or the transition to the Migration Period by a comb of bone (Fig. 17) and a sherd of a yellow-green glass beaker with ground ovals as decoration (Fig. 18). The beaker is of type E 227–237 belonging to Eggers' phases C2–C3 (Lund Hansen 1987, p. 44). It can be mentioned that the thickness of the occupation layers was noticed and charcoal and burnt clay were perpetually found during digging at the churchyard. Prehistoric objects have been found on several occasions.

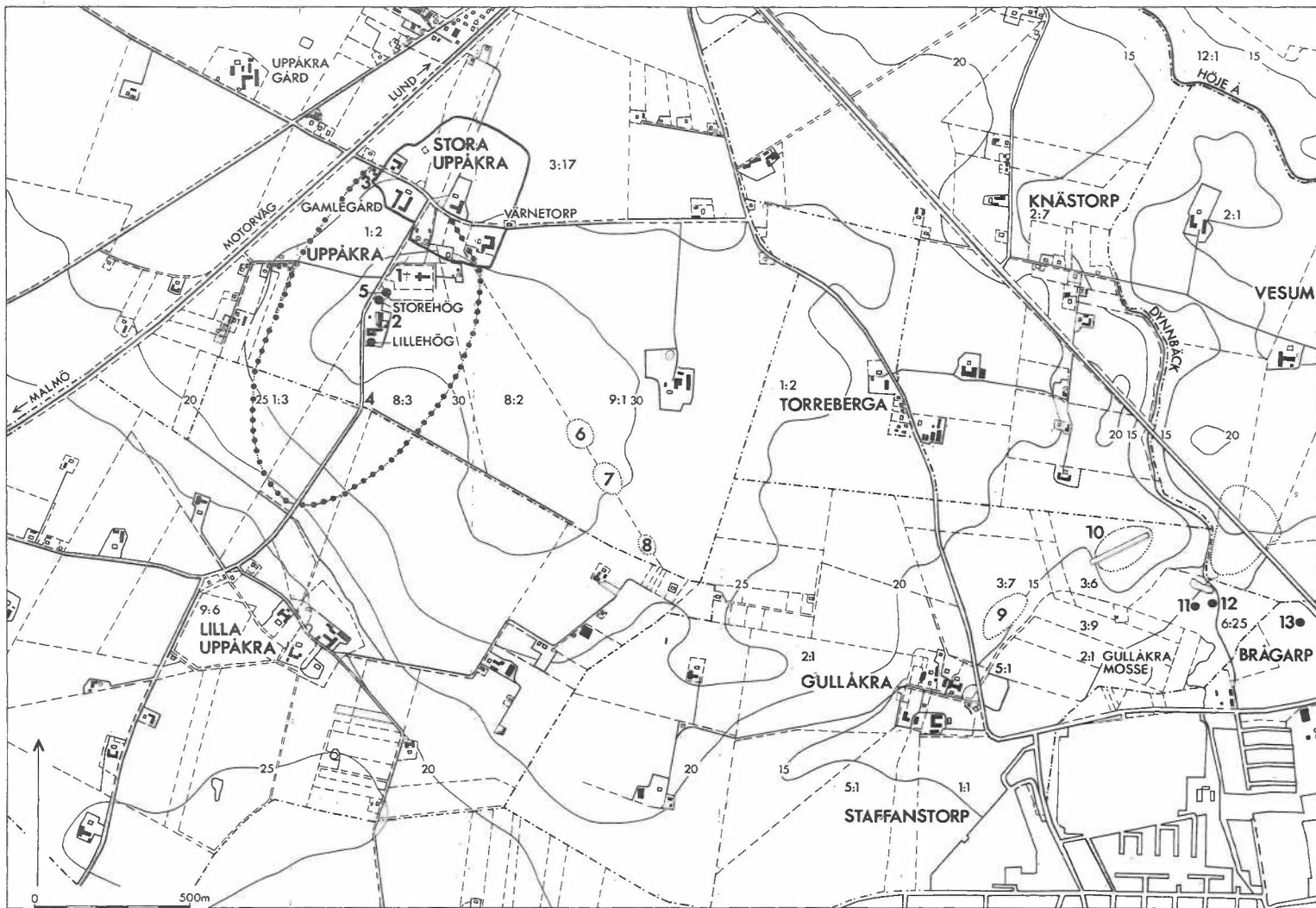
In 1953 a small pottery vessel with a row of impressions as decoration, h 6.5 cm, (LUHM

28944, cf. Stjernquist 1955, Pl. XXXIII:5) came in the southern part of the churchyard, and in 1974 an oval brooch dating from the 9th century was found there (Fig. 19) (Stjernquist 1977; 1994; cf. Jansson 1985). Furthermore, "iron points" are said to be among the finds from that area.

In the year 1968 the building of a new vicarage was planned. Because of the knowledge of the thick occupation layers within the area, a trial excavation was made north-east of the church in order to investigate whether the site could be built on without large-scale archaeological excavation. The trial excavations showed that parts of the area had only slight traces of occupation layers. It was possible in that way to get a site near the church for the new building. In the same year a trench for an electric cable was dug parallel to the road which runs east of the church from the north in the direction of Tottarp. The trench touched above all the area of the old village. The finds such as animal bones, burnt clay, and pottery sherds were consequently not prehistoric but from the Middle Ages or later.

In connection with the construction of the motorway between Lund and Malmö in 1952, observations were made which were important for the delimitation of the occupation layers of the settlement. The digging for the motorway extended only about 50 m to the west of the farm located at the western edge of the village of Stora Uppåkra. The sections showed deposits of clay layers. It was not possible to make investigations in detail because of the disturbed sections and the very rainy weather. As we have seen, the distance to the nearest farm was only 50 m. During restoration of the buildings on this farm, a hearth and postholes were found at a depth of 1–1.5 m. This is support for the statement that the occupation layers extended so far to the west (No. 3 on the map, Fig. 16).

Digging showing prehistoric remains was carried out in 1975 in connection with the widening of road No. 879 at a place some 300–500 m to the south of the church. On that occasion several trenches were dug to investigate the ex-



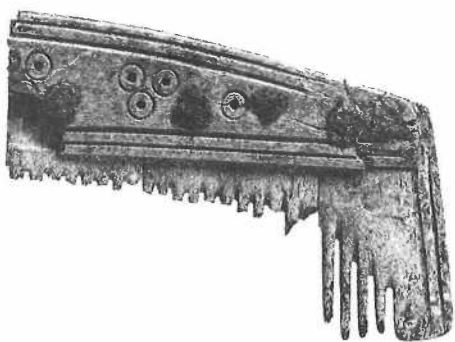


Fig. 17. Comb found at the lower clay-level of the trench at the mortuary. 1:1. Photo Bertil Centervall.

tent of the occupation layers. The thickness was about 1 m. An amount of finds such as animal bones, burnt clay, pottery sherds, and iron fragments came to light (No. 4 on the map, Fig. 16) (LUHM 29377). Dating from the Early Iron Age could be proved. In connection with the students' field school in the same year, two trenches were dug to the west of the churchyard, which confirmed the thickness of the occupation layers at this spot (No. 5 on the map, Fig. 16).

These excavations have shed light on the extent of the prehistoric occupation layers. They have also shown that prehistoric occupation layers are lacking within the area of the old village. It is possible that the older levels were disturbed by the later settlement. But it is also possible that the features of the prehistoric community had very little effect on the area where the later village was located from the Middle Ages to the land-amalgamation reform at the beginning of the 19th century (*enskifte*). A farm

with the name Gamlegård is situated in the area where the old village and the prehistoric occupation layers met each other.

The delimitation of the prehistoric occupation layers, which is drawn in the inventory and shown on the map, seems on the whole to be right. There are, however, finds dating from the Iron Age also outside the delimitation of the occupation layer on the map. This is evident from an investigation in 1986, when a water conduit was drawn between Källby and Önsvala. It crossed the fields south-east of Uppåkra church where the 2 km broad but low height extended from Uppåkra in the direction of Gullåkra.

On one of the investigated points (site 22) (Fig. 16:6) two cremation graves with urns and two cremation pits were found. An urn burial was dated by a pottery vessel with handle to the Roman Iron Age. One of the cremation pits had pottery sherds, two fibulae of bronze, pieces of resin caulking, and beads of amber and glass. The other cremation pit had a fibula with high catchplate which gives a dating to the same



Fig. 18. Glass sherd of yellow-green glass found below the lower clay-level of the trench at the mortuary. 1:1. Photo Inger Kristensson.

Fig. 16. Map of Stora Uppåkra and Gullåkra with the location of the large occupation layer, the find spots mentioned in the text and the site of Gullåkra bog. 1. The churchyard of Stora Uppåkra. 2. Vifot's excavation. 3. Find-place with hearths and post-holes. 4. Trench along the road No. 879. 5. Trench taken up during the students' field school. 6. Graves. 7. Graves. 8. Occupation layer. 9. Stone Age settlement. 10. Settlement from the Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age. 11. Find-place of a lur of bronze. 12. Find-place of a torque of bronze. 13. Find-place of a celt of bronze. – The large occupation layer of the Iron Age settlement is marked by a dotted line. Drawing by Christina Borstam.



Fig. 19. Oval brooch found at the churchyard. H 10 cm. Photo Bertil Centervall.

period. Not far from these features an inhumation burial and a cremation burial were investigated (site 23) (Fig. 16:7). The inhumation burial yielded beads of glass and amber, a bronze ring (Fig. 20), a knife with remains of a wooden handle, and a pottery vessel with a complicated decoration with lines, rows of angles and pits

(Fig. 21). Another pottery vessel with plastic decoration and with lines came from the cremation burial (Fig. 22). Both these vessels have a typical high neck. They date the features from the Late Roman Iron Age (LUHM).

At both of these places there were remains of occupation layers which seem to be from the



Fig. 20. Beads and a bronze ring found in a grave. 1:1.
Photo Bengt Almgren.



Fig. 21. A pottery vessel found in an inhumation. H 18 cm. Photo Inger Kristensson.



Fig. 22. A pottery vessel found in a cremation pit. It had a handle on the shoulder. H 17.5 cm. Photo Inger Kristensson.

Bronze Age but which can be from the Iron Age as well. The same applies to occupation layers, hearths etc. located at a place a little to the south-east (site 24).

Summary of the circumstances of the settlement at Uppåkra as known through the investigations and finds

Vifot's investigation in 1934, later excavations and reconnoitring, and earlier and later finds indicate the existence of a large and rich settlement from the Iron Age. Vifot managed during the rescue excavation in 1934 to get rather good information about the settlement and very interesting find material in spite of the difficulties and the limited resources (Fig. 23). The levels of house foundations and the dating to the Roman Iron Age and the Migration Period were stated by him. Later investigations have completed the picture. The occupation layers, at least at some places, have a thickness of about 3 m and seem to stretch over an area which is 1100 m in a N-S and 600 m in an E-W direction (Fig. 16). They get thinner in the eastern, western, and southern parts. In the northern part the layers touch the area of the medieval and later village. A farm with the name Gamlegård is located there. The name Gamlegård refers to an old settlement but how old it is, is difficult to say. However, the location of the farm at the edge of the large prehistoric occupation layer is noteworthy.

The occupation layers of the Iron Age settlement consist of remains of building plots with collapsed house foundations. Vifot made a division of the excavated material into two stratigraphical levels, which cover the Roman Iron Age and the beginning of the Migration Period. The position of the finds can be seen in the publication and also in details in the report of the excavation. The settlement continued during the Late Iron Age until the Viking Period, which is shown by several finds. Important finds



Fig. 23. Objects found in 1934. Photo Bertil Centervall.

are a glass sherd of a beaker with ground ovals and an oval brooch, both found at the churchyard, and pottery sherds dating from different phases of the Iron Age. There are also settlement traces from the Pre-Roman Iron Age.

During Vifot's excavation one grave came to light which is described above, and later excavations have revealed other graves dating from the Roman Iron Age. They are located near the church but also on the height in the south-eastern direction towards Gullåkra. The finds of graves, however, are still sporadic.

The two mounds, Storehög and Lillehög, near the church have been regarded as Bronze Age barrows, but this is not certain. The information we have about an Iron Age find from a barrow there could indicate that they are from the Iron Age (Bruzelius 1878). Iron Age graves in barrows are not unusual in south-western Skåne. But it must be mentioned that settlements dating from

the Bronze Age are known from places around the Iron Age settlement.

The results of the investigations at Uppåkra give a rather good idea of the features, the dating, and extent of the settlement. On Arrhenius' investigation map (Arrhenius 1934) there is a large phosphate area at Uppåkra, the largest we have in Skåne, which indicates that at the site there are very thick and large occupation layers of an Iron Age settlement. The Roman Iron Age and the Migration Period are very well represented in the material. The finds show that the population of the settlement had connections with a wider social environment. The glass sherds are imported as is probably also a continental form of bronze key with four rods. With larger find material it will be possible to discuss the communications and exchange of the community.

In spite of the limited investigations made by Vifot and later there are finds which give

some information about the subsistence and economic life of the population. Three groups of material can be mentioned in this connection: animal bones and antler, grains, and traces of iron production.

Bones and antler

The animal bones have been analysed by Herved Berlin (Vifot 1936, pp. 139ff.). They originate from cattle (*Bos taurus*), sheep/goat (*Ovis arius*/*Capra hircus*), pig (*Sus scrofa*), and horse (*Equus caballus*). Furthermore, there are a few fragments from dog (*Canis familiaris*), swan (*Cygnus* sp.) and goose (*Anser* sp.). Some bones of fish could not be determined. Finally, Herved Berlin has analysed a skeleton from the grave in trench B and some fragments of *Homo* found in trenches A, B, C, and D. It was a community with stock-breeding.

There are some worked bones of cattle, sheep, and horse and a few pieces of antler of wild animal, elk (*Alces alces*) and red deer (*Cervus*

elaphus). Bone and horn working must have been of considerable importance because of the pieces with traces of working and the semi-manufactured products which have been found (Fig. 24). There may have been comb and other manufacture on a rather large scale. The importance of this craft production at the settlement is well illustrated. There are a lot of points of horn and antler which have been sawn off and many worked pieces of bone and antler. This raw material for craft production of horn, bone, and antler is encountered in all trenches and at different levels: in trench A at least 18 pieces, in trench B ca. 4 pieces, in trench C ca. 10 pieces, in trench D ca. 35 pieces, in trench G ca. 11 pieces, in trench U ca. 35 pieces and in pit P 5 pieces. Combs and comb cases, partly fragmentary, can be mentioned from trenches A, B, C, and D (Fig. 25).

Investigation of grains and grain impressions

The grains found on the floor of the house



Fig. 24. Semi-manufactures of bone and antler. 1:2. Photo Bengt Almgren.

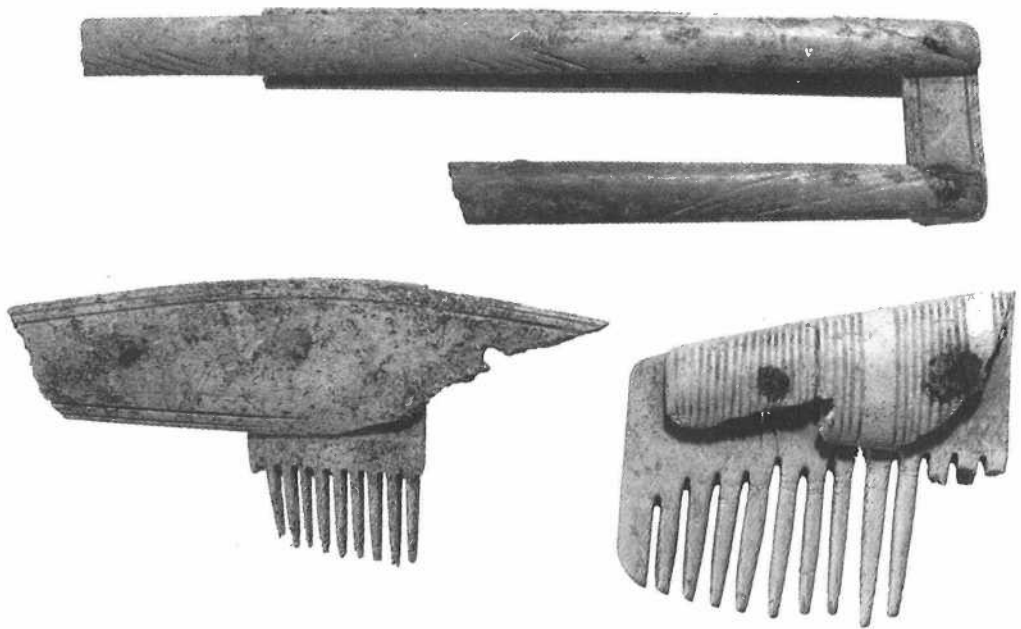


Fig. 25. Combs found in 1934.1:1. Photo Bengt Almgren.

foundation of trench D and the impressions of grains in the burnt daub from the walls of the house and in some pottery vessels have been analysed by Hakon Hjelmqvist (Hjelmqvist 1955, pp. 81 ff.; Hjelmqvist 1979). Most of the grain impressions are hulled barley – 368 impressions or 85 per cent of all the impressions (Hjelmqvist 1955, p. 82, Tab. 6, and p. 87, Tab 7). Only 54 impressions were naked barley. Oats were only documented with 7 impressions and wheat with 3 impressions. Furthermore, *Camelina sativa* and *Triticum spelta* were found in exceptional cases. The grains from the floor were carbonized and difficult to analyse. It was, however, possible to determine hulled barley, naked barley, rye, and oats. Most of the grains were hulled barley in this population too.

Hjelmqvist's work gives a good survey of the food plants and weeds at the Iron Age settlements in Sweden. The find material from Uppåkra is large. Another find from Skåne dating from the Early Iron Age with many grains, analysed by Hjelmqvist and published in 1955, comes from the settlement at Vä (Stjernquist

1951). The spectrum of grains there is about the same as in Uppåkra. Since then the material from Skåne has increased in connection with the investigation of many settlements: Gårdlösa, Hagestad, Valleberga, Råga Hörstad, Malmö, and settlements in the Ystad district. If we compare the results published in 1955 with the results of the analyses of this find material from Skåne excavated during recent years such as Gårdlösa and the Ystad area, the picture is about the same, with hulled barley being the most usual grain (Hjelmqvist 1979; Hjelmqvist 1981, p. 57; Hjelmqvist 1992).

Hjelmqvist has also published finds from other parts of Sweden. A find from Skedstad, Bredsåtra, Öland, is unusual because of the many grains, ca. 2000 of hulled barley. The material which has been analysed after the publication in 1955 confirms approximately the variety of grains which is known from the Uppåkra find with hulled barley as most usual (85%). For Sweden as a whole there is a predominance of 73 per cent hulled barley during the early Iron Age (Hjelmqvist 1979). The find from Upp-

åkra is important as a standard design.

The find material shows that the Uppåkra community was an agrarian society. The problem is whether the grain production was carried on near the features of the settlement or at some places around the community by people working together with the inhabitants of the central place. The fertility of the soil and the organization of labour must be discussed. There are wet areas near the settlement which is a good prerequisite for cattle breeding because of the accessibility of grass.

Iron production

There are some but few traces of iron production. Samples from trenches A and D are slag with a high or small percentage of iron and phosphorus. There is also one piece of bog ore. The samples have been analysed by Dr Sven Palmqvist, Lund (Vifot 1936).

The Uppåkra settlement and the wider economic, religious and social environment

The Uppåkra settlement has been characterized as a central place which indicates that it will be seen in relation to the Iron Age settlement around it and in relation to the wider economic and social environment. There are many aspects to be taken into account in that connection, but it is only possible to discuss some of them here: a cult site in the vicinity, the landscape and the settlement, and the hoards and the settlement.

The discussion of a cult site in the vicinity will shed some light on the religious activities which must have been integrated in the activities at the settlement.

The question about the landscape as a background to the development of a large settlement like that at Uppåkra has many aspects. The natural environment and the settlement is one of them, including the conditions for agriculture, stock-breeding and other balance of re-

sources for economic life. Suitable locations for pollen analyses are important. The social environment comprises the population of other settlements which may have established economic and social connections with the Uppåkra settlement as a central place. The discussion concerning the regional groupings and political structure of Iron Age societies is important in recent research. Only some aspects of this wide problem complex can be touched upon here.

In modern archaeological research the hoards and especially the gold finds play an important part in the discussion of the society of the Iron Age. The outstanding example of this is the Gudme investigation. The gold finds illustrate economic and social power. A problem is whether there are gold finds which can be seen in connection with the settlement at Uppåkra. The silver and the few gold hoards of the Viking Age are also relevant for the problems of economic and social power and at the same time concerning the communications.

Discussion of a cult site in the vicinity of the settlement

Gullåkra bog is situated ca. 2 km south-east of Uppåkra church in the southern part of Brågårp parish (Fig. 16). In a geographical-topographical description of the year 1908 it is described as natural meadow. It is part of an area which is lower than 15 m above sea level and which is even today to a large extent meadow or wet land. The bog and the remaining pools of water are drained by the Dynnbäck brook which is an affluent to the Højeån river. During prehistoric times there may have been wider areas of open water. A small brook ran from the west through Gullåkra to the bog but it is now drained.

The bog is located to the north of the road which runs east-west to the north of the present settlement of Staffanstorp. In present times filling has been put at the edge of the bog but even today it is rather large. It continues into Brågårp village where it is called Brågårp bog and also into Knästorp parish where it has the name

Vesum bog. Several stone axes have been found in Brågarp and Vesum bogs (Karsten 1994). Furthermore, a sword of bronze of Montelius Period V type has been found in Vesum bog (LUHM 2556) and a celt of bronze (LUHM 3463) in Brågarp bog. These finds indicate that offering took place in the bog complex as early as the Stone and Bronze Ages. Gullåkra bog in the west, however, is the most interesting part of this complex.

Gullåkra bog is long since known as an offering site. Several finds have been made there in connection with peat cutting. The most well-known is a lur of bronze found in the 1840s during peat cutting in Gullåkra bog at a part of the bog which belonged to the vicarage of Uppåkra (Engström 1927). It was found at a depth of one to three ells. According to reports, remains of a boat and a big animal (horse) were

found together with the lur. It was given to Sven Nilsson and came with his collection to LUHM where it is No. 4372. According to the typological analyses made by Oldeberg, it belongs to the Early Bronze Age (Oldeberg 1947, cf. Stjernquist 1983). But there are also finds which show that Gullåkra bog was an offering place during the Iron Age.

A torque collar of bronze (Fig. 26) was found in 1911 during peat cutting near the place where the lur was found, which is only ca. 350 m from the find-place of the celt mentioned above. The bar has a quadrangular section and is decorated with hatched triangles and with two semi-spherical balls at the ends, decorated with concave-sided triangles, the so-called La Tène sign; the diameter of the torque 12.5–11.5 cm. The torque is dated to the Pre-Roman Iron Age (Engström 1927; Moberg 1954; Stjernquist 1994)



Fig. 26. A torque of bronze found in Gullåkra bog. Diam. 11.5 x 12.5 cm. Photo Inger Kristensson.

(LUHM 17176).

Four lanceheads have been found in Gullåkra without exact information about the find-place.

Lancehead of iron with narrow blade and



Fig. 27. Lancehead found in Gullåkra. L 21.8 cm.
Photo ATA.

broad octagonal socket with one hole for a rivet preserved. The midrib is distinct. Length 21.8 cm, the length of the socket ca. 8.5 cm, its width 2.9 cm, the width of the blade 1.7 cm. It formerly belonged to O. Sörling's collection. The dating is probably early Migration Period. SHM 7871:178 (Fig. 27).

Lancehead of iron of the same type as the one mentioned above. The socket has two holes preserved. Length 32.5 cm, width 2.5 cm, the width of the socket 3 cm. SHM 7871:177.

Lancehead of iron with distinct midrib, length 33.5 cm, the length of the socket ca. 11 cm (LUHM 12665). The blade is damaged but the socket was about 6 cm width (Engström 1927). The lancehead is dated to the Late Roman Iron Age. It is registered in Ilkjær's catalogue as No. 26 (Ilkjær 1990) (Fig. 28).

Lancehead of iron with distinct midrib. The point is bent and the blade damaged but the length was ca. 38 cm, the length of the socket 12.5 cm, with one rivet (LUHM 12664) (Engström 1927). It is dated to the Late Roman Iron Age (Fig. 28).

The finds found in the bog are spread in time from the Bronze Age to the Iron Age. We now have considerable knowledge about bog finds in southern Scandinavia which seem to be votive deposits, showing that religious activities at find-places of this type were continuous over a long time, even if the character of the finds varies. It is usually possible to see connection with settlement areas but they can also be attached to religious activities of an overarching character. Examples in southern Skåne are the newly excavated Hindby bog near Malmö, the bog in Hassle Bösarps and the Röekillorna find in south-eastern Skåne (Svensson 1991; Stjernquist 1973; Stjernquist 1987). The votive deposits reflect the religious activities of man, his need to be close to divine power, his need to influence his situation and to pave the way for security. It is a task for future research to try to state which groups moved to Gullåkra bog.

At least two of the lanceheads with find-place

Gullåkra (Nos. 12664 and 12665) seem to have come from the bog. One of them (No. 12664) has the point bent which can mean that it was damaged on purpose before being offered. Both these lanceheads have the blades corroded with holes. Similar damage can be seen on iron points in offering finds, for instance, on lanceheads from Illerup. It is a phenomenon which can be related to influence by peat soil and points to the two lanceheads as peat bog finds. The two other lanceheads described here are not corroded. They



Fig. 28. Lanceheads found in Gullåkra. L 38 and 33.5 cm. Photo Inger Kristensson.

Fig. 29. Lancehead found in Gullåkra. L 48.7 cm. Photo Bertil Centervall.



may have been grave-finds. Furthermore, there is another lancehead of iron, of Viking Age type, length 48.5 cm, found at Gullåkra No. 5 (private collection) (Fig. 29). This may be a grave-find. There have been other grave-finds too. Information in ATA speaks about two graves found in 1844 during ploughing at Gullåkra No. 6, which is situated near the bog. The finds of lanceheads in Gullåkra and the information about graves

there speak for a cemetery probably with warriors' graves. These warrior's graves may be seen in connection with the settlement at Uppåkra.

It is a hypothesis of the present writer that there was a special connection between the large Iron Age settlement at Uppåkra and the cult bog at Gullåkra. The bog complex is situated only about 2 km from Uppåkra church. It was so close to the high location of the settlement site that the inhabitants ought to have been able to see it and any fog banks there.

There are some settlements near the bog. A settlement site dating from the Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age has been registered at Gullåkra 3:6, a flat south-east slope at the bog. In the vicinity is also a Stone Age settlement. Furthermore, small settlements dating from the Bronze and Iron Age have been documented in the area between Gullåkra and Uppåkra. The finds from the bog are thus not isolated but have a background not only in the site at Uppåkra but in small temporary or permanent settlements nearby.

Another question is the importance for the central site at Uppåkra played by the rich cemeteries around and settlements and cemeteries at a distance. This problem will be discussed below.

Place-names

According to place-name research Uppåkra means "the high-lying arable land". It is listed in the twelfth century in *Necrologium Lundense* and is also mentioned in Cnut the Holy's deed of gift of the year 1085 when the King was the owner of an area at Uppåkra (at Södra Uppåkra 4 1/2 *bol* (hides) and at the other Uppåkra 4 1/2 *bol*) which was donated to the Cathedral of Lund (Blomqvist 1951). There must have been several farms. The name Uppåkra can be traced back into the Iron Age (Hallberg 1991). The finds discussed above show that the settlement was intensive and continuous during that period and that it went on during the Viking Age at least until the beginning of the Middle Ages. The hypothesis is that a powerful chieftain still ruled

at Uppåkra during the Viking Age.

The settlement perhaps had enclosures like villages of the Danish region. Owing to its location on a rise, the village was similar to an oppidum, which can be attached to the name Uppåkra. It can be mentioned that medieval Latin used the term *oppidum* for a settlement which was like a town but which was not the seat of a bishop. There is a letter from the year 1249 concerning Uppåkra where the term "oppido" was used but has been changed (Hidestål 1994).

The place-name Gullåkra seems to be as old as the name Uppåkra. It is mentioned in the year 1401. The first element *gull-* indicates gold, which the place-name scholars have interpreted as reference to fertile arable land and rich yield (Hallberg 1991). But *gull-* can also indicate the metal gold. One can assume that gold was offered as, for instance, in the Skedemosse bog (Hagberg 1967) and in other offering bogs and that this was so well-known that it gave the name to the bog and the village of Gullåkra. An investigation can be made with great expectations. A first step will be a geological investigation of the sequence and extent of the layers.

Uppåkra as a centre of a region

The term "region." The present discussions about regions in Skåne were mentioned in the introduction. Vä and Uppåkra are called centres in these discussions. The term centre or central place is defined in many papers which will be mentioned very briefly here. Region is a term which is used very much in present archaeological research, but the meaning of the term varies. Therefore, it is necessary to discuss the term and above all to define it, which is not so easy.

The term centre or central place is defined and characterized as a place where religious, political and economic power was concentrated (Jensen & Watt 1993; Öbrink 1994 with references). This means the existence of a cult place, a chieftain's estate, and developed trade and craft. Gold objects and warrior's equipment belong to a centre.

To make the question about regions more clear, the concept analysis of human geography can be used (Hannerberg 1968). There are two types of regions, namely, homogeneous or natural on one hand and functional on the other (Hannerberg 1968; Törnqvist 1994). According to the concept analysis of physical geography, the demarcation of a natural region depends principally on possibilities of transport. This is the prerequisite for the site catchment analysis and the models constructed as circular shapes for territories (Stjernquist 1981). But, as has been stated, this is a purely theoretical discussion. The possibilities of transport are central not only for present societies but also for prehistoric ones, even if the conditions are very different. The functional regions are moulded by patterns of movements and systems of administrative regulation depending, for instance, on economic conditions between the centres and the surroundings. One can assume that these conditions were valid also in prehistoric times. How large the regions were is impossible to say. It depends on the structure of the society. In a hierarchically structured society the regions could have been large. They may have had vague limits.

Ethnic and cultural regions are also discussed (Törnqvist 1994). They may coincide with functional regions but seem to be larger than these. When they are discussed in the present day they are characterized by linguistic, cultural, and ethnic similarities. There are, however, many problems with a definition along these lines.

It is not possible to use terms and contents of present-day economic research for research about the conditions during prehistoric times without further ado, but the present-day research can give some ideas for the analyses.

A homogeneous region around Uppåkra

In the western and south-western part of Skåne there extends in the present day a plain along the coast from the Råån river near Helsingborg in the west to the Svartån river on the south coast. It varies in breadth. It is limited by forest zones

and zones with poor soil (Emanuelsson *et al.* 1985; cf. Fabech 1993). One part of this plain is located around Uppåkra with the Romeleåsen ridge to the east. The southern limit of this plain can be seen near Skabersjö, where a spur of the Romeleåsen ridge and the forest zone extend to the west. The northern limit is not very clear but even there a spur of the ridge extends to the west. There are wooded border districts in places north of Löddeköpinge/Hoferup. The limits are not clear, but the plain is narrow at the two points mentioned. The landscape described with the forests is documented during historical time but the geological conditions were the same during the Iron Age and the division between the plain and the forest zone about the same as in present day. It is necessary, however, to reconstruct the local vegetation and its changes in the area at the time when the settlement flourished. An important point, though, is that reclamation has occurred since prehistoric times which can be seen, for instance, on the *Rekognosceringskartan* from 1815. A wet area is there marked near Alnerup (Alnarp) and a small brook runs from that area to the village of Lilla Uppåkra (Fig. 3).

Knowledge of the environment is, as mentioned, a prerequisite for analyses about the economic life but also for analyses of the contact and the need for contact with the social environment. Several methods can be used to obtain information about the vegetation, of which the pollen-analytical method and the reconstruction of potential vegetation from mapped modern vegetation have given good results (cf. Bartholin, Berglund & Malmer 1981; Berglund & Olsson 1991).

With the demarcation given above there is a plain with the Höjeån river at the centre and with the Segeån river to the south and the Kävlingeån river to the north. The three rivers meander towards the coast in the west, where there is a short distance to Sjælland. An old road running from Lund passes Uppåkra on its way to Trelleborg at the south coast. At the point where the road passes the Höjeån river there is a bridge which is

known already in the 14th century. This tract around Uppåkra can be mentioned as a homogeneous region (Fig. 30). It is about the same area as the so-called "Lund district" which the present author has described in a paper in 1977 (Stjernquist 1977). For practical reason it will here be called the *Uppåkra plain*. It is interesting to notice that an isarithm map of the finds dating from the Late Iron Age has a concentration on this plain (Strömberg 1961).

The settlement of the Uppåkra plain

As has been stated above, the Uppåkra settlement was inhabited during the whole of the Iron Age, at least from about the Birth of Christ. The thick occupation layers speak for a stable settlement. As the investigations are very limited it is, however, impossible to know whether there have been any changes inside the large area where the occupation can be traced. Future excavation will show that. There has at any rate been a settle-

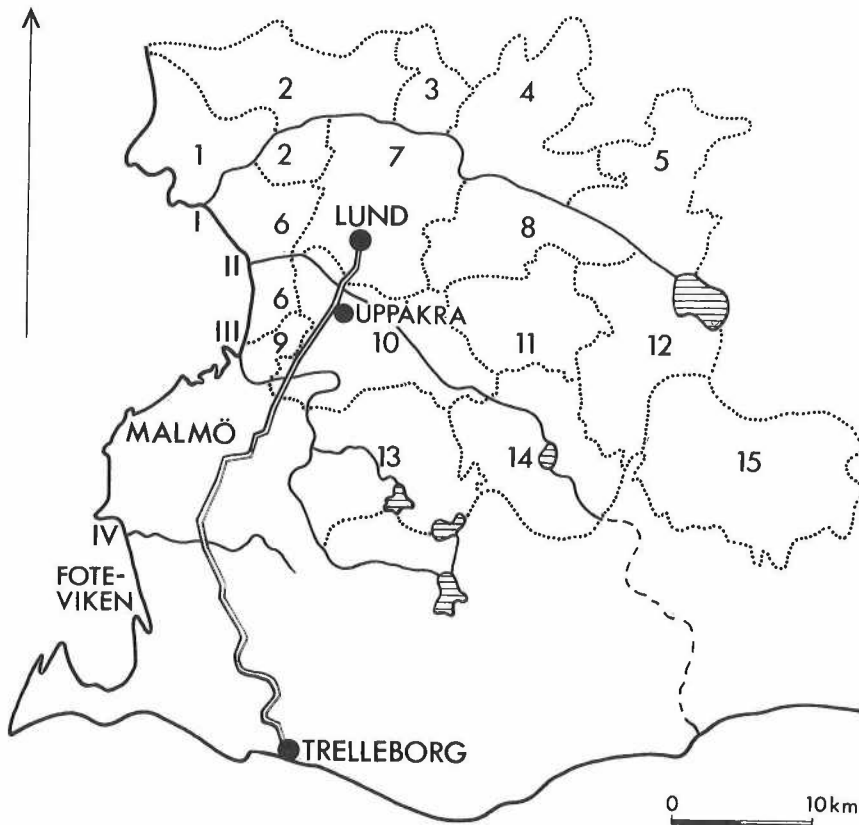


Fig. 30. Map of south-western Skåne with municipalities (1–15) on the Uppåkra plain comprising some parishes each, the rivers, the old road and places mentioned in the text. – *Parishes*: 1. Hofterup, Barsebäck, Löddeköpinge, Hög. 2. Västra Karaby, Dagstorp, Södervidinge, Virke, Stora Harrie, Lilla Harrie, Kävlinge, Lackalänga, Stävie. 3. Remmarlöv, Örtofta. 4. Östra Strö, Borlunda, Holmby, Skeglinge, Skarhult, Gårdstånga. 5. Hammarlunda, Högseröd, Harlösa. 6. Borgeby, Flädie, Fjellie, Lomma. 7. Västra Hoby, Stångby, Håstad, Igelösa, Vallkärra, Odarslöv, Norra Nöbbelöv, Stora Råby, Lund. 8. Södra Sandby, Hardeberga, Revinge. 9. Burlöv. 10. Uppåkra with Flackarp and Trolleberg, Knästorp, Bjällerup, Tottarp, Kyrkheddinge, Görslöv, Särslöv, Mölleberga, Staffanstorp (Brågarp, Nevishög), Esarp. 11. Dalby, Hällestad, Bonderup. 12. Silvåkra, Vomb, Veberöd. 13. Bjärshög, Bara, Skabersjö, Hyby. 14. Gödelöv, Genarp, Lyngby. 15. Everlöv, Blentarp, Sövde. – *Rivers*: I. The Kävlingeån river. II. The Höjeån river. III. The Segeån river. IV. The Pile brook. Drawing by Christina Borstam.

ment for a long time which can also be seen in the very large area with high phosphate values. It is, as mentioned, the largest phosphate area which Arrhenius has mapped in Skåne (Arrhenius 1934). It is quite clear in this case that the high phosphate values correspond to an area with very thick occupation layers even if there are problems concerning the dating of the high values (Callmer 1980).

One important problem is the distribution and structure of the Iron Age settlements on the plain around Uppåkra, and the connections between the Uppåkra settlement and the communities in the surroundings, which are defined here as the social environment. The existing register of all finds and observations can be used as a starting point, but it is necessary to supplement the material as far as possible. The description here will, however, be restricted to a survey of settlements along the rivers and the large and most important settlements and graves on the plain. The hoards of gold and silver will also be discussed. The high phosphate values will be considered.

When the settlement on the plain is discussed it could be useful to divide the material into periods according to observations made at the Uppåkra settlement. It is, however, not easy because of the incompleteness of the material with sporadic rescue excavations and retrieval of finds. Intensive analyses and reconnaissance of the archaeological landscape are necessary.

It is even more difficult to divide the find material geographically. The valley of the Höjeån river seems to be a very important area for the analyses of the Uppåkra settlement, but the upper course of the river has in more ways than one contact with the Kävlingeån river and with the Segeån river. It is not easy to divide the area between these three streams. Therefore, the survey here will start with the settlement along the Höjeån river and then mention some settlements and cemeteries to the south and to the north of it.

The Höjeån river which stretches to the north

of the settlement seems to be one of the most important communications of the population at Uppåkra. It has its source in the Härkeberga lake at the edge of the Romeleåsen ridge, passes between Uppåkra and Lund and flows into Öresund at Lomma on the west coast. An important problem concerns the water table of the Höjeån river during the Iron Age. It may be possible to get some knowledge about it by means of natural science methods.

Especially high values of phosphate can be noticed along the Höjeån river south of the village of Kyrkheddinge. There are others along the course to the coast, as at the village of Knästorp. These conditions can be used as an aid for an analysis of the settlement but, as we know, there are many problems with the phosphate method. The high values seem to originate from prehistoric times or the Middle Ages, but it is not possible to date them exactly (cf. Callmer 1980).

Between Uppåkra and the coast there are in the Höjeån valley at least three bigger complexes of prehistoric settlements from the Iron Age, namely, at Källby near Lund, in Flackarp parish, and at Lomma. At places along the upper course of the river several single finds and ancient monuments are known but not large complexes of settlements and graves which can be related to the Uppåkra settlement.

At Källby several ancient monuments have been found during planning activities. A cemetery with skeleton graves dating from the Roman Iron Age has been investigated on several occasions (Stjernquist 1955; Strömberg 1961). Some graves were excavated as late as 1986 (LUHM 28529). A grave from Vendel/Early Viking Period with very fine equestrian bronze-gilt mountings, a sword etc. is long since known; it was found at Källby in 1933 (LUHM 28271) (Wilson 1955). It could have been a boat-grave. From Lund are also some runic stones and hoards. There are several phosphate areas especially to the south of Lund and along the Höjeån river nearby (Callmer 1980). Among the very

fine objects found near Lund, a glass beaker can be mentioned, dating from the transition between the Roman Iron Age and the Migration Period (Stjernquist 1977; Hansen 1987).

In Flackarp parish, which is also near Lund, there are remains of graves and settlements dating from Late Roman Iron Age, Migration and Vendel Periods and, finally from the Viking Age and the Middle Ages (Callmer 1980). Rescue excavations, some as late as the 1990s, have given sporadic finds at several spots; there seem to have been settlements over a long time in the parish. It is important to emphasize that a big and heavy collar of gold from the Migration Period was found in 1921 at Trolleberg, Flackarp, to the south of the Höjeån river (SHM 16675) (Strömberg 1961).

The Höjeån river reaches the sea on the west coast at Lomma. At that point a small stream, the Önnerup brook, comes from the north. Lomma was regarded as a town in the Early Middle Ages (Skansjö 1980; Pauli 1983). The area has been very much disturbed by the modern development, but Viking Age settlements are known to the north of the Höjeån river at Habo and to the south of it at Karstorp. At Karstorp a rather large settlement was discovered and partly excavated (LUHM 29229). The settlement is located on a rise about 1500 m from the coast. Of the pit-houses 15 were investigated with pottery sherds, iron objects, combs, a spindle-whorl, an equal-armed brooch dated from the 10th century, a quern, etc. C14 analyses seem to show that the settlement goes back to the Vendel Period and continues in the Viking Age.

The rich complexes at Lund, Källby, and Flackarp can be seen in connection with the Uppåkra settlement, but the settlement at Lomma is also important in that connection. They were all settled at the time when Uppåkra was flourishing. The settlement at Karstorp is located near a point where there must have been a harbour. Transshipment of goods may have been done in the neighbourhood before the transport

on the Höjeån river with its low water table.

The distance between the Höjeån river and the upper part of the Segeån river to the south of Uppåkra with its tributary the Torreberga stream is not very great. Some large cemeteries and settlements between the two rivers are not far to the south of Uppåkra-Gullåkra but they are also a short distance from the Segeån river. Therefore, we can assume that the inhabitants of these sites used this river and its water system as a communication route.

Kabbarp and Djurslöv, both in Tottarp parish, have cemeteries dating from the Late Roman Iron Age/Migration Period with some very rich graves with breloque shaped amber beads which indicate high status (Stjernquist, Beck & Bergström 1994). Viking Age silver hoard was found at Kabbarp (Salomonsson 1971), which shows the importance of the site even at the end of the prehistoric period.

Önsvala, in Nevishög and Mölleberga parishes, is a very important site with a series of rich graves with, for instance, amber beads of the type mentioned above and a brooch with ornament in chip carving, and other brooches dating from the Roman Iron Age to the Viking Age, and also settlement remains with pit-houses etc. (Larsson 1982). An inhumation with two lanceheads, a sword and a ploughshare-point of iron, dating from the Viking Age, were found in a mound and excavated at Önsvala No. 5 in the 19th century (LUHM 3753–57). After Larsson's publication of the great amount of find material, the development has revealed other remains which show that the site was very large. The Önsvala site flourished at the same time as the Uppåkra site, and is situated only ca. 5 km to the south of it. The village is mentioned in the 14th century.

There are many Iron Age sites along the Segeån river which passes Arlöv before the fall at the coast. In the neighbourhood of Malmö development has destroyed the prehistoric landscape but the rescue excavations have given good results. We know quite a lot about the sites found

in Fosie, Lockarp, and Oxie parishes (Björhem & Säfstad 1993) (see map in Salomonsson 1971).

Some rich graves excavated at Kristineberg, Oxie parish to the east of Malmö, which can be dated to the transition between the Roman Iron Age and the Migration Period, have finds of fibulae of bronze, a glass sherd of a beaker, and very interesting beads such as amber beads of breloque shape (Stjernquist, Beck & Bergström 1994).

There are several gold finds from the Malmö area. Two bracteates and a finger ring of gold are found at Arlov. An armring of gold from Käglinge, Oxie parish, is of a type which was used by princes during the Migration Period as a sign of high status (Salomonsson 1971; Kyhlberg 1980; Andersson 1995). A Viking Age armring of gold from Husie parish can also be mentioned (Hårdh 1976). It is quite possible that the Segeån river, like the Höjeån river was important for contact with a wider social environment on the other side of Öresund.

Skabersjö is situated to the east of Malmö not far from Oxie, on the edge of what has been defined here as the Uppåkra plain. At Ryd in Skabersjö parish a gold collar from the Migration Period has been found. It is a collar of the same kind as the one from Trolleberg mentioned above. From that parish is also the famous Skabersjö brooch from the Vendel Period, which was imported from the west (Arbman 1956). There are many other important Iron Age finds from that district, such as the fine sword with animal-decorated hilt of silver from Vrångabäck, Sövde parish.

To the north of the Höjeån river between that river and the river Kävlingeån, there are many finds and sites, but only some of them will be mentioned here, such as settlement remains from the Late Iron Age at Bjerred, Flädie parish, near the coast, with pit-houses etc.

Many of the important sites and hoards are concentrated in the Kävlingeån valley, such as the well-known Igelösa hoard from late Viking

Age, hoards from Lackalänga and Stävie, the Lackalänga boat-grave, the Stävie and Norrviddinge cemeteries (Ale 1973 and 1967) from the Late Iron Age with very fine Viking Age objects, and also settlement remains from Saxtorp and Kvärlöv (Petersson 1975; Jacobsson 1978). At the lower part of the Kävlingeån river there are near the coast the well-investigated settlement complexes at Löddeköpinge with the important Borgeby area quite near (Ohlsson 1976; 1980; Cinthio 1980). To the north of the river there are also settlements from the Iron Age at Västra Karaby and at Hög. Settlement remains of big farms at Västra Karaby are very interesting. Among the rich finds are a fine vessel with stamped decoration (Stjernquist 1992), and a gilded sword-pommel with animal ornamentation dating from the seventh century, which must have belonged to a chieftain (Ohlsson 1971; Wihlborg 1985).

At Löddeköpinge there is ca. 3.5 km from the coast a settlement from the Late Iron Age, which is interpreted as a market place. During the Viking Age there was at the mouth of the river a harbour with a wooden quay. The harbour lagoon was protected by a barrier of stone. It seems to have been silted up and in the 11th or early 12th century a new harbour with a stone-built mole, the *Lödde kar*, was constructed off the river mouth (Rausing 1990).

As mentioned above, there are many sites with settlement remains, cemeteries, hoards, and single finds on the Uppåkra plain. As far as can be seen at present, some show continuity through the Iron Age, some had their main points in the Viking Age. The greatest difference between the Uppåkra settlement and some of these sites is the very thick occupation layer at Uppåkra. Such a thick occupation layer is not documented at other sites. But the knowledge about many sites is very incomplete. The hypothesis is that Uppåkra is the central place and that other sites on the plain was connected to it. However, much investigation has to be done concerning the sites, the gold finds, and the communication

routes and their function in the social and economic life.

The Uppåkra plain has here been discussed as a region. The problem is, however, the connections between the settlements on this plain and the districts to the north and to the south of it. The districts to the north will not be discussed here any more but the district to the south will be treated very briefly. The area around Malmö, which has been mentioned, is located between the Uppåkra plain and the south-western part of Skåne with Oxie and Skytt hundreds (*häradar*).

To the south between the Segeån river and the south coast of Skåne, where an old road runs from Lund to Trelleborg, there are abundant settlements, cemeteries, hoards, and other finds from the Iron Age. This material has been catalogued and discussed by Hårdh in connection with the investigations at Foteviken (Hårdh 1984). Some will be mentioned here, such as the cemetery at Hammarsnäs and the cemeteries at Maglarp/Trelleborg, Bodarp, and Vellinge, which seem to continue during the Iron Age. There are also settlements dating from several periods of the Iron Age, such as the complex at Hötofta (Stjernquist 1969 and forthcoming) and others at the Pile brook. And there are many gold finds (Strömberg 1963). On the isarithm map of the finds there is a maximum in this district (Strömberg 1961).

It is quite clear that the western and south-western parts of Skåne were oriented towards the west not only in the Viking Age but earlier in the Iron Age. Already in the Roman Iron Age there were strong cultural connections in that direction and along the western coast of south Sweden (cf. Stjernquist 1955). These connections in the Viking Age can be traced as far to the north as Norway. Written historical sources refer to them (Randsborg 1980; cf. Gjøstein Resi 1979; Holmberg 1977). There must have been harbours at several places (Crumlin-Pedersen 1984; 1991). And in the Viking Age, perhaps earlier, there were political connections. Since the Foteviken investigation was published a ring

fort of the known Viking Age type has been found and partly excavated at Trelleborg (Jacobsson 1989). The ring fort shows that the Danish King ruled over this part of Skåne at least in the 10th century.

At the end of the Viking Age, probably at about the time when Lund was founded on the Højeån river and the ring fort was built on the south coast, the King in some way came into possession of property at Uppåkra (Skansjö & Sundström 1988). It was a time of great change in the social structure and we can assume that there was violence. Cnut the Holy's deed of gift speaks about "paying for peace" as a reason for the King receiving property. This is not written specifically about the property at Uppåkra, but it is in so many other cases that it must have been the ordinary manner. If Uppåkra was from the beginning a powerful and wealthy centre with religious functions it lost its power when Lund was founded and during the eleven century became a royal and ecclesiastical centre.

The problem is when the politically integrated situation of the Viking Age was created (cf. Anglert 1995). It is very difficult to estimate whether the central place at Uppåkra ruled for some time over other very wealthy centres not only on the Uppåkra plain but also in the wide districts to the north and to the south. There may have been local chieftains and political centres at several places before and at the beginning of the Viking Age (cf. Myhre 1987; Christophersen 1991; cf. also Callmer 1984). Future research will show what connections such local chieftains had to the chieftain at Uppåkra.

A project concerning structure and change of the Iron Age settlement in southern Sweden has started at the Institute of Archaeology in Lund, in cooperation with authorities working with the care of ancient monuments.

Abbreviations

ATA Antikvarisk-topografiska arkivet,
Stockholm

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Ale: Historisk tidskrift för Skåneland.

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