…once upon a site

-a story of archaeological
knowledge production

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ABSTRACT

This thesis strives to tell a story of archaeological knowledge production at the Uppåkra site in Scania, southern Sweden, through focusing upon the actual work on site. Ethnographic study of archaeologists in the field brings the thesis into contact with sites and material practices as well as literary sources and accounts of archaeology and methodological problems. Following these leads the thesis realizes that, when telling the story of archaeology, it subjects itself to whatever the work on site is subjected to. Showing archaeology to be a set of complex material and social practices, and networks of things and people, that need to be held together to tell the truth, the thesis knows it has to do the same thing itself. For it too is on site, right next to its archaeological object of study, rather than on some meta-level.

Keywords: Ethnography, archaeological facts, thesis, field archaeology, Uppåkra.

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1. DEPARTURE

"To make light of archaeology is to be a true archaeologist."[1]

I began writing this thesis with an interest in the foundations of archaeology, what kind of ontological entities it builds upon in order to come up with interpretations of past events. I turned to Heideggerian thinking in a search for the Being and beings of the discipline. But the thesis also began with an archaeology department, at Lund University, and a thesis advisor, Cornelius Holtorf, without which it could never come to be realized. Searching for "the foundations" or "the essence" of archaeology the thesis steered its course to questions of how archaeology works in practice and how it is carried out in the field and under what influences it does this. I was presented with literature and articles, philosophical investigations of the *building blocks* of archaeological knowledge and accounts of ethnographic studies of archaeological fieldwork. And the names of the authors behind these works, and their most important references, led me further into accounts of scientific activity. I had to press on, and as the opportunity presented itself of doing an ethnography myself, of the field excavation course in Uppåkra in May of 2007 (with subsequent excavation carried out during the entire summer), I chose to build my thesis around my observations in the field. Little realizing, then, the journey upon which I had departed and the troubles that would follow.

1.1 Aim and Questions

My aim with this thus became to tell a different story of archaeological fieldwork at the Uppåkra site in Lund in southern Sweden. A story of what happened "once upon a site". I asked myself what archaeological knowledge production would look like if I studied closely what happened during excavation and listened to what was being said, rather than just routinely accepted the archaeological a priori of excavating remains and then constructing interpretations of what prehistoric events produced these. In my role as ethnographer of the familiar I tried to "'exoticize the domestic', rather than to 'domesticate the exotic'" (Edgeworth 1992:40), turning a world I knew quite well into something strange and peculiar, trying to understand archaeological knowledge production.

The questions that helped me with this task are the following:

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[1] A paraphrase of Blaise Pascal's "Se moquer de la philosophie c'est vraiment philosopher." (Pascal 1958:100), translated by Trotter as "To make light of philosophy is to be a true philosopher." (Pascal 1660:4).

How was archaeological knowledge produced at the Uppåkra site in the 2007 field season, focusing on the way in which the material site was turned into textual archaeological data?

How did the excavation project evolve, and how was the knowledge production affected by the structure of the project and its various material, archaeological and non-archaeological components?

1.2 "Archaeology as Anthropology"

The first ethnographical study of archaeological fieldwork is to be found in American Antiquity in 1955, in a page-long article by Louis Dupree. He claims that an archaeological excavation provides a very interesting, and hitherto unrecognized, opportunity of anthropological, linguistic, ethnological, etc., studies. With hired workers the archaeologist leading the project receives a unique tool - an artificial group that would not have emerged outside of the excavation. It evolves, through daily work together, into a natural entity with its own rules, structure and equilibrium. In order to study this, the archaeologist should prepare for a dual role, as both field technician and human scientist (Dupree 1955:271). To Dupree this would never become anything more than a suggestion to others, something which has, at least today, 50 years later, become reality in many places. Matthew Edgeworth makes an interesting point when commenting on the dual role of the project leader or site director. Should he also include himself in the study as no such study could be complete without taking the group leader into account? This is however a problem to any ethnographic study; whether or not the observer should be involved in the object of study (or if it is even possible not to be) (Edgeworth 2006:2).

In 1967 perhaps the first real ethnographical (or sociological) study of archaeology was conducted, by Ove Wall, Anita Christiansson and Helena Wall. It was a sociometrical study of cooperation in teams at an archaeological excavation. Central questions were the effect of educational background on cooperation, relations between the director and other members, and also between teams on different parts of the site. Since it was carried out by people not taking part in the excavation itself the site director was included, which is why it could be claimed to have, in a way, solved the problem of reflexivity (or at least situated it 'outside' archaeology, with the observers) (Edgeworth 2006:2). With the "New Archaeology" of the 1970s and the early -80s no major studies on archaeological activity were carried out. Possibly the focus on scientific objectivity made such work worthless or at best uninteresting to archaeologists. Edgeworth mentions two articles during this period, by Sellars (1973) and Flannery (1982), that can be said to give some kind of account of archaeologists

(Edgeworth 2006:2). Flannery's "The Golden Marshalltown" (1982) is a humorous story of a flight home to Detroit from an archaeological meeting in San Diego. I find it to contain a couple of good points (even though the author tells you to not look for anything profound in it), apart from being an amusing account of three very different archaeologists. The central theme here is the relation between archaeology and philosophy, or theory, and the moral of the story seems to be that archaeologists should stick to unself-consciously satisfying their own curiosity about the past, something that will render us a good general understanding of past human activities. What the world wants from archaeologists is archaeological stories, it is claimed, and not epistemology (or any other philosophy), a statement that Björnar Olsen uses to exemplify a common skepsis in archaeology against theoretisizing what can be considered unproblematic (Flannery 1982:272; Olsen 2003:16f).

The conflict between processual and post-processual archaeologists of the later 1980s was contemporary with important works in the sociology of science and experimental ethnographies in social anthropology, and with the increasing influence of Bourdieu's "Theory of practice" (Edgeworth 2006:3). In this climate the most detailed, still today, work on archaeological field activity was carried out in 1989-90, by Matthew Edgeworth. He worked for ten weeks as part participant, part ethnographical observer on an archaeological excavation. His account of the activity on the site made up his doctoral thesis, finished in 1991. He had his focus on what he called the "acts of discovery", a two-way transaction, in which material evidence emerged from the ground and was worked, shaped and interpreted into data by the archaeologists, who were in turn affected by working with this material. The conceptual schemes of the archaeological agents made the material evidence intelligible, but the latter would not simply be passively subjected to the archaeologists' categories and preconceived ideas, but sometimes presented challenges and contradictions, which led to a reshaping of some knowledge alongside the reproduction of other (Edgeworth 2006:3; 2003:vi; 1992). It is stressed in this work that all theory is grounded in bodily practice, and the aim is to sketch the ontological foundation for archaeology (Edgeworth 1992:2). An abundance of terms for different situations of archaeological fieldwork figures here and, not surprisingly, he draws in part on Heideggerian thinking in laying the ontological foundation for the archaeological activities that he records and examines. Archaeology is shown to be an activity consisting of a multitude of material and social practices, involving mediation by different tools and analogies (Edgeworth 1992, see for example chapters IV and VI).

In the 1990s ethnography was integrated as a method for reflection in post-processual archaeology, of which Ian Hodder's project at Çatalhöyük and Christopher Tilley's at

Leskernick are among the best known examples (see Edgeworth 2006:6-8). One objective of the latter was to put to the fore the fact that archaeology is as much a discourse of the past as an activity in the present. Daily excavation practices generate many alternative site-histories that are later abandoned, forgotten, reproduced or reshaped. It is remarked that reports are seldom written in a way that respects this multitude of perspectives or gives an account of how interpretations develop and emerge during an excavation project. Ordinary archaeological reports are criticized and said to give an authoritative, polished narrative of the past, for professional consumption, which hides the practices of archaeologists themselves. Archaeology, it is stressed, depends on how archaeologists experience past remains and are shaped by present society. Field diaries are used as a method for understanding the different interpretations and experiences at different stages of the project. The organization of the project was explicitly non-hierarchical (Bender et al. 1997:147, 150, and see for example 157f). Reflexive accounts, like this of the work at Leskernick, are more of project methodologies than complete studies of archaeological activity. Even though they may contain much of interest, I find there are significant differences between accounts like these and more extensive ethnographical accounts (e.g. Edgeworth 1992). For example, while the latter make the study of archaeology more into a study in its own right, the former is a method for improving archaeological fieldwork. To exemplify this, contrasting the above given description, Michael Wilmore focuses on and investigates what might at first look like a contradiction, in his ethnography of the Leskernick project. He points out that even though archaeologists characterized their work as free and individual, the reflexive methodology adopted by the project leaders, as a recognition of the individuality and subjectivity of the work, was not welcomed by many of the crew members at Leskernick. Instead there was explicit support for established techniques and forms of organization, something which was also noticed by the project leaders. To understand this apparent contradiction Wilmore claims it is necessary to place archaeology and the archaeologist in a larger field of future projects and employment, in which it is of utmost importance for the individual to market him-/herself as someone who knows the commonly accepted methods of the profession (Wilmore 2006; Bender et al. 1997:169, 172f).

Hodder's project at Çatalhöyük strove to develop a methodology for post-processual archaeology, drawing from the four major themes of reflexivity, contextuality, interactivity and multivocality. This is to be a way of acknowledging archaeology as an activity situated in a specific cultural and political context, having a great impact on the world outside it. Therefore we have to allow archaeological activity to be criticized and investigated searching for the influences of different experiences, backgrounds and other factors. Archaeology must also accept that non-archaeologists

too want a say in the interpretation of the past, other voices must be allowed to make their own sense of what they consider important. Fluid web-publications of results and finds were used to enable this. Different companies and governmental instances are also making use of the past to promote products or feelings of nationality and common descent (Hodder 2000:3f, 9-11).

Perhaps of more direct interest to the individual archaeologist down in the trench were the 12 steps of incorporating reflexivity and contextual thinking in actual archaeological interpretation of objects and features. In short these were supposed to give way to "interpretation at the trowel's edge" rather than reproducing the idea of the field worker obtaining objective facts, which are then recorded and saved for future analysis during post-ex in a laboratory somewhere, distant in both time and space. The analysts and specialists are here involved in the excavation, meeting the workers in the field, discussing different interpretations with them, so that any discoveries in the field as well as in the laboratory are quickly accessible for everyone taking part in the project. Diaries were used, both written and video recordings, to enhance understanding of interpretations at different points, and enable questioning and criticism of previous work. Everything was available in a database, so that previous interpretations of features could be checked during the excavation of new ones, and also questioned with new information (Hodder 2000:5-9; see also Hodder and Berggren 2003). The explicit theme for the excavation was context-sensitivity, so paradoxically the only central methodology consisted in a lack of universal methods (see Hodder 2000:3). Anthropological accounts were concerned with both archaeology's place in relation to local communities and the non-archaeological activities connected to the site (see Bartu 2000, Shankland 1999, 2000), and the actual fieldwork with all its steps in action. There is also an interesting, personal narration capturing the strangeness of work in "Everybody-Knows-Land" (Çatalhöyük), in which the archaeologists are given Indian-sounding names and depicted as performing very strange activities hard to grasp the meaning of for the uninvited (Erdur 2006).

Thomas Yarrow has recently argued for an understanding of archaeological fieldwork as practices where people and material traces on an excavation constitute each other as archaeologists and archaeological objects respectively (Yarrow 2003; 2006). He finds the interpretive move away from an empirical approach to archaeological material as objective, enhancing understanding of archaeological activity. But he also claims that this move fails to appreciate anything beyond the subjectivity and interpretive capacities of the archaeologist, as well as the fluid, flexible and temporal nature of the excavation. There is a one-way influence here, from the subject to the object. Instead Yarrow focuses on how a Latourian actor-network perspective can turn

archaeology into an activity which actually creates the subject-object distinction in the first place (Yarrow 2003:65f, 71f). By employing archaeological conventions and methods the individual archaeologists become equivalent with one another, "digging machines" doing the same thing, regulating their own actions, which in turn regulates the objects they encounter. Together with social interactions and discussions about types of finds this ensures that the archaeological objects are understood as separate from the subjects excavating, and that everyone makes the same interpretations and finds the same kinds of things (Yarrow 2003:67f; 2006:24f). But this is just one side of the story, the other being people turned into archaeologists by what they are excavating. This was most obvious when problems were encountered so that the interpretations involved in excavating a feature were made explicit and discussed. Questions arose concerning whether or not a certain interpretation would fit in with the rest of the site, and the initial understandings were modified by the emerging material (Yarrow 2003:69-71). Yarrow also points out the fact that features have an interesting ability to bring people together in excavating, as well as tear them apart in a very complex web of social interactions important for the interpretations that are produced, but which is kept separate from explicit accounts of knowledge production (Yarrow 2006:20-2).

2. PROLOGUE

As I said in chapter one, the thesis began with an interest and with a couple of factors of institutional or material kind, important for somehow turning this interest into a real, materialized, thesis. Having turned to studying archaeology being practiced in the field, more and more emphasis needed to be placed on literature dealing with studies of archaeology (see above) and of science in general (see below), the latter mostly sociological in origin. For indeed "if it's a central part of your thesis, you're gonna need secondary literature" (Holtorf 2007-08-24[2]). Taking field notes in Uppåkra, reading about studying archaeology and scientific procedures, I started producing a text about archaeology and archaeologists at work. Receiving a mixed reaction from my fellow students, ranging from some awe-like fascination for taking on such a strange and exciting subject, to doubt and what sometimes seems to me a sort of contempt for wanting to distance myself from what is seen as more usual archaeological business.

Incorporating studies of science the thesis was directed to the *sociology of knowledge*, the 'Strong Programme' and David Bloor, by my thesis advisor and literary

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[2] All interviews, field notes and personal communication, as well as Swedish literature quoted in the text are translated from Swedish to English by the author.

references: "Now any book published [or thesis written, I suppose] in history and philosophy of science must take Bloor and the strong programme into account – Robert J. Richards, University of Chicago" (Bloor 1991:back cover). Early sociology of knowledge and studies of science held an *asymmetrical* view, where only erroneous knowledge, or belief, was considered in need of explaining by such outer, social factors as economical interests and biased scientists. Much focus was placed on quantitative and organizational studies of science – a 'science of science' (see Richards 1983:chapter 6; see Woolgar & Ashmore 1991:7, table 1). As a reaction to this, in the 1970s and 80s, a *symmetrical* view was developed, claiming that both correct and incorrect knowledge need explaining and are inescapably at least partly socially constituted. A 'Strong Programme' that is built up around the four central points of causality, impartiality, symmetry and reflexivity. Causality urging one to study what causes the changes in scientific knowledge; impartiality and symmetry meaning both true and false knowledge needs explaining and are explainable by the same kind of models; and reflexivity claiming that the explanations are also applicable to sociology itself (Bloor 1991:7). Sociology of science should no longer concentrate on why science and scientists failed or held erroneous beliefs, but on how they reached their beliefs (no matter the truth or falsity of these), and social circumstances were now realized as weapons used by different scientists to discredit the work of others. An interesting feature in scientific work thus became how scientists themselves (not sociologists) drew a line between what was scientific/intellectual business, and what was to be considered as part of science's social context (see Latour & Woolgar 1986:20-3).

Bringing this knowledge into my work I tried noticing how I was perceived on site. Very often, it seemed, as someone who tried to disqualify what was being done as socially influenced and therefore erroneous. Interestingly enough archaeologists are well aware that much of what they do is filled with interpretation, and thus subjected to the individual's experiences, socially influenced beliefs and bias. As the Uppåkra site director Karl-Magnus Lenntorp tells me: "Then you have the culture historical interpretation … that is your own interpretation, it is to be considered a suggestion … first you present what you've found and how it's found and how clear your features are. Naturally this is based on interpretation as well … it is subjectively interpreted in the field" (Lenntorp 2007-09-17, int.exc.[3]). Other important examples of archaeology as a social and interpretational activity are presented in the book *Towards reflexive method in archaeology: the example at Çatalhöyük*, edited by Ian Hodder (2000). The methodological aims of the Çatalhöyük excavations in the late 1990s are described

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[3] Quotes from interviews and field notes are found in appendices, in Swedish.

here and much focus is placed on reflexivity, constantly thinking about what is being done on site, with the help of anthropologists studying both archaeological work and the effect of this on the people living nearby. No universal method is said to be used, rather the methodological change and fluidity is the main method. All archaeological facts demand responsibility as archaeology is always carried out in a sociopolitical context and never just a mediator of neutral, objective facts (see Hodder 2000:3-11). On the other hand in order to have anything to be reflexive about and any archaeology to contextualize, one has to do something, even knowing that it cannot be anything but biased. A certain amount of rigidity is necessary, and indeed also imposed by organization and digital aids: "All data analyzed by the laboratory teams were reliant on the definition of the unit and its stratigraphic relationship as the excavator perceived it. The field person created the unit and this could be regarded as an assumption to be tested by the laboratory staff" (Farid 2000:24). "[T]he database insists on constituting objects and delimiting them from contexts" (Hamilton 2000:123). This interpretation down to the very prehistoric remains – the dependence of the fundamental archaeological data, upon individual interpretation and the tools used – shows itself as clearly as day at Uppåkra and in my own field notes.
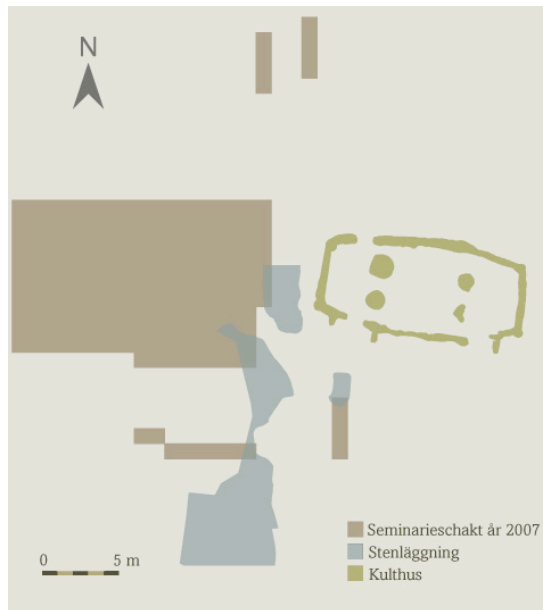
3. ENCOUNTERING UPPÅKRA

The Uppåkra site, in western Scania in southern Sweden, was first mentioned as an archaeological object in 1934, when Bror-Magnus Vifot carried out an excavation and uncovered the burnt remains of a building from around A.D. 400 and pottery dating from A.D. 0-400. Vifot's test trenches, and excavations in the following decades (up to the 1990s), due to road-construction and building work in the vicinity of the church, revealed that the cultural layers occupied a very large area. The magnitude of the site was also hinted at by the phosphate maps over Scania, erected in the 1930s, showing Uppåkra as the biggest concentration in all of Scania (Hårdh & Larsson 2007:5-7, 107; see Lindell 2001; see Vifot 1936). In the 1990s a project was started under the name of *Iron Age Social Structure in Southern Sweden*[4], bringing together people from different departments, and with Uppåkra in a central position. With time the project came to be called the *Uppåkra project*. From 1996 onwards different grants enabled investigations using metal detectors, various measurings and minor excavations, and from 1999 larger scale excavations took place. The last three years (2005-7) minor excavations have been part of the education of archaeology students at Lund University, with last year's course followed by a complete field season with three archaeologists working full time (ibid.:8-10; Larsson 2007-09-12).

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[4]"Samhällsstrukturen under järnålder i Sydsverige". Author's translation.

The objective for 2007 was to investigate the outside environment around the "enigmatic" ceremonial building (see Larsson & Lenntorp 2004; and see figure 1), with special focus placed on continued study of the remains of a burnt down building, containing human remains, to the west of the former. This was first discovered in 2005 and there is reason to believe that these remains belong to the same house whose west end Vifot excavated in 1934 (see above). The field season (and the field course) of 2007 started on May 7th, a rainy, cloudy Monday. The site had been stripped from topsoil by a digger earlier, and a few hours into the first day the impatient

Figure 1: Excavation plan for 2007 showing the trenches (brown) and the ceremonial building (yellow).

archaeology students, myself being one of them, entered the trenches, full of anticipation, hopes and fears. I took upon myself a dual role of trying to follow the course and carry out excavation, and observe how this work was being done by myself and my fellow students. Keeping a field diary I made clear to myself from the start, as I am making it clear to the readers now, that this was not to be an all-inclusive quantitative study of what happened on site. This notebook of mine followed me everywhere on site, recording events and statements when and where they occurred, in a seemingly unstructured manner. Just like the other archaeologists I settled for documenting only the interesting and important things. As is often the case the first days of the excavation project were full of uncertainties and finding one's way. In the words of Edgeworth (1992:173): you need time to "get your eye in". This of course meant little of great archaeological interest, whereas I found plenty, feeding on the need to create some kind of order and patterns in the ground to follow. Interpretations of what was seen in the ground at this point were as likely to include the digger as any prehistoric agent, and in the end quite arbitrary characteristics were chosen to indicate the first cultural layer, hoping for a chance to reinterpret later on when things had cleared up. And yet, while it seems we were not working with any absolute and objective material, nor were we simply making things up.

3.1 Archaeologists and Their Remains

The previous paragraph puts focus on the process of excavation rather than the prehistoric remains being unearthed, and this brings me back to the question of the foundations of archaeology. When studied in the field, archaeology does not seem to work directly with any absolute material remains as building blocks to discover, combine and interpret. Rather these seem also to be, partly, creations of archaeological interpretation and interaction. But then; what are the fundamental entities of archaeology? Linda E. Patrik discusses and questions the most central term used to describe archaeological data, *the record*. She notes that somehow this term has become so fundamental that it is not likely to be reflected upon, even though it is used in many different ways in archaeology. Using central archaeological texts she is able to distinguish five different things, or entities, that the term archaeological/material record refers to. Roughly these range from material deposits in the ground to archaeological samples and written reports, all of them being referred to, at different times and places, as *the record*. More interestingly she also identifies the record as a scientific model, i.e. something that works by establishing analogies (both more obvious, known similarities, and other possible but untested ones) with other kinds of records, e.g. a music record. This connection is a mutual one, and so closely tied to the entire system of a theory that, unless analyzed, it affects the work of scientists in a subconscious way. As is shown in the article archaeology can be said to contain two different scientific models, both under the term of the record. There is a *physical* model, drawing analogies to fossils, passive imprints, and a *textual* one, relating to structuralism and active uses of material symbols. Both are used to explain what lies behind the record, or the material culture that archaeologists excavate and interpret, bringing different analogies into play. Some analogies more obviously and others more subtly (Patrik 1985).

Without going further into Patrik's analysis of the various positive and neutral analogies packed into the two models I leave this article with a couple of questions, much like the ones arising from my field notes above: "Is there an archaeological record? Might there be a new model of archaeological evidence [data] that does not borrow at all from the concept of a record?" (ibid.:56f). To provide *one* answer to this I use Matthew Edgeworth's ethnographic study of archaeological fieldwork. He is concerned with analogies, what he calls "base analogies" or "root metaphors", as something that deeply influences and structures all sciences. They help us organize reality from a certain perspective, explain some things, but also impose limitations as other things are hidden by them. The record or the *text metaphor* is what structures archaeology, turning archaeologists into readers of objective material remains or

creative writers of prehistory. Either way this focuses upon an archaeological subject perceiving and interpreting material objects, and retelling or construing what happened in prehistory. And what is hidden and forgotten is the meeting of subject and object. Since he studies archaeology in the field, Edgeworth is concerned with how this works in practice, how theory and preconceptions are implemented in bodily work on site. For this is where the theoretical meets the material, in what Edgeworth calls "acts of discovery", practical subject-object transactions renegotiating both theory and material reality, as a candidate for *scientific model* of archaeology. Rather than objective material remains or the creative abilities of a subject (Edgeworth 1992:11f, 14-19; see Yarrow 2003).

According to Edgeworth (1992) archaeology is also a craft, turning the *raw material* of nature into the cultural products that is archaeological remains (what we might call the record). Facts are actively produced, rather than passively perceived, as archaeologists arrive to the site and to nature with their common-sensical knowledge and their ideas and understandings of prehistory. Trying to impose these ideas on nature's raw material, the latter to some extent resists and allows itself to be shaped only insofar as it is allowed to shape the archaeologists and their ideas of what they are excavating. It is no longer a question of an intellectual subject using, on the one hand ideas and theories to follow, and on the other various tools to uncover material remains. It is an embodied subject in practical activity bringing theory down to earth, trowelling the ground, feeling its texture, constantly changing strategies and both physical and theoretical perspectives. Excavation advances through a continuous shaping of both material and theory (see Edgeworth.:12, 28f, 41, 104-6, 116). And yet the trowelling of an experienced archaeologist "*has the effect of erasing the principle tracks of the trowelling operation itself*" (ibid.:108; emphasis in original). A bit counter-intuitive perhaps, the objectivity of the archaeological data increases with the craftsmanship of the archaeologist.

If these are the material transactions on site, there are also social ones, transactions between the archaeologists, supervisors and visitors. Both linguistically, but also, perhaps more common, practically, in digging, acting and looking at each other's work. Reports from different parts of the site meet and blend and influence the way the individual archaeologists work with their material, in a *dialectical* movement towards some kind of unity (see Edgeworth 119-21, 130-4). Yarrow also describes how archaeological features bring people together, physically and conversationally, and separates them during the course of an excavation. He claims that these relations connecting humans and things in practice are what archaeological knowledge is produced through. Neither archaeologists nor features and sites are stable in this, and

knowledge is gradually solidified through drawing and writing. The site is created by its archaeologists, and they are in turn created by their site (Yarrow 2006:20-2). Problematisizing field archaeology like this, by looking at the *acts of discovery* or focusing upon "interpretation at the trowel's edge" (see Hodder & Berggren 2003:421), moves away from an archaeology of discovering and interpreting, with fixed entities of subject and object on beforehand.

Meanwhile at Uppåkra: "It is better to treat it all as one layer, and include some of these patches of charcoal and clay. The first layer is always the most difficult." Things are unclear at Uppåkra; are we identifying or removing a layer? "I am a bit higher up than you guys. Should I take it down? Should we have the same height or is the layer slanting?" "This looks completely different. I think this fat stuff comes underneath over there." Different people try a bit of digging around the same spot, to try to get a feeling of what is going on. They go between different $1m^2$ squares, marked out by nails and string, seeking to determine whether what appears in one square is what should be sought for in the others. Or the other way around, or if the character of the layer is changing. "Are we getting down to the hard stuff or am I getting down to the soft?" "Now I have the hard stuff over here as well." "Here comes this clayey layer as well." "Let's go a bit deeper." "This doesn't look like over there, but there's more soot" (field notes exc.). A constant discussion over what is and what is not, transactions of ideas between both different people on site and archaeologist and the material in the ground, the "raw material" out of which archaeological data are *formed* (neither created nor uncovered). People from different parts of the site meet and exchange ideas, try a bit of trowelling, just to *feel the ground*. Site supervisors relate the different parts of the site to each other, people talk about other sites and other times and other finds: "What's this? Is it anything? Burnt rock?" "We found that stuff by the bucketful in Vallåkra, and it was nothing" (field notes exc.). These are the social and material transactions visible at Uppåkra, when focus is removed from the archaeologist, with his/her exclusive right to perceive and interpret, to the acts of discovery. And of course there is more, so many more events and discussions. What is found here is only what I used in this narration of how archaeologists try to make sense of an excavation. It is my way of making sense, in writing, of the site.

However well my field notes from Uppåkra seem to fit in with the theories discussed above, I now look to myself, finding that I am writing this thesis relying so heavily on ethnographic accounts and my own field observations. The thesis needs to make space for this, motivate its inclusion and show that it is a thesis capable of dealing with field notes from an archaeological excavation. A discussion of ethnographic observation as

a method is needed, through literature dealing with its problems and characteristics (see Holtorf quoted above).

4. OBSERVING; LIMITATIONS, CRITIQUE

> *"The irony of a text that claims to 'escape the text'"* *(Edgeworth 1992:283).*

Writing Culture -The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography (Clifford & Marcus (eds.)) is a publication containing articles dealing with the objects of ethnography and their representation. Attention is drawn to ethnographic writing, not as a transparent method for representation, but as a sociopolitical activity of constituting its objects, its cultures. Careful use of words and conventions *creates* (or forms) foreign objects of study, distanced from the observer, to later interpret. No readership or interpretation of neither cultures nor ethnographic texts, can be considered final, but always temporary and relative to a specific context. A central topic is also what ethnographic writing could and should look like in the face of all this construction, rhetoric and multiple readerships. What ought ethnographic accounts look like (see Clifford 1986a; Crapanzano 1986:51-3)? And, of course; what kind of text ought I produce when telling the story of archaeology at Uppåkra?
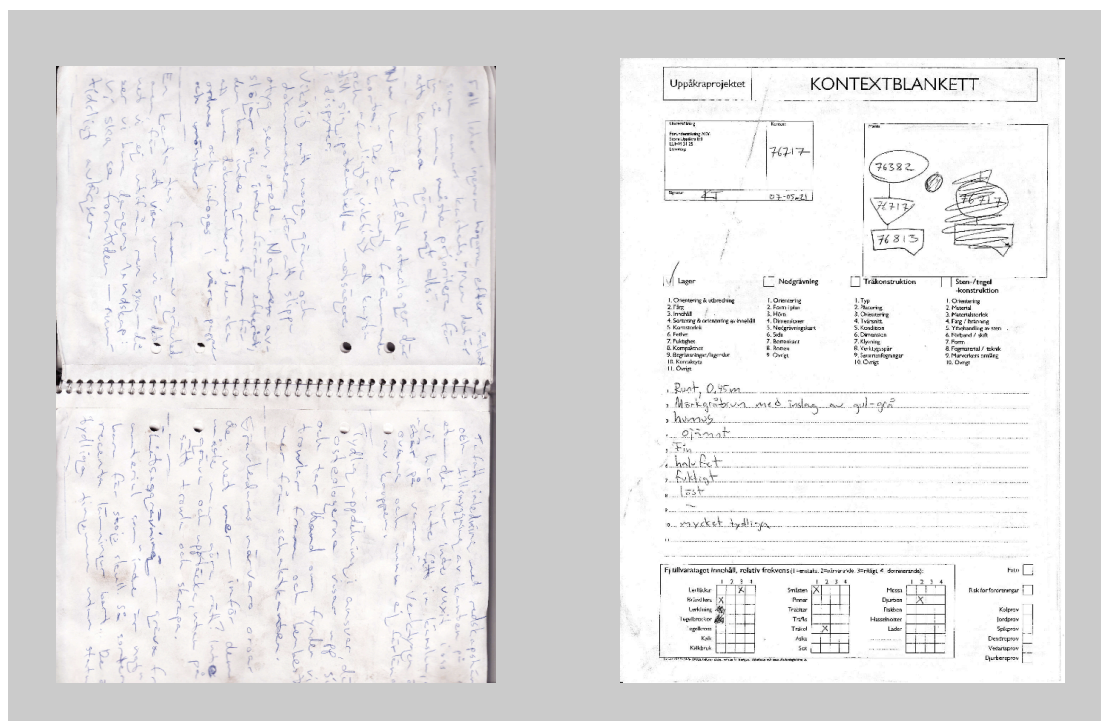
Figure 2: Documentation material of the ethnographer and the archaeologist at Uppåkra, respectively.

Of course, having gone this far, I have to agree that "[t]here is no way … to separate the factual from the allegorical in cultural accounts. The data of ethnography, make sense only within patterned arrangements and narratives" (Clifford 1986b:119), and that I too try to account for archaeology by forming my own facts and representations. To disagree with this, at this point, seems to me to use some kind of Orwellian 'doublethink' operation.[5] It is indeed ironic that a study of the subject-object relation of archaeologists and their material remains, turns this relation into an object of study, something that could, in turn, be objectified itself (see Edgeworth 1992:283f). Where do I go from here? One way would be to claim that I am right. And in a way I am, but perhaps only from my own perspective, in my own social context, as the archaeologists are from their perspective. Should I study this, study the way in which I produce my text and in what context and with what interests I do this? It seems to me unfruitful and, above all, uninteresting, at least if the objective is to find the final and absolute vantage point, absolute truth. If this is not the objective then such a study will be something completely different from this one, albeit not an uninteresting or superfluous one. I will leave that to someone else. If finding the absolute truth about archaeological fieldwork is the objective, then I would rather want to find out why this is the case. Why are absolute, objective *representations* so important? And how to reach these?

Figure 3: Studying archaeology in the field.

Stephen A. Tyler, Paul Rabinow and Bruno Latour, respectively, discuss the obsession with absolute, objective truths, independent of human interpretation as a historical phenomenon, accidental and originating from the 17th century. With the philosophy of Descartes 'reality' was disconnected from the knowing subject, and the central quest was for the scientist, this "mind-in-a-vat", to reach out to the "outer world" in order to reach certainty about what was really true. This needed the

[5] Referring to *1984* and "to be conscious of complete truthfulness while telling carefully-constructed lies, to hold simultaneously two opinions which cancelled out, knowing them to be contradictory and believing in both of them; to use logic against logic […] to forget whatever it was necessary to forget, then to draw it back into memory again at the moment when it was needed, and then promptly forget it again: and above all, to apply the same process to the process itself. That was the ultimate subtlety: consciously to induce unconsciousness, and then, once again, to become unconscious of the act of hypnosis you had just performed. Even to understand the word 'doublethink' involved the use of doublethink." (Orwell 2003:40f).

work of epistemologists, the proper accessing link. The role of scientific language and descriptions in this was to represent the world correctly, stressing the need for perfecting language, thus turning language into a scientific object of description. So while reaching communicated agreement and a perfected language, science distanced itself from practice, becoming internal discourse with less and less to say about the world. Rabinow sees this world view as sterile and Tyler claims it has broken down in the postmodern world, while Latour sees the whole separation of scientific subject and outside world as a means of control. For when the world is really "outside" of us, independent and law like and homogeneous neither persuasive rhetoric nor majority rule can decide what it is like, but only the rational scientist. This is the origin of the different spheres of *nature*, *society* and *mind* (Latour 1999:1-15; Rabinow 1986:234f; Tyler1986:122-5). Clean links between nature and mind are sought, whereas those between society and mind are seen as imposing social influence and bias, polluting scientific results.

And this is where I am now; feeling quite sure that archaeology in the field is not about discovering material remains, but rather stuck in constant interpretation, which is also true for me. My observations of archaeological activity at Uppåkra are surely influenced by my own experiences and by the literature that I have used to build up this thesis. My representations are distorted. This can be considered another view in the study of science (see above), knowing that not only the *observed,* but also the *observing,* scientists are relative to certain contexts and social factors: "The general aim of the social studies of science is to produce knowledge about scientific activity … about human acts which involve the production of scientific knowledge. Since … [this] … is itself a human act, it follows that the social study of science is self-referring" (Woolgar 1991:18). Unnerving indeed, now that no one seems to be right. Looking over the shoulders of archaeologists at Uppåkra (see figures 2 and 3), I anxiously glance over my own to see if there is anyone there doing the same thing to me. Emphasizing the impossibility of mere representation has been done in different ways of deconstructing the text or being reflexive about it, focusing on its construction and the text itself (see Woolgar & Ashmore 1991; Woolgar 1991:29f, figure 2 p. 31). These are neat tricks to cope with your own sense of being contradictory when claiming to know more than one's objects, to be more scientific (see Latour 1996:199f). I will not attempt any such thing, but leave it here for I feel I have forgotten the archaeologists at Uppåkra. And I have forgotten the excavation project, with its material and social transactions between archaeologists, their tools and the non-archaeologists involved in this. Now is the time to work out the larger context of knowledge production at the Uppåkra site in 2007. Leaving all of the above

seemingly in a mess I can only say that I put my trust in the same thing that archaeologists do, namely that, in the end, afterwards, *things will clear up* .

5. BACK TO UPPÅKRA

> *"how can we understand the object if we do not try to understand the principles of our relation to the object, which are partly constitutive of it?" (Edgeworth 2006:xiii).*

In trying to sketch the Uppåkra project of 2007, I realize that I forgot two categories of things while I was focusing on archaeologists and their activities: the non-archaeologists involved with the project, and the material culture of the archaeologists. The non-archaeologists and their institutions are important as they are seen as those who set the rules and the frames (above all the financial ones) for archaeological activity: "Everything was planned according to actual costs, so we knew that we could afford this and nothing more. So as you have planned from that, there were no surprises" (Lenntorp 2007-09-17; int.exc.). And of course the material culture used in the field is equally important, from trowel to drawing board. You do not need emphasize the importance of material culture to an archaeologist, and still: "The material culture of archaeologists themselves remains exempt from ethnoarchaeological analysis." (Edgeworth 1992:10).

5.1 Archaeologists and Non-Archaeologists

On site there are numerous people (visitors, reporters and people with a commercial interest) that are not working as archaeologists, but 'only', at best, have an interest in prehistory. The site itself is a truly strange spatio-temporal phenomenon, gathering people, discussions and practices: "…there aren't that many places that can gather people in that way" (Lenntorp 2007-09-17; int.exc.). If the site can be said to be the central point there is surely much more to be seen, more arenas where archaeology is 'at work'. Such as newspapers (both in the conference rooms and offices of the editors, and in the actual printed pages), university departments, web pages, etc. Having to explore and account for this, as my thesis now needs more material than is available and accessible in a study of the everyday activities at Uppåkra, I have to ask around and track down the non-archaeologists and investigate their importance for the project. Even though I do not have the possibility to follow work on site throughout the entire summer, I can follow it in the newspapers (*Sydsvenskan*), on the internet (www.uppakra.se) and in oral information from different people somehow involved in the project. So I turn to interviews, tape-recorded conversations concerning the excavation at the Uppåkra site in 2007 between two persons, transcribed and thus

transformed into written text, possible to use in a thesis. Of course the first people of major interest to talk to are the ones responsible for the project, on and off site. This also gives me the chance to relate to other central questions, such as why it is important and interesting to conduct (and finance) archaeology in the first place.

Birgitta Hårdh (at the Department of Archaeology and Ancient History, Lund University), one of the authors of a recent publication (*Uppåkra – Lund före Lund* (Hårdh & Larsson 2007)) and an early driving force behind *Iron Age Social Structure in Southern Sweden* (see above footnote 4), tells me the recent history of public presentation of archaeology at Uppåkra. It is a site capable of gathering many different groups of people from near and afar, filling museums with finds, exporting exhibitions, providing material for scientific seminars, and of enchanting numerous audiences with stories of central places, long forgotten chiefs, trade and pre-Christian cult. Interestingly the more Uppåkra revealed itself as a place of dignity during the Iron age it also, parallel to this, took over the project of which it was a part (and this thesis as well, it seems) and the minds of people today – the latter shown by the planning of an archaeological park to attract tourists to the region. The interest in Uppåkra and its history has been great, both inside the academic world and outside it, with both regular people and with the media. The interested common person is described as important to archaeology, for without public interest it is hard to motivate such an activity. Indeed it says in the first paragraph of the first chapter of the Swedish law concerning cultural heritage (SFS 1988:950) that it is a national concern to protect and care for our cultural environment, and that this responsibility is shared by everyone. So archaeology at Uppåkra, shouldering the responsibility of everyone, must also act in a way that wins the approval and liking of everyone. And, Birgitta reminds me, attracting and interesting a lot of people also makes it easier to attract sponsors. The reporters, however, are a trickier bunch. They come in different shapes, some of them looking for nothing but scandals and sensations, such as 'illegal' use of metal detectors, and constantly comparing different sites for importance: 'Is it more important than Birka?'[6]. Archaeologists tend to be more interested in avoiding these comparisons implying that the two sites are more or less alike, rather trying to direct such conversations to how they differ in function, time, size, etc. (Birgitta Hårdh 2007-08-29).

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[6] Birka is the most famous Iron Age settlement in Sweden, and one of the central sites in Swedish archaeology. The question is indeed something of national interest, reflected in the 20 years jubilee version of *Trivial Pursuit* in Sweden: "In which village outside Lund did archaeologists find 'a new Birka'" (Trivial Pursuit 2004:question card nr 46. Author's translation).

The importance of visitors and of cultivating a public interest in archaeology is pointed out also by Birgitta's co-author and colleague both in the above named project and at the department, Lars Larsson: "they report to their representatives in the parliament and that way they create support for noticing Uppåkra … I'm pretty convinced that some students have applied because they've read about excavations and the like … or visited an excavation. So there are reactions that are positive to us. A general positive opinion is not bad when you come to some decision-maker and can refer to people visiting" (Larsson 2007-09-12, int.exc.). And the relation to reporters and the media also comes up. For: "it's partly taking interest in reaching out to mass media, making it known. Without those means people can't get any knowledge about Uppåkra for example." And meanwhile: "people want concrete answers and we can't always give them that … Many people read the newspapers and [wonder] 'can't you ever answer anything, archaeology, is that so uncertain?' They would have needed to have described to them why it is so uncertain … if you get the time to present it people usually find it exciting, like a process. And you can't do that in today's world of mass media where they put a microphone in your face and you are supposed to describe everything in ten seconds" (ibid.). So the visitors and the general public interest is important, but not always easy to get when you are using reporters to reach out to people. But there are at least three other 'outsiders', of equal importance.

Firstly the private donor, that enabled the excavations in 2007 in the first place, that came in contact with Uppåkra through a university fund raiser, working to help projects find financial support. In short you present your project as best you can, through the fund raiser, to possible interested donors, in contact with the university, and these choose what they want to support. In the case of Uppåkra the private donor, to begin with, preferred to be 'secret', keeping it all between the archaeologists and herself. After a while, however, Laura Tegstam chose to make it official, and told the newspaper (*Sydsvenskan*) about the story, after having been contacted by them via the university fund raiser. Interestingly enough after having had less information than the archaeologists on this, the tables turned and after talking to Tegstam the reporters could tell a more complete story. Perhaps more complete than the archaeologists, and certainly more complete than the archaeologists would have wanted them to tell. In fact, for the archaeologists on site it came as a surprise that Laura decided to continue financing another summer of excavations, since they had not been in contact with professor Lars Larsson (responsible for the excavations), who was in Greenland at the time. Of course such a story of money and secret donors was interesting to investigate and write about, but to supervisor Karl-Magnus Lenntorp it was a bit awkward to be talking to reporters about things that they knew and that he did not, or did not know that they knew. Especially since it had to do with future financing and future

excavation, and he never trusts an archaeological project: "…nothing is certain until you're out there". And: "Everything was planned according to actual costs…" (see Höök 2007b; Glimberg 2007e; Lenntorp 2007-09-17, int. exc.; Glimberg 2007-09-21).

Almost unavoidably when talking about the donor and the secrecy surrounding this story, one comes in contact with *Sydsvenskan*, and their coverage of the project throughout the summer. Of course for them, to an even greater extent, public interest is the key to success and to what to write about. You have to write about something interesting or write interestingly about something – you have to sell newspapers. And since most people are not archaeologists the story of a secret donor might spice things up a bit. Through newspapers (and their web pages) archaeology can reach a much larger crowd and create a much greater interest than could ever be done on site, or through lectures. It is a sort of symbiotic relationship, where archaeologists want to reach out and newspaper reporters want to sell good stories. What is a good archaeological story might however differ from what is a good story in general, as has been hinted at above: "…the aim is always for the readers to find it interesting" (Glimberg 2007-09-21; see int.exc.). If the donor, Laura Tegstam, came in contact with the project quite early (some time during 2006), Sydsvenskan came in quite late, in the middle of May 2007, when the students had already started excavating. It was after a press conference and a presentation of an investigation of an archaeological park in Uppåkra that Martina Glimberg, a Sydsvenskan reporter, got the idea of following the excavations through a series of articles. There was continuous contact between archaeologists and reporters during the summer, and Glimberg tells me she felt that the archaeologists gradually became more and more open and were happy to talk about finds and interpretations of what had happened. And the reactions to the articles from friends, colleagues at the newspaper and from the donor have been very positive. Apart from the hundreds of people that have visited the site attending guided tours, something that has also been announced in the newspapers. When asked what she thinks the readers want, Glimberg says that the local is important, and the fact that the site is of such great significance, comparable to Birka (see above), and the drama of a house that has burnt to the ground, giving us a snapshot image of a specific moment in prehistory. And also the fact that it fuels speculations about pre-Christian rulers and regions in Scania, something that Lars Larsson suggests, while also talking about Uppåkra's importance for a modern Scanian identity (Glimberg 2007-09-21; Larsson 2007-09-12; Glimberg 2007c).

Secondly, a new addition to the on site personnel featured at Uppåkra during the summer of 2007, crime technicians from the police. They helped with the burnt down

house, explaining what happens during a fire and how it develops. This is experience that they have from criminal investigations, but that archaeologists seldom have, therefore being a valuable asset on site. The technicians and policemen came in contact with Uppåkra through Mats Attin, a policeman dealing with crimes against the Swedish law protecting antiquities and cultural heritage (SFS:1988:950), after having investigated a number of murder cases involving the disappearance of antiquities. He urges for a closer cooperation between the police and other actors involved with antiquities and cultural heritage, and so contacted the museums and institutions involved with excavation in Scania urging them to report any cultural heritage crimes. Attin also has an interest in archaeology and has taken part in numerous excavations, and claims to be the only policeman in Sweden working with these questions. This way he came in contact with Lars Larsson, and Uppåkra, and visited the site at an early stage, presenting himself as someone who could supply contact with crime technicians. Since Attin also trains Forensic Search Dogs[7], to see how old material they can sense, he brought one to the site, to try to sniff out any human bodies. Interesting, no doubt, even though the archaeologists were a bit skeptical to the dog's ability to sense bones that have been lying in the ground for well over a thousand years. As a prequel to Uppåkra this special training brought him in contact with osteologists at the Swedish National Board of Antiquities' Investigation Unit South (RAÄ UV-Syd), and battlefield archaeologist Bo Knarrström. Talking about this at the police more and more people got interested, especially the crime technicians, and collaboration grew out of this, a week of excavation using archaeologists, policemen and dogs in Borst during spring 2007. Uppåkra was discussed with the archaeologists at UV-Syd and when they heard about the burnt down house, interest grew (Lenntorp 2007-09-17; Attin 2007-09-29; Larsson 2007-09-12; see Attin 2007; Johansson 2001-2002; Isberg 2007; Joelsson 2007).

With policemen and crime technicians on site investigating the house, it can be said to have taken on more the character of a crime scene. The human remains that were found and the charred remains of a house became evidence in a prehistoric crime case, with a number of people having been killed and burnt inside a house, or perhaps even locked inside a building that was then set fire to. For, as site supervisor Karl-Magnus Lenntorp said (2007-09-17, int.exc.): "[The fire engineers at the fire department] only deal with technical failures. If it's arson the crime technicians usually take care of it", the very specialists that were on site! And Lars Larsson adds (2007-09-12, int.exc.): "[Stories of enemies attacking or someone powerful gathering

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[7] A term borrowed from Urban Johansson (2001-2002:2), who says this is the closest comparison to the Nordic dogs used for searching for dead bodies.

and getting rid of all his competitors (as in the icelandic sagas)] were more of fantasies before, but now that the [crime] technicians are of that opinion it's no longer just fantasies…" Perhaps of equal (if not archaeological) interest is what Attin claimed the police had to learn from archaeologists. Attin claims that the police can learn a great deal from archaeological documentation (something that was also noticed by Lenntorp), and use of digital aids, such as metal detectors, GPS, georadar. And also have use for archaeologists, and learn from their mix of specialists, when doing an investigation. In an essay from the crime technical education, Olov Bokefors compares and discusses the methods used by archaeologists and crime technicians. One of the main questions concerns whether or not these two groups can learn from each other. He sees similarities in the need for meticulous documentation, and he too claims that, when working with large outdoor localities, the police can learn from the way archaeologists use a number of digital aids to make documentation more effective and exact. He also notices the lack of close cooperation between archaeologists and the police, in the past (Attin 2007-09-29; Lenntorp 2007-09-17; Bokefors 2001-2002).

The *third* main 'outsider' that I deal with here is www.uppakra.se and the two men behind this web page. The objective was to present Uppåkra to the public, and to follow the archaeological work of 2007, through a weekly updated field diary mentioning and depicting the most important finds and discoveries. Talking to Petter Lawenius, responsible for the idea of the web page and for the text published on it, I was told the story behind it all. Lawenius is an artist, with a great interest in history and archaeology and has followed Uppåkra for a long time. Life as an artist "…is not easy living", so when the government announced the so called 'plus jobs' (to try to put unemployed people to work, and boost the economy) he came up with the idea and enlisted his friend Peter Minorsson, to construct the actual page, in March 2006. In order to turn it into a 'plus job' (and thereby getting paid by the government), they needed an employer that was either related to the government or to the municipality. So they turned to Staffanstorp municipality in which Uppåkra is situated. At the time a project called Uppåkra Archaeological Experience Centre[8], was connected to Staffanstorp municipality, so any help promoting Uppåkra was welcome. Something that led to Lawenius and Minorsson having to work on promoting this project, rather than the archaeological site of Uppåkra, but after a couple of months UAUC dissolved, and www.uppakra.se could concentrate on the archaeology. The aim during the excavations was to present something new every week, to a general public, even when the archaeologists claimed nothing had happened and were less prepared to

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[8] 'Uppåkra Arkeologiska UpplevelseCenter' (UAUC). Author's translation.

provide interesting finds coupled with elaborate interpretations (Lawenius 2007-09-26, int.exc.). Thusly the web page turned into a driving force in making the archaeologists constantly interpret their findings.

5.2 Archaeologists' Material Culture

Archaeologists use many different tools, digital and conventional aids on site. In the chapters above, concerning archaeological activity, I focused only on the archaeologists themselves, leaving out their material culture. The most noticeable tool is the trowel, the personal, the bodily extension, the pride of an archaeologist, connected to numerous past excavations and experiences. It is through the trowel that you feel and judge the texture of the soil. Unlike the other tools this is something that you do not leave on site or lend to anyone else (unless you borrowed it on site, and even among the borrowed trowels there are favorites). It is the preferred tool for the more delicate tasks, and also a status symbol, something that is used and worn into a good shape and feeling. Generally the more used and worn down the better: "I have a larger [trowel] as well, but I like the smaller one better" (field notes exc.; Edgeworth 1992:96-99; Carman 2006:100; see also Bender et al. 1997:161). In identifying features you trowel an area to make them stand out clearly and reveal themselves through divergent colour, and then mark these by drawing lines around them with your trowel. It takes a skilled archaeologist to properly delimit features, and the quality of this work is also a good measure of the person behind it. The better it is done, the better both feature and archaeologist. This marking or highlighting of features is a good way of separating the experienced from inexperienced (the irony of using the work of separating the interesting archaeological features from surrounding soil, for separating able and less able archaeologists), and also an instance for showing and teaching novices how things *should* be done and seen on site. Important for unifying the different perceptions of things on site, in creating intersubjectivity (Van Reybrouck & Davids 2006:39; Goodwin 2006:54; Carman 2006:98-100).

Figure 4: Defining layers, involving material and social transactions, trowel and context sheets.
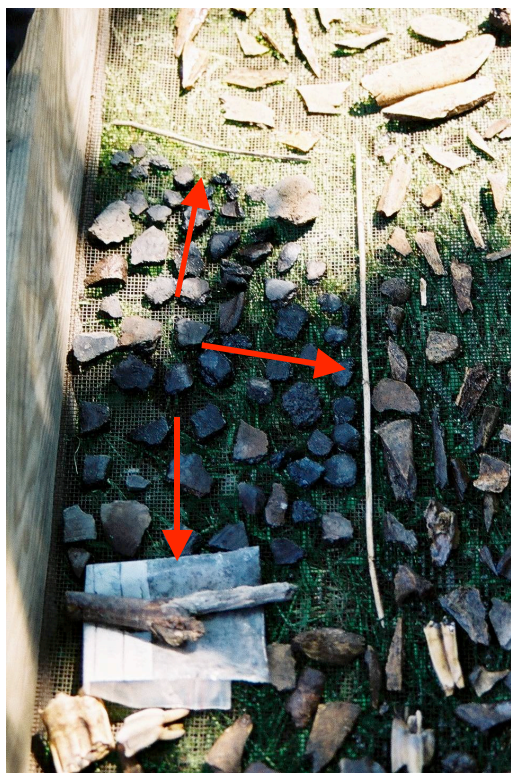
Apart from the trowel there is a variety of 'heavier' tools for more effectively shifting the dirt when performing less delicate tasks. However helpful the wheelbarrows,

shovels and buckets are at Uppåkra, they are more seldom used and are therefore not discussed more closely here. If the former can be seen as tools or aids of a more quantitative kind (enabling a more effective moving and removing of soil), section drawings, plans and context sheets make for a more *qualitative* change in the work on site. These constitute part of what Edgeworth calls "acts of inscription", in which the natural, the finds and the patterns in the soil, are turned into cultural, archaeological data, something textual in 2-D. When this has taken place, when something physical on the site has been transformed into something textual on a drawing or on a sheet, the physical something on the site loses its value and can be taken out, turned into dirt on a spoil heap (alternatively to a dislocated find in a bag) (Edgeworth 1992:232f). After having trowelled a surface once and identified possible features, it is treated as something almost sacred, you can no longer walk over it any way you like, it has become full of archaeological importance. However, after having drawn a plan the soil can be excavated away, and it is no longer to be trusted, its informative value has passed to the drawing. You can hear the archaeologists say: "What we have drawn is the truth". "Only in that corner do we want another layer. It isn't marked by a whole drawn line so we have no layer there." Patches and colour deviations in the ground are captured in writing and turned into something more, something better than the actual soil. The latter is, after all, affected by shifting weather and subjective opinion in a way that the former is not (field notes exc.). Jonathan Bateman (2006) also notes how archaeological illustrations and drawings are part of a process of reproduction and distribution that turns subjective interpretation and social transactions into objective archaeological data.

As for the context sheets and the documentation manual for the Uppåkra project, the key words are unity and 'inter-excavational' comparison, even though it is stated that standardization needs to avoid making documentation static. Everyone needs to read it and follow the given strategies for excavation and documentation. Colours to be used in describing the soil come in a fixed list, and everywhere there are 'dos', 'avoids', 'shoulds', 'shalls', etc., creating unity in what is seen and done on site. So that everyone sees and does the same thing and can be compared, both concerning what is found, and the quality of how one works. It is a qualitative shift from subjective perception to objective, archaeological data, something that can be uncovered in a more or less correct manner by a skilled archaeologist. And all of a sudden we have 'digging machines', numerically distinguishable only, encountering the same type of objects with their own qualities, rather than individual archaeologists with their changing feelings and actions (see Yarrow 2003:67f, 2006:24f: Bateman 2006). An interesting thing is that only after documentation and excavation can things done be proven wrong; things can be missing on context sheets, lines and boxes can be empty,

earlier interpretations resulting in excavation strategies might have been less than ideal, etc. The 'testing', 'trying' and 'feeling' of earlier excavation stages are now replaced by correct and incorrect. The digital archives and the registration of finds works the same way, the right terminology must be used and the finds must be properly fit into categories and types, helping us to see what kind of archaeological datum a specific find is. Finds are what they are registered as.

Another digital aid, apart from the categories and databases used for registering, is the total station, used for registering the location of finds, layers and features, in three dimensions. At Uppåkra it is a necessary *passage* for any material of archaeological significance: "We have to register the layer digitally, so that it gets a number, otherwise it won't be a layer." Something that forces you to 'save' squares from excavation until registration is possible. And, like the context sheets, the total station, too, captures trowelled surfaces and exposed features, before they can dry up and lose colour and clarity : "We need numbers for these. On Monday we'll have forgotten them." We can not trust them to be there, visible for us to see, when we get back (field notes exc.). A very handy 'tool' that quickly allows you to correctly register a number of points (representing finds or what not), and then store these digitally. It makes work a whole lot more effective and less time consuming: "When the excavation is over most of your info is digital … and the report work can concentrate on the actual report, and not on … registration." "[Without using a total station] you would have had to spend a lot more work on the following registration … and it would have been a problem … when you would turn it over to the antiquarian authorities. They're set on doing everything digitally" (Larsson 2007-09-12, int.exc.). With the total station, as with the drawings and context sheets, not only are archaeological features documented and registered, but archaeologists are *controlled*. The instrument works in a certain way that demands of the archaeologists that they act in a way that is compatible with it: "Now you don't have the instrument with you." You have to walk and hold the prism so that the instrument can find it, when documenting your

Figure 5: Finds drying. Twigs are used for separating different contexts.

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features. More interesting is that it seems to demand you giving up your common sense: "It feels like I'm standing slantways." "But you're not supposed to feel, you're supposed to see what the bubble [in the water level] says, it is right and you are wrong." Since it is also incapable of uncertainty it forces archaeologists to define their layers if they want them to be documented: "Let's draw it like this; 'cause we do have it in these squares, right?" (field notes exc.). Something that is not always seen as a positive thing: "This uncertainty that has to, I think, be present in the archaeological documentation, it disappears" (Larsson 2007-09-12, int.exc.).

Having discussed the finds and their incorporation into the digital archives and the categories of things, one must not leave out the way from site and soil to registered type. Finds are found directly in the ground or while sieving, and then collected in bags carrying the number of the square and the layer in which they were found. This is their transport to registration. Different categories of finds are treated differently; animal bones, pottery and small lumps of corroded metal or slag, for example, are collected by the layer and weighed or counted, whereas human bones, valuable metals and purposefully worked material and produced artifacts are registered individually in situ. When all runs well this seems to be very unproblematic, but when things take unexpected turns a number of archaeological material aids end up in the centre of attention. Every once in a while, and more frequently towards the end of the course, bags lacking information, or with obviously incorrect information (for example referring to a layer in a square where this was shown not to exist), arrive for cleaning or registration. Ironically this triggers the only real detective work on site, something that otherwise is often seen as

Figure 6: In or out? The spatial limit between prehistory and present.

symbolic for archaeology as a whole. For this is the only stage at which we have absolute entities to work with; layers, finds, registered numbers. This is the only time that things can go wrong, at least in real-time. At the earlier stages things can only be said to have gone wrong with hindsight, afterwards, when things have *cleared up* (see also Holtorf 2002). Different notebooks, drawings and digital registers and people's handwriting(!) are checked, people are asked in order to sort out what the missing information is or what of the information is wrong and what it should be. This involves many interpretations of the very recent past; 'could s/he have done this?'

'Does this look like your handwriting?' 'What were they thinking when assigning this number to this bag?' etc. In most cases information is added or changed and the finds keep their status as archaeological data, but sometimes there is just no way of sorting things out and the former finds, just like spoil heap material, are given: "the quality of *non-meaning* … it did not fit in with the projects of the archaeologists … it is a kind of anti-data" (Edgeworth 1992:77, italics in original; and see ibid.:146). The same thing happens when the site supervisor decides that the smallest fragments of bone are of no scientific value, and should therefore be excluded from any finds bags before registration. But where to throw these away? They have acquired some kind of find status and the archaeologists are hesitant; after all they are finds, or should be, or could be; couldn't they? During cleaning and registration the finds are taken out of their bags, somehow moving from prehistory into the present. This removing of the *temporally protecting* bags calls for a temporary stand-in, something that can protect finds from the present until they are clean and dry (see figures 5 and 6).

So far I have treated only the tools that are archaeological. But, as Edgeworth reminds us, the features and finds on site are also part of the archaeological material culture, they are "…as it were *double-artefacts*" (Edgeworth 1992:167, italics in original). They are "objects of significance", right upon identification, implying to archaeologists some kind of prehistoric agent and rationality behind them. Through their naming ('posthole', 'grave', 'layer with ash and burnt clay', 'spearhead' etc.) they are connected to a special type of site and other types of features and finds, according to earlier experience of the archaeologists encountering and naming them. Thusly they give the archaeologist an idea of the character of the site, but they are also part of his/her own material culture, they are incorporated into strategies for excavation (Edgeworth 1992:71, 73-75). Concentrations of burnt yellow clay or perhaps concentrations of ash, can be used as starting points for defining a layer, something to work from in order to uncover some kind of pattern or maybe construction work. While postholes and larger cuts seem to suggest partial excavation and creation of sections to do drawings of.

5.3 Messing up Insides and Outsides

Having presented the non-archaeologists and the material culture of archaeologists at Uppåkra I now follow up some of the loose ends in the previous two sections. For, looking back, I realize that, however necessary, the separations of the last two sections (and the chapters above) are artificial in a way that is clear for anyone to see in the above. The outsiders/non-archaeologists are no outsiders, nor are the tools and the material culture of archaeologists mere tools, save by the dividing lines drawn by myself and the archaeologists. It is time to mess things up a bit, again. For how can I

claim that society and economy are outside the 'pure' archaeological business, when archaeologists themselves tell me how to win the liking of the people with the financial means to support them? Perhaps they are not manipulated directly with the trowel, but through the newspapers and the public opinion and great numbers of visitors. Archaeologists know full well the dependence of politicians and people with economic power on approval among the general public. If archaeologists can somehow *translate* getting this approval into financing excavations and other archaeological projects they will have put themselves in a much more favourable position than being financially dependent (see Latour 1996). And how can I keep so tightly separated the tools and material culture of archaeologists, from the human actors connected to the project? What is the difference between reporters enabling mediation of archaeology, while also asking uncomfortable questions and demanding short, direct answers; and a total station enabling effective and exact documentation and digital registration, while at the same time forcing archaeologists to exactly define and decide upon layers and features? They seem equally helpful and ruthlessly impatient to me. Indeed the inside-outside and human-non-human distinctions seem prejudiced. The story of Uppåkra 2007 must be retold without any a priori knowledge of what archaeology is and is not, with no clear borders.

6. FROM A MESS TO A MESH

> *"Abandon all knowledge about knowledge all ye who enter here" (Latour 1987:6f).[9]*

So what is archaeology at Uppåkra? Without a priori separations of society, nature and science, without scientists working away in their trenches trying to reach the pure, independent nature? Without an absolute truth to find, 'out there', my interest is directed towards the question: How can I learn what archaeology does at Uppåkra? From the looks of it, by doing what I have been doing all along, so long as I rid myself of the separated spheres of society, nature and science, as these seem to intermingle and blend quite freely. Remember Latour saying that these spheres or "settlements" are just dreamed up creations of epistemologists in the 17th century, and indeed also great weapons for discrediting the works of others by claiming it to be prejudiced and socially influenced (see Latour 1999:10-15; Latour & Woolgar:21-3; see above). This spares me the task of finding out, on my own, what is and what is not a part of science, finding out whether the total station is just a transparent tool or if it is something that (to a greater extent than effectivizing documentation) affects the

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[9] Paraphrasing Dante's "Abandon all hope ye who enter here" from *Divine Comedy* (Wikipedia).

work on site and should be considered some kind of social influence. All I need to know is that it is there, involved with archaeology. The same goes for visitors and reporters, etc.

6.1 Retelling Uppåkra 2007

In late 2006 there is hope. A hope of raising money for excavations at Uppåkra during the following summer. There are numerous entities, *actors*, of both human and nonhuman form. The term actor, as used here, does not distinguish between intentional, rational human agents on the one hand, and mute, dead objects on the other. This implies equalizing humans and nonhumans when it comes to being active and following interests (see for example Latour 1999). However there is not yet a project. Ideas will always stay ideas if not materially realized, and ideas at this early stage are not very informative, as they have yet to meet with reality, they are still based on some image of what the world is like. Only when they are put to practice, in a process of realization, are they interesting. They are much like the strategies and schemes of the archaeologist in the field, trying to impose learnings from previous experiences of the raw material of the ground, about to be gainsaid by this and have his/her beliefs modified in the process (see above). So for now it will suffice to say that there is hope, a will to excavate at Uppåkra, and a need for the financial means to do so.

6.1.1 Preliminaries

Uppåkra in late 2006 is an archaeological site of interest to many people, constructing web pages, heading university departments of archaeology, running commercial projects, etc. At the Department of Archaeology and Ancient History at Lund University it is well-known that Uppåkra must have been of significant importance during the Iron age, but also to present day archaeology and the department itself: "…there's hardly any thesis or larger piece of work that treats Nordic Iron age, without Uppåkra *entering* it … they made a magazine called 'Moderna tider'. That did an evaluation of the importance of the different archaeology departments, and when they graded Lund they mentioned Uppåkra … it has *entered* already the evaluation of the department" (Larsson 20070912, int.exc. Emphasis added). It seems, and this is enforced by the choice of words in the quote above, that Uppåkra needs to be treated as something active, something that cannot be overlooked. The spectacular finds, the ceremonial building and the partially excavated house from Vifot's days, do not only intrigue archaeologists. They are not only objects of intention, being nicely fit into the projects of archaeologists. They *demand* their attention, they force archaeologists to manage them well, in order to enjoy the continued respect of their

colleagues and society as a whole. There is a mutual dependence here, as Uppåkra also needs its archaeologists to present it, to speak for it to reporters and the public. What there is *not* is *essence*, a fixed project, but only different ideas and wills and interests, resting with various actors (see Latour 1996:48).

For any such ideas or projects about to be there is need for *realization*. According to a common perception science is considered something preferably unconnected to the rest of human society, being 'pure' science seeing with 'eyes unclouded' the truths of the world. As has been shown above, however, it is more complex than this. It is about constructing a project of different bits and pieces, often seemingly unrelated, such as reporters, departments, literary sources, total stations, visitors, etc., and making the various interests of these actors somehow work together. Actors need to be attracted, by the promise of selling newspapers, finding identities and the liking of the general public, and convinced that archaeology is the best way of achieving this. The larger and more tightly connected this project, the stronger its claims, so that when things hold together they start being true, rather than 'true things hold together'. Good projects or *networks* are built in ways that are socio-*logically* irresistible, made unpleasant to contradict (see for example Latour 1987:12f, 1996, 1999:18-20). Leaving Latour for the fund raiser at Lund University, it is obvious how true this is for Uppåkra. No matter how the project is described at this point the only thing that makes any difference is whether or not it can attract any financial means. Without it Uppåkra becomes nothing but an unmanaged resource to the department. Luckily a new actor is tied to the project, the network; Laura Tegstam. Through the Olle Tegstam Foundation, formed to commemorate her late husband, she decides to support excavations at Uppåkra in 2007, and listening to what she later says to the newspaper reporters it becomes clear what Uppåkra is for her: "I liked the idea of supporting the excavations at Uppåkra. I think my husband would have liked it, says Laura Tegstam, who thinks it feels good that the donation has a connection to her husband's 'Viking heritage' … now I feel I want my husband's name tied to Uppåkra" (Laura Tegstam in Glimberg 2007e). For she has a project of her own, and it is not a question of Uppåkra being an important part of the Department of Archaeology, but of honouring her husband in a proper way. Mentioning in the article that she wants to continue supporting the project is something that is also of interest since it causes it to *drift*, to change slightly, as her interests are now part of the network and need to be considered. But that I will have to wait discussing for a while.

Drifting is the result of compromise between the interests of the different actors in a network. If this is done successfully everyone will feel that their goals and interests are worked towards. But of course it is not an easy matter, and it involves translating

the will of other actors, into the terms of what one seeks to achieve, so that they become compatible and the network holds together (Latour 1987:108-11; 1996:57-9). As with Tegstam's will to commemorate her husband. It could have been done in many a way, supporting an archaeological project being one of these. Through a process of translation of this interest, however, this proved to be a good way of achieving her goal. Surely her project of commemoration is not the same (at least now it is more concrete, realized). Another example, of more archaeological importance, is the fact that using this fund raiser (another actor) at the university firmly ties the project to the university and the Department of Archaeology. This is perhaps of little interest, as the actors involved in planning at this stage are already connected to this department. Nonetheless the department has its own projects and obligations, such as educating students. And the educational plan for the masters course in archaeology (ARK341), confirmed by the historical-philosophical faculty council, states that any student should, after completing the course, master the basics of archaeological field methodology and to be able to work up and report the results of a field investigation. Educational and research projects have to meet and work together. The project drifts to be both about good research and providing sufficient education, not always easy to do: "…there were so damn many students that we had to have two improvised trenches … I can imagine that the individual student found it to be too little supervision… Unfortunately they added another field course … it went okay, but there was some back-lock on the registration" (Lenntorp 2007-09-17, int.exc.). There are no major changes but still it is all important for what happens. Two extra trenches for investigating the outer environment of the ceremonial building, for example, as a result of the structure of the project's network.

6.1.2 Students on Site

My ethnographical material from the field course has already been used to some extent in the above and I will not repeat what has already been said but rather present, in a more structured way, this story written in clay. In the field diary presented on the internet (www.uppakra.se) these two and a half weeks are summed up with short mentioning of some of the more interesting finds and the features in the trenches opened for the students, and the problems of unclear remains of younger constructions on top of the burnt down house. In my notes there is much of the unclarity but less of remains and postholes. The latter are there, but with the feeling that they are more in my writing than in the trench. Contact is made with the ground using the trowel, in numerous attempts to make sense of things. Indeed jokes about features at the early stages are more real than anything: "What did one posthole say to the other when the archaeologist came?" "…?" "Act natural" (field notes exc.). Layers and remains

(apart from fragments of bone and pottery) seem strangely elusive, as if they are hiding, and especially so with the varying weather. All of a sudden it starts raining and the dry, almost homogeneous-looking gray soil breaks out in shades of brown, yellow and black. Only to soon become covered in a wet sticky, dark greyish goo, covering all patterns and colour variations. And then it stops, and the water is sucked up by the ground, making it perfectly, evenly moist for archaeology, all the way through. A good time for trowelling and highlighting layers and features, and capture these with total station, drawings and context sheets. Once the archaeological data have been created, the material, the soil can be excavated, taken out, destroyed. Interestingly no matter how unclear the features and layers in the trench, drawings are made and concentrations defined. They are 'something', even though we do not yet know what, and the less is known about them the more information is included in drawings. As shown above, this trowelling, (and especially) drawing and documenting make things a bit more real, while paradoxically bringing them one step closer to termination. For when they are completely defined, i.e. when they have a registration number and the sheet is completely filled out, they are turned to just soil, soil that can be run through a sieve and thrown on the spoil heap. The workings of these important actors of context sheets, drawings and total station have already been described, especially the practical necessity of the latter in spite of its expensiveness (which brings us back to financial means and donors).

Unmentioned so far is the actor of a written source presented to students. It is a students' report from 2006, presenting the finds from a nearby location on the site. Reading this report effectively shapes me and my fellow students, and we use it for various comparisons concerning soil descriptions, features, wishes and organizational issues and lack of time. Through the report we can pinpoint and put into words what before was only feelings and unclear ideas: "We've had that too", "that's where we are now", "we've not had that yet", "so we have some idea of what to expect." "So that's the house we're looking for", "we also wanna find that." "'There was not enough time to investigate the posthole.' Neither will we have if it's gonna' go on like this" (field notes exc.). As different layers of clay and silt, with concentrations of soot and burnt or unburnt yellow clay, are defined and documented much is owed to these actors of documentation conventions and old written reports, enabling identification. The unclear layers have the effect of extending the trench in a search for edges, a search for *something else*, against which layers can be defined and delimited. This work with extending, measuring up and trowelling new squares and digitally registering these slows down excavation. So whereas one group of students quite quickly get down to the burnt remains discovered in 2005, another, right next to these, struggle with what must be the damaged remains of younger constructions. For this is

what these are now beginning to be described as, no longer layers and strange concentrations of clay and soot, but house floors, walls and postholes. With the help of another written source and a postulated hypothesis, saying that the area right next to the ceremonial building was not rebuilt after a house had burnt down on it (Larsson & Hårdh 2007:58), as much as with the trowel, the site is slowly rebuilt. For if there is something there, on this very spot, it presents itself as something that can be used in a report for contradicting the hypothesis that people left the site of the burnt down house untouched. This hypothesis and the unclear colour patterns in the ground are both objects of intention for the archaeologists, possible to juxtapose for building up tensions and drama in reports and academic texts. They are good to write with. Another important event is the arrival of visitors on the so called 'Uppåkra Day', Sunday May 13th, for these do not settle for layers and features. As interested visitors have already been shown to be important (see above) they have to be pleased and presented not dry archaeological descriptions and definitions, but more interesting stories of houses, people and events. It is now that baked clay with imprints, and soot are turned into burnt down walls built in a wattle and daub technique. Even though the problems of interpretation and the unclarities are pointed out, they are no longer just interpretations, but interpretations *of something*. We might not know the exact extension and direction of the houses, but we know that we are indeed dealing with the remains of houses. A qualitative shift that takes us far from Lenntorp's contradictory-looking remarks: "So that's the hardware, and that's the documentation, and 'what do we find?' … Then you have the culture historical interpretation, that is an interpretation of this … first you present what you've found and how it's found and how clear your features are. Naturally this is based on interpretation as well … it is subjectively interpreted in the field" (Lenntorp 2007-09-17, int.exc.).

This is where interpretation is delimited from what it is interpretation *of* at Uppåkra, through the demand for more explicit stories of prehistoric events. Now we have our independent objects to interpret and talk *about*, and all the instances of filling out context sheets and forcing definitions and delimitations upon patterns in the soil are soon forgotten. They are no longer needed, as things *turned out to be* this or that way, and the definite end of this dispute is the removing of the soil. Clay and soot can no longer tell us anything and the removal has the effect of manifesting the archaeological facts in the ground, as holes and pits, etc. To prove or disprove anything now is impossible, both on and off site, as the only thing left is the archaeological documentation, the facts and their material imprints in the ground (see Latour & Woolgar 1986:176-8, 183). Archaeologists' excavation and defining of patterns and layers (see above) has changed into searching and following what is in the ground. Prehistoric agents have entered (of course as something that was always

there to be found) and been made explicit. Obvious for everyone to see is that the archaeologist is still digging a hole in the ground, but now for tracing and documenting a digging operation that has already taken place, long ago. The network is a well working one and even though the archaeologists are unable to say anything that is not interpretation it is, as I said, interpretation *of* something. Something independent of anything archaeologists or anyone else does to it. Scientific success means to be able to tell a story *about* such a something *outside* of science, through constructing a network, and setting up sites and laboratories that connect and persuade actors, and thus works and is true (see above). This means that science can be defined in parts as the seemingly contradictory activity of *creating* things that are autonomous, independent of science. The output (knowledge of things in the world) is thus greater than the input (e.g. knowledge prior to excavation, experiment), something usually explained by either discovery of previously unknown things, or construction based on social factors. Either way these things are claimed to have been there all along, in society or in nature. This assumption is needed only insofar as the involved actors are seen as essentially the same, unchanged by scientific activity, in a sort of zero sum equation: 'archaeologists + … + x = archaeologists + … + prehistoric event' What is on the right side needs an equivalent on the left (where 'x' is the prehistoric event). But if archaeologists, university departments, policemen, newspapers, etc. can be said to have changed in the process (as seen above with the project) as a result of the structure of the network, we would have all different things on both sides of the equation sign, and no need for the a priori assumption of 'x' being there all along (even if its character afterwards is having been there all along, as prehistoric): "And I've talked to Karl-Magnus and Lars Larsson about [getting someone talking about cultural heritage crimes to the Department of Archaeology], 'cause I think it should be something for upcoming archaeologists to hear about … it ought to be of interest to the department" (Attin 20070929, int.exc.). Archaeology at Uppåkra and the education at the university department might be heading for a change, as well as the Malmö police. As a result of the Uppåkra project of 2007. There is no need to assume the prehistoric event to have been there all along as the equation is not zero sum, archaeology, the police, etc. are not the same on both sides of the equation sign (see Latour 1999:123-7).

A giving up of an independent world of unknown prehistoric events 'out there' and representation of it 'in here' (in science, words, minds) turns archaeology into a creative activity, that needs its field work, not to recover and represent unproblematic past remains, but to set up a site properly as one central point in a network, where many actors are put to work. Where acts of discovery and acts of inscription, material and social transactions can be transformed into data in a textual form that is

compatible with the rest of the knowledge of the discipline. Materiality and locality on site are lost, but the interactions and negotiations result in universal, general textual data that are easily used for distribution, referring, comparison, etc., and the context sheet and the total station will speak to us, tell us when enough data have been textualized. In this form the world can be spoken about and compared to other texts and theories and arguments, something that was not possible with the 'feeling of the soil against the trowel' or the 'social interactions concerning patterns in the ground'. Indeed rejecting the spheres of mind, society and nature (as I have tried above), the purpose of the mind's words are no longer to represent correctly the objects of nature, there is no gap between these. Rather the words *create* archaeological data as these are given by the conventions and rhythms of trowelling-defining-documentation on site. After a certain amount of trowelling and discussing features and squares are up for documentation and definition (and presenting to the public), textualizing, *factualizing*. This is not the representation of information in a new form, but a way to create order, objects that can be used to tell stories of past events[10] (see Latour & Woolgar 1986:245f; Latour 1999:24, 49-51, 69f). Such an archaeology must constantly legitimize itself and attract actors, constantly maintain its networks, for it only speaks the truth so long as this holds together. Archaeologists must constantly work towards being "…the empowered subjects, representing, or speaking on behalf of, usually, the past" (Pearson & Shanks 2001:45), something that is achieved, paradoxically, through assembling networks incorporating many diverse actors, while denying that so much of the 'social sphere' is part of science (ibid.:47). On one of my later visits to the site Lenntorp shows me a photo from a guided tour, and tells me that there were around 500 people attending it. As if these 500 visitors constitute incontrovertible proof that the work at Uppåkra, and archaeology in general, is important to society at large. All of this seems somewhat at odds with the way in which archaeologists perceive their material: "Like the eskimo carvers, many archaeologists do not conceive they are applying or adding a pattern or form to their raw material. Facts about the past are considered to be an inherent property of the material record. Archaeologists tend to view their work as being about releasing (discovering) those facts" (Edgeworth 1992:265).

At the end of the field course cleaning of finds and sorting and registration gradually replaces actual excavation, and many new negotiations and arguments over layers and squares have to be settled (see above). Here it is clear how the project character of the

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[10] If this creating of facts seems contradictory it might help listening to Latour & Woolgar (1986:240): "The result of the *construction* of a fact is that it appears unconstructed by anyone; the result of rhetorical *persuasion* … is that participants are convinced that they have not been convinced" (italics in original).

excavation works better than any essentialist discovering archaeology. To illuminate this I introduce Latour's term *black box*, replacing the term fact. The latter has worked well so far, but whereas it might encourage reference to absolutivity, the former is emphasized as a truth only insofar as it is actively held together by, and working well within, the project or network. All the finds bags and the filled out context sheets and the drawings are to be seen as black boxes, having been given some amount of independent existence through the processes of tagging them with textual information and destroying the layers and features to which they are connected. However, they are not absolute or totally independent, but still obvious parts of a network of alliances, that can be broken or redefined. Just like the archaeologists are connected to the public and the visitors, the finds are connected to their bags and the people having written on these, drawings to their makers, and everything to the digital registration (connected, in turn, to the antiquarian authorities). As conflicts between the different black boxes arise, these must be settled, for the good of the project. The overall coherence of finds, drawings, registration numbers, squares, layers, etc., is much more important than any obstinate collections of potsherds or bones refusing to fit into defined layers well incorporated into the rest of the network. And so, in a rather ruthless manner, one rids oneself of these troublemakers, not unlike, I imagine, the way in which a totalitarian regime would deal with uncooperative thinkers. But, as said above, they can be saved from this cruelty, by rather surprising, even paradoxical, courses of events. If the hand writing can give away the writer, possibly also the person collecting the finds in the bag, numbers can change, be re-read, explained. Or, even more interesting, if any notes in field diaries or even someone's memory can supply enough information to allow an interpretation of the actions of the archaeologist, why s/he might have thought things to have been this or that way when they *really* were not. That might explain why a strange number is on a bag or a drawing. Paradoxical indeed as this connection between finds, drawings and context sheets (black boxes), and human action at this stage is exactly what can turn something into more of a black box. Later on status as a black box is awarded to something that is not accompanied by any human agency, something that is totally independent and that always speaks for itself, not including who said or did something and when or where. Things and statements looking like that are real black boxes, more fact like (see Latour & Woolgar 1986:176; Latour 1987:23f). Some finds are strong enough to resist any troublesome connections or lack of these, as they know well to connect themselves to other parts of the network, the reporters, by looking good in newspaper articles.

Having discussed earlier the written report presented to the students, there are even more forceful examples of this, during the writing of our own reports. For while

interpretations in the field are always just interpretations, written sources seem more solid and good to build on, agree or argue with (more often the former). We are never sure of what we ourselves have found, but we can always refer to what Vifot found, documented and wrote about. And when a group of students discuss potential interpretations an idea is presented, but immediately overruled, with the motivation: "I can accept it if there are examples from Hedeby or Birka or some place else." And when trying to typologize and give a rough dating of something the discussion goes: "Did we find a good picture of that, that matched?" "No." "Then let's leave it…" (field notes exc.). What is written is more true than what comes up when discussing, or even than seeing things for yourself on site! With a view of science promoting first-hand perceiving the truths of nature this is disturbing, but viewing it as a project less so. For what is put down in writing is the result of a successful project, a strong network, and it allows good references to someone who speaks for something bigger than him-/herself, e.g. Birka or Hedeby. It is a good actor to add to your own argumentation, in trying to black box what you yourself say. To present something as a fact it is never enough to simply say that this is the way it is (nature, as seen on site), to settle the dispute you have to gather other actors and have them support you, have truth (nature) reveal itself as a result of this (see Latour 1987:93, 97f).

6.1.3 Reporters and Crime Technicians

The first 'reporters' getting involved with the Uppåkra project in 2007 are the two men working with the website www.uppakra.se, Petter Lawenius and Peter Minorsson, and they have been doing this as part of another project, since Spring 2006. Their way into this and their use of actors to put themselves in this position is given above and so will not be repeated here. Having 'survived' the demise of the UAUC, the website deals more generally with Uppåkra. But continuing the story the chairman from UAUC, politician Nils-Ove Mårtensson, is now the head of a company called Mitek AB, that in May 2007 presents a pilot study commissioned by Staffanstorp municipality in 2005. This states that the purpose of a museum or visitors centre on site is to present the remains and the place to the public, as a permanent and always available exhibition. And since there is already an exhibition of the finds from Uppåkra at the Historical Museum in Lund (LUHM) the suggestion for the centre in Uppåkra is an archaeological park (UAP) that connects the finds at LUHM to the actual site. The park is supposed to be a public space, with no entrance fees, supplying information about Iron age Uppåkra and the excavations, guided tours, a gift shop and a café. Without going too much into this, as it has yet to prove more significant importance for the archaeological activities, it is interesting to notice Lawenius' remark on my question why the local government committee in Staffanstorp has

decided to finance the constructing of this park: "That's an interesting thing, 'cause they have nothing to gain on it. It is only a … moral and ethical responsibility. If you have that kind of area with prehistoric remains inside the borders of your municipality it is sort of your responsibility to make something of it. [An archaeological park] won't attract any tourists [to the community of Staffanstorp], there's nothing to see or do." He says that if you go to Uppåkra you will probably go out to dinner in Lund or go to Malmö for a bit of shopping afterwards, not to Staffanstorp (Lawenius 2007-09-26; int.exc.; see *Uppåkra Arkeologiska Park (UAP) Förstudie Maj 2007*; Glimberg 2007a; Nasr 2007; www.uppakra.com). It seems Uppåkra is powerful enough to exert influence on the politicians in Staffanstorp as well, have them show it to the public or attract a bad reputation for squandering a cultural resource.

A more interesting effect of this website project is the fact that it had a weekly updated field journal presenting the finds and the progress of the work, to the interested public. This weekly updating in a way 'forced' the archaeologists to give immediate and preliminary interpretations of finds and features, something they had not always planned to do. Of course it is understandable that trained academics are not keen on openly interpreting or saying things without first doing a proper amount of research, consulting the experts through literature: "…writing a report every week, of what had happened, was really hard" (Lenntorp 2007-09-17; int.exc.). But for the website it was important to present something other than unidentified pieces of metal, bone and potsherds. The website in a way *demanded* more familiar items. Lawenius tells me of a visit to the site, when his request for some updates and some artefacts for the website was met with the response that nothing had happened that week. His need to write something and to present some pictures made him go through the boxes of finds, drawing attention to a little knife-like thing that the archaeologists had found earlier and getting the archaeologists to award it the status of 'maybe a surgical instrument', throwing it into a context of experts on the area and comparisons with other tools and other places. Another example concerns a tool for weaving, that was presented on the website on a picture as a shuttle. Shortly afterwards a phone call from a researcher of prehistoric weaving tools at Copenhagen University disconfirmed this as a shuttle. So it became a forum also for immediate feedback on the work done on site. It shows how actors in the network and the different connections work to constitute archaeology and also how things are not in a given context, but are rather constantly *contextualized*, as with the 'possible surgical tool' and the 'would be shuttle', both thrown into semantical fields of meaning, comparisons, experts and places. All of it capable of having an impact on the archaeology, the excavation strategies and the interpretations on site

(www.uppakra.se; Lawenius 2007-09-26; compare to Hodder 2000; see Latour 1996:133f).

The most important reporters, however, for the Uppåkra project in 2007 are the people from *Sydsvenskan*, as they are likely to reach a larger crowd of regular people. They decide to follow the excavations in a series of articles, stretching from May until August (see above). Different aspects of the work are presented, and guided tours are announced (see for example Glimberg 2007a, 2007b (8/6); Amnell 2007 (15/6)), and the story of the 'famous' tour when over 500 people arrived on site (see above) is also told here (see Höök 2007b). The project now contains both archaeologists and *Sydsvenskan*, and showing archaeology as important and interesting is the same as showing the newspaper to be interesting to read. The continuous collaboration gives the archaeologists the room to legitimize their activities: "An excavation is exciting." "Archaeology is for the public." "[It is important] for our common identity. To understand the present you need to know something about the past… Everybody needs a background in order to be able to put themselves and the world around them into perspective. To only live in the present would make you feel empty" (Lenntorp in Amnell 2007 (15/6)). Lenntorp praises the relationship between archaeologists and reporters in Uppåkra during 2007, the first year that *Sydsvenskan* decided not only to run a short article, but a whole series. The continuous contact enabled checking up facts and minimizing misunderstandings, producing high quality articles: "it's everybody's gain, from readers to us [archaeologists]". But even though he says it is thanks to the newspaper that so many people attended the guided tours, he knows he needs to guard his tongue. Not because reporters are not to trust but because they are interested in more than archaeology, as are all of us, and it does not always serve the interests of archaeology. He gives me the example of the donor and the costs of an excavation. That kind of money being spent is good to write about, but Lenntorp stresses that it might be disadvantageous to archaeology if an article about the money that goes into an excavation ends up in newspapers next to an article about, say, the money being spent on children's school lunches (Lenntorp 2007-09-17; int.exc.; see Glimberg 2007e; Gudmundsson Renco 2007). It seems archaeologists prefer to avoid such encounters as they feel the necessity of their work might be questionable in certain contexts.

Apart from money and costs, other stories connected to Uppåkra are also being told in the newspapers. The stories of the UAUC/UAP business are of course of interest, involving a good deal of money and politics (see Glimberg 2007a; Nasr 2007; and see above). The series tries to cover a wider perspective of archaeological business, to make it more complete than just the Uppåkra project. This includes giving generalized

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accounts of what archaeologists do, on and off site, and with what tools and techniques this is done. 'Meticulous' is a key word and, not surprising perhaps, work seems to be all about using the right tools and techniques in getting the right information from the remains in the ground. Archaeologists are portrayed as serious scientists that work away routinely without debating layers and finds (see Amnell 2007). An interesting addition to this is an article that focuses less on finds and Iron age Uppåkra and more on excavat*ing*, find*ing* and experienc*ing* archaeology in the present: "My knees dig down into the mud, the moist penetrates the trousers and the light coloured gloves soon get covered with clay" (Höök 2007a). A behaviour that the archaeologists do not fully understand: "They only lay there digging, they didn't like the [finds]". They wanted to show new spectacular finds to the reporters, but these were uninterested and preferred telling a story of lying face down in the mud (Lenntorp 2007-08-13, field notes exc.). But it can still be a good archaeological story, even if not good archaeology. Just like comparing real archaeologists to world famous action hero Indiana Jones, something that is perhaps not to everybody's liking (Amnell 2007; for an account of what archaeologists think of the Indiana Jones stereotype see Grönberg 2007).

The policemen and the crime technicians have already been presented, so here I wish only to problematize that a little, and show how the network and its structure under creation was important for what happened in Uppåkra. It begins with Mats Attin (see above) and his personal background and interests in prehistory and archaeology, and the way he managed to interest people at the police, build up his own network, in Malmö. The archaeologists had discussed earlier the need for someone with an understanding of how a fire develops and what happens to a burning building. But here Attin is of importance, for the archaeologists did not know who to contact for this knowledge, as both the police and the fire department deal with fires, but from two different perspectives. The *fire engineers* of the latter with accidents, technical failures etc., and not with crimes, intended fires. As Attin presented himself and his contacts, his network, so early he was the most obvious person to work with, bringing his network to Uppåkra and involving the police. One might wonder what the fire engineers would have sought for had they been asked. Sources of the fire? Physical causes, as opposed to human, intentional ones? Would they have found these? What the crime technicians found were three new dead bodies, in the collapsed building and we have seen (above) how their presence on site turned the speculations about murder and rivalry that we know from the sagas, into more probable explanations. They turned the site into a crime scene, as crimes are what policemen investigate with their interpretations and experiences, for they know that the smoke would have gone upwards and the fire cannot have surprised people inside the house. These must have

been dead already or maybe locked inside the house, perhaps during an enemy assault or an act of internal rivalry. The similarities between archaeology and criminal investigation are pointed out by both sides, and the long continuous collaboration is saluted by everyone. It made possible avoiding a relationship of sending data and questions to experts with another perspective of things, sending back incompatible answers, as everyone involved was really involved and knew the problem, the strategies and the questions needing answers. All actors on site were properly connected and engaged in this fully functioning *hybrid* creation, made possible by the continuous collaboration and the fact that the policemen, too, had interests in being on site, learning from archaeologists (see above) (Attin 2007-09-29; Lenntorp 2007-09-17; Glimberg 2007d, 2007f; see Bokefors 2002-2003).

Another effect of the structure of the network is the presence of the Forensic Search Dog on site, through Attin's interest in training and testing these. These dogs are actors, but they are not as able to turn something into a black box as, for example, the crime technicians. This means their authority on site is not undisputed, and when they mark a spot it is not to be seen as a place to immediately start searching for dead bodies. Archaeologists doubt whether they can actually pick up the scent of bodies that have been dead for over 1500 years. One must not forget that training of such a dog is a network of its own, of importance for how well they work for archaeologists. These dogs are trained to find dead bodies, but also to identify places that have been in contact with dead bodies or blood, and where no visible traces can be found, or even traces of DNA proved. This is of utmost importance to the dogs' role in juridical matters, where these 'invisible' traces may be used as leads to follow up *if* the dogs can be considered strong enough actors (Johansson 2001-2002:14f; Attin 2007-09-29; Larsson 2007-09-12; Lenntorp 2007-09-17; see www.uppakra.se). The problem for archaeology is that the dogs are not that exact tools on site, so when they mark a spot this is tested for a dead body, or parts of one, and when no such body is found it cannot be taken for a spot with which a dead body had once been in contact. Marked spots using dogs must always be *confirmed by excavation*, and the fact that the dog can be claimed to scent things that are otherwise invisible and unprovable to humans and our technical aids is not considered.

6.2 The End

A somewhat different story told, of Uppåkra. One in which archaeologists are not searching only for things in the ground, but also for good alliances, capable actors and ways of enrolling these and making them compatible. In a world that does not involve a gap between human minds and things 'out there', a world that is *realized* through strong networks black boxing things into truths, and where all facts and things and

humans and institutions have histories and networks and projects of their own. A world where a strong and true archaeology is not separated and secluded from society but tightly connected to it, an archaeology that is *in the world*, and that is able to speak the truth because it does a good job *realizing* things through strong networks, capable of change and of changing politics, societies and theses. A world in which interpretation of prehistory is never informative, but always *performative*, as it means claiming and showing that the world works in a certain way. It means using many different actors to construct and deconstruct networks so that what is said is not only believed by one's fellow archaeologists, but actually working, holding together in the world, across 'borders' of society and nature. But what is Uppåkra, and the event of the burnt down building and the dead bodies? Black boxes, but also actors, things that have been realized, given a life of their own, capable of affecting the lives of anyone, scientist or other, who dares coming into contact with them. This is why archaeologists can go further than their finds and even talk about *non-finds*, through the works of analogies: "Doors on the short-ends [of houses] aren't that common, right?" "No, but they're so damn hard to find" (field notes exc.). When things have been black boxed on site, there is suddenly houses, and postholes and other constructions, and now the fragmentary character of prehistoric remains can instead be used for explaining, as the lack of something needs not imply it was never there, only that we cannot find it. And the action of excavating a posthole results in a hole in the ground, that everyone knows is caused by the archaeologist, but that can turn into the result of prehistoric events. This only because it was excavated, subjected to the will of archaeology, and then (through the tools and networks of archaeology, see above) turned into the explaining factor as to why the archaeologist dug a hole in the ground. Would this be possible outside an archaeological site? These new actors resulting from this can now be used, agreed with, argued against, not because they are *only* in the ground or not, but because they are, in the only way that they can be: In networks, as black boxes, not only being history, but also having histories of their own as facts and interpretations of archaeology; because they *were* not independent of us any more than we are of them.

7. CONCLUSION

> "This is not a thesis."[11]

> "Objects appear to us as significant precisely because they
> can be incorporated into our projects" (Edgeworth 1992:73).

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[11] Paraphrase of Magritte's "Ceci n'est pas une pipe. " (Foucault 1983), translated by James Harkness as "This is not a pipe."

"That's how science works, and whatever you think you can find support for it somewhere, there's all kinds of stuff" (Holtorf 20070613 pers.comm.).

Have things *cleared up* (see above, chapter 4)? Hopefully. The thesis has learned from archaeology, it has learned that only through building strong enough networks with actors connected in a proper way can it black box the things it says. A thesis needs to *realize* things just as field archaeology does, it can never *find out* the truth of the world. If that was the case it would have been done long ago and people would have stopped searching (compare to Latour 1996:200; 1991:171). This thesis can never tell the truth, it can never inform us of the truth of archaeology, as if this was something to find out, waiting for us all, but it can be there, right next to archaeology, studying, learning, *imitating*. Performing rather than informing. Stephen A. Tyler says an ethnographic text cannot represent any observed object of study, as these are in part created by it, but only *evoke*, through unfolding and narrating create a text that gives the reader an understanding. The ethnographic text cannot inform us about things, but should strive to present itself as a way to an understanding of the world: "if a discourse can be said to 'evoke,' then it need not represent what it evokes" (Tyler 1986:129, 136-8). Evoke what; one might wonder; perform what? Speaking, inspired by Latour (1991:166f), the idea is this thesis can inform us less about archaeology than it can perform by *being* an archaeological thesis.

7.1 An Attempt at Summarizing

Having told a story of Uppåkra and archaeological fieldwork, through focusing on how facts are recovered on site, this thesis has drifted, like the fieldwork project itself. Studying archaeology in action, in the field, it tried to answer the question of how archaeological knowledge was produced at Uppåkra in 2007, focusing on the way in which the material site was turned into textual archaeological data. And how this knowledge production was affected by the way in which the excavation project was constructed. The data were created out of a number of material and social practices and interactions, textualized with the help of different actors attracted to the project. The actors were both archaeological and non-archaeological, human and non-human, imposing control over the archaeologists and the work on site, dictating when and how to do things. The actors, with their different agendas, were responsible for drift and change in the project. And also for firmly connecting the project to the rest of the world, of other actors and practices. In telling this story the thesis became aware of its own creations, its own project and networking. The thesis too encountered actors; an excavation, an Iron Age settlement, literary sources and methodological dilemmas that all needed dealing with. These were linked together, networked, forming a

mixture of different interests and agendas, just like the archaeological project at Uppåkra dealt with and linked together reporters, visitors, web pages, total stations, etc., all having a bearing on how archaeological facts (or black boxes) came to be. Fieldwork showed itself not as interpretation and representation, but as actors linked together, structured in a way that created proper cycles of working and necessary passages for anything considered fact like. And the thesis had to face that its incorporating of ethnographies of archaeology forced it to discuss problems of studying science, and ethnography as a method, realizing that it had gone too far to be able to give itself primacy over any archaeological accounts of prehistory. In telling the story of the production of archaeological facts and knowledge the thesis engulfed itself, realizing that it could never be an outside account *about* archaeology. It needed a way of telling a story of archaeology without drawing borders separating inside and outside, without being a more truthful account. Telling a story of archaeology and archaeological fact production the thesis subjected itself to the same reality of construction and networking as the people on site, with no a priori truths or meta-perspectives to be sought for. Whatever is *performed* on site and when writing reports is what must be *performed* by this thesis, as it does not represent archaeology, inform us of its dealings. It builds a network that is a story of archaeological knowledge production.

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A realm of actors.[12]

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[12] Referring to the effect these literary sources had on this thesis, causing it to drift and change in connecting it with different problems and discussions and other literature.

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LIST OF FIGURES

APPENDIX 1: FIELD NOTES EXCERPTS

"Det är bättre att vi tar allt som ett lager, och tar med lite av de här kol- och lerfläckarna." "Första lagret är svårast."
Oklarheter om vad vi gör. Ska vi identifiera ett lager eller ta bort ett? "Jag är ju lite högre än ni. Ska jag ner?" "Ska vi ha samma höjd eller sluttar lagret?" – En utomstående, erfaren, tas in. "Det ser helt annorlunda ut." "Jag tror det feta kommer under där." "Jag är inte säker." – Den utomstående bjuds in att gräva. (Schaktmaskinen förklaras som ojämnheternas orsak.) "Jag tror inte att det är något." – Det går fram och åter – lagret förklaras bort med de andra rutorna eller används för att leta lager i de andra rutorna.
"Kommer vi ifatt det hårda eller kommer jag ner på det mjuka?" "Nu har jag också det hårda här borta."
"Här kommer ju det lerlagret också". "Vi går lite djupare". "Det ser ju inte ut som där, men där är ju mer sot".

"Jag har en stor [skärslev] också, men jag trivs bättre med den mindre."

"Det vi har ritat är sanningen" – Alltså är det bara ett lager som syns i schaktet nu!
"Bara i det hörnet där vill vi ha ett annat lager. Där är inte heldraget [på planritningen] så där har vi inget lager."

"Vi måste mäta in lagret digitalt, så att det får ett nummer, annars blir det inget lager." – En obligatorisk passage som tvingar fram våra materiella förhållanden i schaktet [spara rutor tills inmätning blir möjlig]! Annars finns det ej.
"Hur pass väl kan du apparaten [totalstationen]? Vi behöver nummer till dessa. På måndag har vi glömt bort dem."

"Nu har du inte instrumentet med dig." Man måste stå och gå så att instrumentet kan följa prismat och plocka punkterna.
"Det känns som om jag står snett". "Men du ska inte se vad du känner, du ska se vad bubblan säger, den har rätt och du har fel." – Om att hålla prismat till totalstationen rakt, i plan. Man överger sitt sunda förnuft för det digitala redskapets känsla för kontroll och ordning och exakthet.
När lagret ska in i det digitala måste det bli en sluten enhet, det får ej ha några öppningar, dess ändar måste knytas ihop. Det tvingar arkeologerna att förtydliga och definiera sitt lager. "Vi drar det upp så; för det finns väl i de här rutorna?"

"What did one posthole say to the other when the archaeologist came?"
– …?
– "Act natural"
Ett skämt som blir verkligt när lager och former ska tas fram och fynden börjar dyka upp.

En rapport presenteras oss (från fjolåret). Ännu en allierad (?). – En formande instans, något vi jämför oss efter. Något vi kontextualiserar oss efter? Vi börjar leta frågeställningar, slutsatser och fynd i rapporten – och jämför med det vi tror oss finna/funnit. Den blir en allierad för att styrka våra fynd av husgolv, gul, bränd lera:

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"Det har vi också haft", "en del sånt har vi också haft", "det är ju där vi är nu ju", "det har vi inte fått ännu" [när vi rör oss neråt i deras lagerföljder], "så har vi lite koll på vad vi kan vänta oss". "Så det är det huset vi letar efter"… Liknelser: "Det vill vi också hitta" 'Stolphålet hann ej undersökas' [enligt 2006 års rapport]. "Det kommer inte vi heller hinna, om det ska hålla på så här".
…

"Så det är den västra[?] väggen vi ska hitta, det är den vi letar efter." "Den södra är ju redan utgrävd."

Det behövs skriftliga källor eller grävledarnas uttalanden, oavsett (nästan) skrifternas bakgrund. Allt nedskrivet är mer fast än rena uttalanden inom gruppen. På något sätt söker man sig utom den inomgruppsliga diskussionen för bekräftelse. Man vill ha något från andra personer (som ej hör till 'oss') och ej är med på samma villkor. Något som är helt utom vår diskussion, och kan brukas som ett faktum i sin egen rätt och inte är beroende av en levande diskussion. Därför ska det finnas i oavhängd text, eller hos någon som ej varit med i diskussionen. "Jag kan köpa det om det finns exempel från Hedeby eller någon annanstans". – Om att acceptera en teori om brandgata bakom huskonstruktion. Det krävs skriftligt någonstans för att det ska tas på allvar! (se också Cornelius' uttalande nedan!)
Olika gränser sätts för vad man uttalar sig om – "Hittade vi en bra bild på det, som stämde?" "Nej." "Då lämnar vi den därhän…" – Så gör man alltså, antingen daterar och bekräftar man, om man hittar skrift som belägger ens fynd och datering, eller så lämnar man det definitivt och säger att det är oklart, osäkert.

Karl-Magnus visar runt på siten och bland fynden. Det känns självklart att visa mig hur 'allt visade sig vara till slut'. Jag som arkeolog vill se fynd, lagerföljder och stolphål. Mina försök att leda in på mer om vilka historier som berättas av journalister faller inte helt väl ut. Journalisterna ses som oförstående om arkeologin. Arkeologerna vill ge dem fynd, bra bilder, men journalisterna är mer fascinerade av det arkeologiska arbetet i sig, likt deckarförfattarna. "De låg bara där och grävde, de tyckte inte om brakteaterna".

APPENDIX 2: INTERVIEW EXCERPTS

List of Characters

Johan Kerttu	*(JK)*	*Mats Attin*	*(MA)*
Karl-Magnus Lenntorp	*(KM)*	*Martina Glimberg*	*(MG)*
Lars Larsson	*(LL)*	*Petter Lawenius*	*(PL)*

Lars Larsson 2007-09-12:

LL: Jo, det kryddar lite. Och då kan man ju fundera på två alternativ; är det utifrån kommande som angripit platsen, eller är det kanske så att man samlat sina kontrahenter som man gärna vill ha avlägsnat och bränt dem inne. Det har vi ju i nordiska sagor.

JK: Ja det var en tolkning som kom upp när jag var där ute.

LL: Men vi har haft det tidigare. Det var mer fantasier tidigare, men i och med att brandteknikerna har den uppfattningen så är det inte bara fantasier längre, utan det finns lite stöd för det också. Så på det viset har det varit viktigt att ha dessa med.

JK: Vilka positiva resultat tänker du på då?

LL: Jag tänker på allmän kunskap, om Uppåkra, en medvetenhet om det. Man ser att de meddelar det till sina riksdagspersoner och på det viset får de stöd till att uppmärksamma Uppåkra, i detta fallet. Och allmänt just vad arkeologi betyder. Jag är ganska övertygad om att ett antal studenter anmält sig för att de läst om olika utgrävningar och sånt. I massmedia, eller besöker en utgrävning. Så att det blir följdresultat som är positiva för oss. En allmän positiv inriktning är inte så dum när man kommer till nån…[beslutsfattare?] och kan kanske referera till att det håller på och besöks, och då blir stämningen oftast mycket bättre.

LL: Ja, och det är ju delvis just det med att man lägger ner intresse för att få ut det i massmedia, att det blir känt. Utan de möjligheterna så kan man ju inte få nån kunskap om t.ex. Uppåkra.

LL: Och det kan vara lite svårt ibland att göra det förståeligt, men får man lite tid på sig att presentera det så brukar man finna det här som något verkligt spännande, som en process. Just att försöka formulera processen, det kan vara lite svårt. Och det går liksom inte i dagens massmediavärld när de sätter fram mikrofonen och man ska på tio sekunder beskriva allting. Det kan vara svårt. Så jag tror inte problemet ligger i… för att besökarna kan man ju följa under kanske en halvtimme, en timme och då kan man ju på nåt vis exemplifiera detta med varför det är svårt och varför vi får nya frågor och så vidare, men den möjligheten får man ju inte när mikrofonen bara förs fram och man ska ge svar på högst en minut. Får man bara tid. Många läser ju i tidningarna och: "kan ni aldrig svara på nånting, arkeologi; är det så obestämt?". De hade behövt få sig beskrivet varför det är så obestämt, så blir det lättare att få deras respons.

LL: Det är ju att få ihop den informationen, det kommer ju så mkt lager och fynd och liknande. Totalstationen är ju en del av det hela, det är ju också detta med att registrera in fynd och lager och andra förhållanden, det är ju det som är det viktiga och där är ju totalstationen en del i detta alltså. När man slutar grävningen så är ju det mesta av infon… finns digitalt, en enorm fördel, där rapporten kan koncentreras just på rapport och inte på en massa sammanställande och tvättande och registrerande. Så man kan inte se bara totalstationen som en enhet utan det är en del av enheten, att digitalt registrera det hela.
Negativt, det får jag nog säga, det finns negativa aspekter också, det är ju… tidigare när man ritade planer och profiler så hade man ju möjlighet att på nåt vis markera osäkerhet. Det har man inte nu, ett lager är ett lager. Nu får man sätta att den gränsen går där, punkt, och så sätter man en punkt ju och så registreras den. Det går inte riktigt att säga att 'nånstans däremellan 10 och 25 cm så är det nån oklarhet', då får man registrera ett nytt lager men då är det ju också på ett sätt en definitiv markering av nåt

som kanske inte är så säkert. Och det kan vara problem, för det vet jag att i andra sammanhang när man har sett ritningar, där man har gjort just markeringar – 'här är nåt märkligt men vi kan inte riktigt förklara det' – så har det…, då när man ser det med andra ögon så kan man kanske tolka detta. Det kommer man inte att kunna göra i framtiden för då är ett lager ett lager, punkt slut. Den här osäkerheten som måste, tycker jag, finnas i den arkeologiska dokumentationen, den försvinner.

JK: Men det finns fortfarande möjlighet utifrån ett akademiskt perspektiv, det är ingen som skulle tagit resultaten på mindre allvar?

LL: Nej, nej. Men däremot hade varit problem t.ex. när man ska lämna över det till antikvarisk myndighet alltså, magasinera det och sådant. De är inställda på att allting ska göras digitalt.

JK: Tillbaks till Uppåkra litegrann. Jag har ju läst lite om projektets bakgrund, "Samhällsstrukturen…" som det hette från början. Och sen tog Uppåkra över litegrann och det är samma med mitt. Jag började ju ganska allmänt och lite abstrakt och sen blev det ju lite ironiskt att Uppåkra tog över även min uppsats. Men om man sätter Uppåkra i ett större perspektiv, ett större arkeologiskt perspektiv; vad för betydelse har Uppåkra där?

LL: Det ser ut till att ha en mycket stor betydelse, jag menar det finns ju knappast någon avhandling och större arbete som behandlar järnåldern i Norden, utan att Uppåkra kommer in i det hela. Så ur forskningsperspektivet har det en stor betydelse. Det har också, nu kommer jag kanske in på ett sidospår, men jag tänker på denna… det gjordes en tidskrift som hette *Moderna tider*. Som gjorde en värdering av olika arkeologiska institutioners betydelse, och när de just graderade Lund så tog de med detta med Uppåkra så att det har liksom kommit in redan nu i värderingen av institutionen.

Karl-Magnus Lenntorp 2007-09-17:

JK: …Jag tänkte på det med rapportupplägget som är, där man har 'fyndpresentation och stratigrafi' å ena sidan och sen 'kulturhistorisk tolkning' å den andra, med en, som jag känner, ganska stark skiljelinje emellan. Arkeologin som så att säga 'mjuk vetenskap' inom citationstecken. Varför?

KM: Det var rätt kul att du tog upp det, för att precis så resonerade kriminalteknikerna. Så det är hårdvaran, och det är ju dokumentationen, och 'vad hittar vi?'. Den står ju så att säga på ett eget ben. Sen kommer den kulturhistoriska tolkningen som är en tolkning av detta, det är ju den egna tolkningen, den ska ju betraktas som ett förslag. Så man måste hålla isär det som tolkningen bygger på, hårdvaran, och tolkningen, den ska man ju kunna gå in och ändra hela tiden. Och precis så resonerar poliserna, de skriver en dokumentation av platsen och sen skriver de vad de tror har hänt. Så man ska kunna plocka bort det de tror har hänt och sedan sätta nån annan expert på att gå igenom materialet. Och då ser man hur man resonerar här också, eller vi, att man först presenterar allt det som har hittats och hur det är hittat och hur tydliga strukturer du har. De bygger ju givetvis på tolkningar det också. Men slutsatserna av detta måste ju vara bärande själva, dem måste man kunna klippa bort. Så att andra har samma… [möjlighet?], även om det inte är så, det är ju subjektivt

tolkat i fält, så att man kan ju inte göra så mycket åt det, men det finns ju åtminstone teoretiskt en möjlighet att göra en annan tolkning på samma material. Och det är ju inte ovanligt att man gör så inom arkeologin att man knyter ihop den kulturhistoriska tolkningen för mycket med redogörelsen för det man har hittat, så det blir mycket svårare att plocka ut det. Så det är ett klassiskt drag, kan man säga.

JK: Då går vi vidare. Hur såg det ut på fronten 'önskemål och planer' kontra 'ekonomiska och tidsmässiga ramar' för projektet alldeles i början?

KM: Allting var ju planerat egentligen efter faktiska kostnader, så att vi visste ju att vi hade till det här och ingenting mer. Så att eftersom man har planerat utifrån det så var det ju inga överraskningar.

KM: Har man lite år i branschen så är man så van att saker inte blir som man tror. Det kan vara grävningar som är helt säkra och så står man där på måndagen och har klätt om och så händer inget. Så det brukar liksom vara, ingenting är säkert förrän man är ute. Det är klart man har lite förhoppningar om att det ska bli mer, men kan ju inte räkna med för mycket heller för då blir man besviken.

KM: Men det är faktiskt rätt häftigt det att man kan få dit 500 personer på en söndagseftermiddag för att titta på ett stycke jord, och att de får sig en berättelse till livs om vad som hänt där. Jag tycker det är…, ja det är inte många platser som kan fånga mänskor på det viset.

JK: …så det är brandingenjörer som gör det?

KM: Nä, de tar bara tekniska fel [det vill säga om apparatur och felkopplingar startar branden]. Är det mordbrand så sköter kriminalteknikerna det oftast. De är ju egentligen skickligare på det här med döda mänskor, nedbrända hus. Enligt dem själva, men det tror jag ju. Eftersom de… Kommer det in ett larm om en misstänkt brand så är det de som går in och tittar först: "Är det här nånting för oss eller inte?" Hittar de tecken på att det är mordbrand så tar de hand om hela alltet, annars släpper de det till brandingenjörerna.

KM: Sen var det att det var så jävla många studenter så att vi fick ha två improviserade schakt. Som också då avsåg utemiljön. Det ena var ju tänkt för att studera en stenläggning, men just där det här schaktet öppnades så var ju den här stenläggningen ganska kass. Det var ju det här södra schaktet. Och sen så var det då din grupp och en annan som var i det här stora schaktet, de avsågs de börja på arbetet med att plocka fram det här brandhuset, som egentligen var huvudmålet med undersökningen.

JK: Ja uppakra.se.

KM: Ja, och skriva en rapport där varje vecka om vad som hade hänt det var jättesvårt. Vi gjorde ju samma sak i 2 månader, flyttade jord för att komma ner på brandhuset. Och sen small det till liksom, när man gav sig på det. Då var det inga problem.

JK: Och journalisterna då, vad är de ute efter? I din mening.

KM: Lite är de ju ute efter att skriva en snabb story, som de kan trycka ut i tidningen så snabbt som möjligt. Och så har det varit i alla år. De har kommit och skrivit en bra eller dålig artikel. Men det är först denna säsongen som de valde att bevaka, hålla kontakten under hela resans gång. Och då fick man ju ett helt annat diskussionsklimat, det är mycket lättare att prata med mänskor som kommer ut…, precis som att kriminalteknikerna och vi förstod mer och mer av varandra efter ett tag, desto mer förstår vi av journalisterna och de av oss. Så att de kan skriva, ja 'vettiga artiklar' låter kanske lite förmätet, men annars kan det bli rätt mycket fel, de kan bli rätt torra om de bara kommer dit en gång och lyssnar på oss och skriver. Här kunde de ju ringa och fråga oss om saker de hade missförstått eller tyckte var oklara. Det gör de ju om de känner en och kanske inte har sån brådska med att komma ut med artikeln, så att de kan ligga och fila lite på den. Och det gör ju att det blir högre kvalitet på den. Och ju högre kvalitet det blir på artikeln – det tjänar ju alla på, från läsare till oss. Så den här mediabevakningen tyckte jag var bra, för det blev hög kvalitet, utifrån min aspekt. Sen är det ju jobbigt, man måste ju vakta sin tunga. Inte för att man inte har förtroende för dem, men man måste ju vara försiktig med vad man säger också. T.ex. med den här donatorn, vi hade ju träffat henne så jag visste hur hon såg ut och så, men det kunde man ju inte säga eftersom det var hemligt. Ja, såna saker som hur mycket grävningen kostar, det är inte alltid vi vinner nånting på att berätta det i tidningen. Det kan bli så himla fel, om det kanske står nån artikel om skolmaten på sidan innan, och så läser de att arkeologerna får 'så mycket pengar'.

Martina Glimberg 2007-09-21:

MG: Ja men målet är ju alltid att läsarna ska finna att det här är intressant, och kanske också att sprida lite mer kunskap om en plats som man kanske inte vet så mycket om, normalt. För de flesta kör ju bara förbi på motorvägen mellan Lund och Malmö. Det är ju folkbildning, men också nyheter. Tycker jag.

Petter Lawenius 2007-09-26:

JK: Det första jag vill veta är hur ni [Lawenius och Minorsson, bakom uppakra.se] kom in i bilden, ni som har hållit på med hemsidan, när och hur.

PL: Själva jobbet är ju ett arbetsmarknadspolitiskt jobb, ett så kallat plusjobb. Jag är verksam som konstnär vilket inte är nåt man överlever så bra på. Jag hittade på jobbet helt själv, för jag har varit grymt intresserad av historia och arkeologi sedan jag var pytteliten, en sån som redan när jag var nio var förläst på både Saxo [Grammaticus] och Snorre Sturlasson och eddor och Beowulf. Så att jag kan det där och jag har följt Uppåkra också, för mitt eget intresse väldigt länge. Så att jag hittade på det här jobbet när de här plusjobben dök upp, som nånting jag ville göra och sedan så kontaktade jag Staffanstorps kommun och sa att: 'Är det inte så att det vore kul om nån gjorde nånting, typ en hemsida med lite information om Uppåkra?' Det kostade ju inte dem några pengar i stort sett, så det var klart att de tyckte att det var en bra idé. Så drog jag in min kollega också som är duktig på hemsidor och den typen av saker.

JK: Vad vill Staffanstorps kommun med det här, vad tjänar de på det här, är det ett turistmål som de är ute efter?

PL: Det är ju en intressant grej, för de har ju ingenting att vinna på det. Det är ju bara en, i princip skulle man ju kunna kalla det för en moralisk och etisk skyldighet. Om man har ett sånt fornlämningsområde inom kommungränsen så är det ju lite ens skyldighet att göra nånting av det. Det drar ju inte dit turister, det finns ju ingenting i Staffanstorp att titta på eller göra.

JK: Nej inte nu, men det kommer ju att finnas då, kan man tycka.

PL: Om du åker till Uppåkra som turist så åker du förmodligen till Lund och äter middag efteråt. Och du åker kanske till Malmö och shoppar kläder på H&M, eller vad man nu gör. De som kommer vinna på det är ju Lund och Malmö, i den mån man kan tala om nån vinst när det gäller besökare och turister. Ute i Uppåkra finns det ju ingenting, så, givetvis, om man skulle bygga nåt litet museum eller nån liten grej i anslutning till den här parken så… För det första så kostar det ju mer än vad man får in, om man nu säljer kaffe och våfflor eller vykort och sånt. Då blir ju bara en anställd person som ska vara där dagligen dyrare än vad man får in pengar på. Så att Staffanstorp har ju, i alla fall som jag ser det, ingenting alls att tjäna på det, utan det är ju snarare än moralisk skyldighet att på nåt sätt gå in med några pengar eller göra nånting i bakgrunden.

Mats Attin 2007-09-29

JK: Då kommer vi in på det som du skrev i mailet till mig, det här med att få in en föreläsare på Arkeologiska Institutionen. Hur har den idén kommit upp, vems idé var det och hur har det upplevts hos poliser respektive arkeologer?

MA: Det är ju ett intressant ämne för Polisen och jag föreläser inom Polisen när det gäller kulturarvsbrotten, ofta, runt om i Sverige i olika sammanhang. Och jag har pratat med Karl-Magnus och Lars Larsson om detta, för jag tycker själv att det borde vara någonting för blivande arkeologer att ta del av.

JK: Just med kulturminneslagstiftning och sånt.

MA: Ja absolut. Det finns ju till exempel en 5-poängskurs på Högskolan i Visby på ämnet gravplundring. Och där är en arkeolog i Uppsala och en arkeolog i Göteborg som har föreläst och varit inblandade i "Uppdrag Granskning". Det är två arkeologer i alla fall som har engagerat sig i de här brotten innan. Och jag tycker själv att det borde vara ett intresse för institutionen.