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The Wealth from Crucible and Anvil

Multimetality, Spatiality and Socio-economy in Iron Age south-east Scandinavia

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The Wealth from Crucible and Anvil – Multimetalty, Spatiality and Socio-economy in Iron Age south-east Scandinavia

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Aim and scope

The project investigates metal use in the Scandinavian Iron Age and the societal implications of this diverse phenomenon. Firmly established hypotheses concerning the spatiality and socio-economic importance of Ferrous- and nonFerrous metal use and metal craftsmanship is countered, evaluated and contextualized.

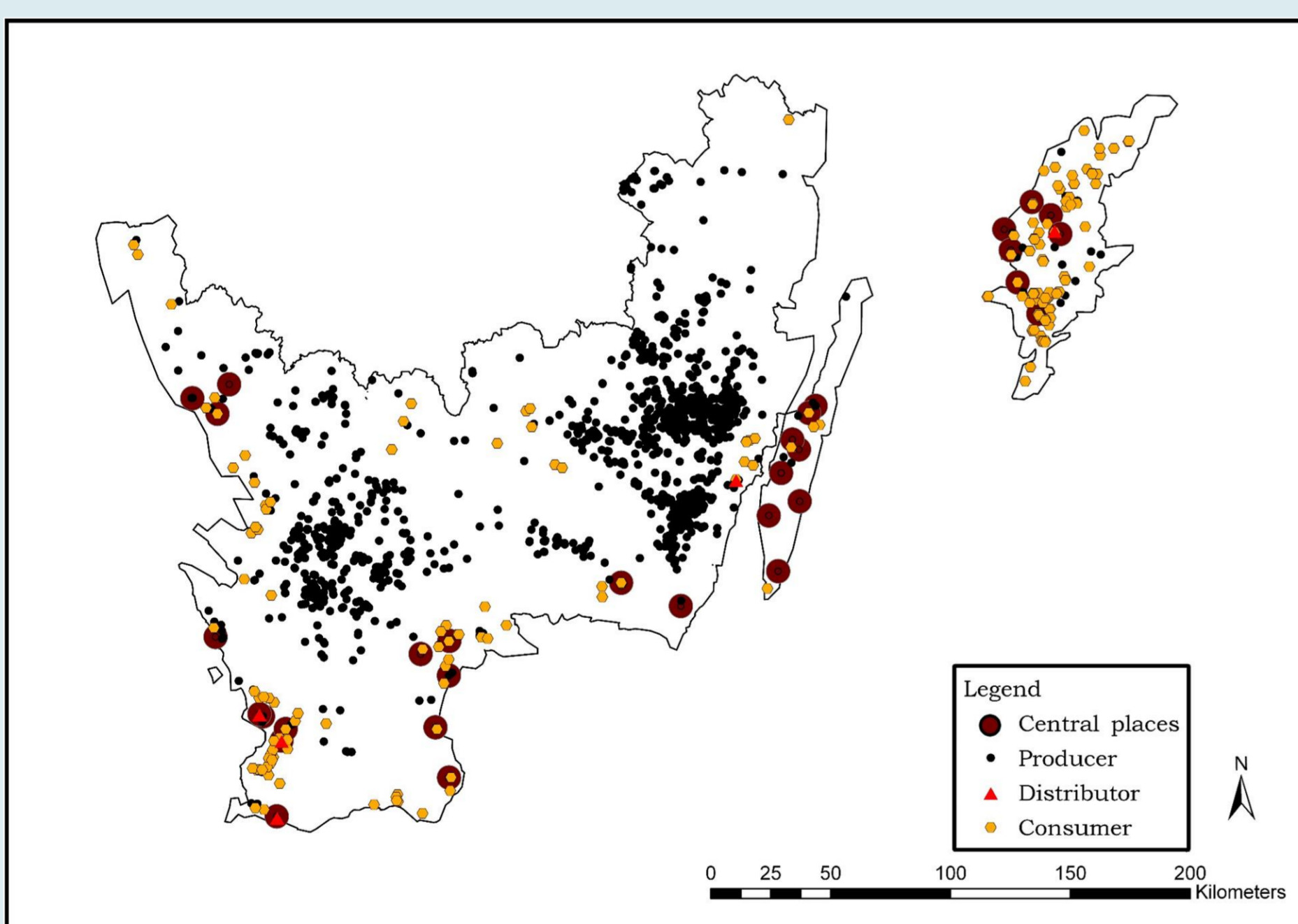
The project is structured as three case studies with differing but interconnected scopes, methods and source-materials.

Study 1: Metal use in a macro perspective

This case-study utilizes the Swedish National Heritage boards **Archaeological sites and monuments database** to facilitate macro-spatial statistical analyses countering questions of the links between metal use and socio-economic centrality. Ferrous and nonFerrous metal use as well as single-, dual- and multimetal craftsmanship are contrasted and evaluated using spatial statistics in a GIS canvas.

Commodity-chain analyses are performed on Ferrous and nonFerrous crafts highlighting the differences and similarities between these from a macro-economic perspective.

The case-study effectively creates a solid background for further in-depth enquiry and charts the current state of knowledge within the study area.



Spatial commodity-chain analysis covering the entire study area.
Note: No chronological resolution of mapped sites



Metalworking debris in the form of pit lining stained by Cu-alloys. Photo: Andreas Svensson

Study 2: Contrast and structure in Blekinge

The county of Blekinge (south-eastern Sweden) is chosen as study area for qualitative spatial analyses of metal use and metal craftsmanship. The same statistical methods as in the previous case-study are used, but with a high-resolution data-set of metal use sites.

The case-study contrasts metal use sites to the overall Iron Age landscape in Blekinge. Thus, a comprehensive societal analysis of Iron Age metal use is created, further elucidating the results from case-study 1.

The case-study also includes an in-depth archaeometallurgical analysis of metalworking debris from Västra Vång, a central place site complex situated in the middle of county Blekinge.



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Study 3: Multimetalty at the central places

Case-study 3 explores the multimetal craftsmanship undertaken at central places. The study utilizes archaeometallurgical and spatial analysis of metalworking debris retrieved and recorded from excavations at Uppåkra (county of Scania, southern Sweden).

The case-study is divided into an intra-site analysis of the character of metalworking and metal use at Uppåkra and a comparative analysis between the material retrieved from Uppåkra and Västra Vång (see previous case-study).

Questions of the spatial and qualitative similarities and differences between Ferrous and nonFerrous metal use are prioritized in the analyses. The results are interpreted from a socio-economic perspective

Preliminary conclusions

- Dual- or Multimetal use is shown to be spatially linked to socio-economic centrality, rather than nonFerrous metal use.
- The macro-spatial pattern for metal use strongly mirrors the overall demographic patterns in the Iron Age – i.e. metal use should be seen as an integrated part of society.
- Ferrous and nonFerrous metal craftsmanship differs significantly from technological and economic perspectives. However, both inter- and intra-site analyses suggests contextual links between several types of metal use, both at central place sites and provincial sites.

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