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## A wealth from Crucible and Anvil

The spatial socio-economy of Iron Age Scandinavia seen through multimetal craftsmanship and metal use

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## **Session: #16 “Economic Archaeology” and Quantitative Approaches – Measuring the Variations in Production and Consumption from Archaeological Data**

**Abstract title: A wealth from Crucible and Anvil – The spatial socio-economy of Iron Age Scandinavia seen through multimetal craftsmanship and metal use**

The project ‘From the Crucible and at the Anvil’ was started in 2015 with the goal of examining the socio-economic implications of metalworking in Iron Age Scandinavia, focused on the spatiality, economic remits and technological repertoires of metal use. The connection between economy and metal use is central to the project. Within one case study, metalworking sites have been analysed from a macro-level landscape perspective covering the wider south-east Scandinavian region throughout the Scandinavian Iron Age (500BCE-1100CE). The aim has been to infer the socio-economic implications of metal use through the macro-spatiality of metalworking sites.

In this paper, results from the case study are presented and evaluated. The macro-spatial patterns of metal craftsmanship are used to infer the role of metal use in the overarching economic climate of the Scandinavian Iron Age. Employing a large data-set from both contract archaeology and large-scale inventory projects in southern Sweden, quantitative approaches and formal spatial statistics have been both necessary and fruitful. Using a macro-level approach, the site-information analysed was reduced, with general spatial location, primary metal use and coarse chronology forming key attributes.

This method differs significantly from the more high-resolution and qualitative approaches normally favoured when countering questions concerning the societal implications of metal use. What are the benefits and limitations of these approaches? And how can these methods be integrated in the economic analyses of the Scandinavian Iron Age?

A qualitative landscape analysis of a sub-region of the study area forms the basis of another case study within the project. The focus in this regard has been to elucidate the spatiality of commodity-chains of metal use, and to contrast those patterns to the general Iron Age landscape. Comparing the two case studies provides the opportunity to gauge the use of both sets of approaches, highlighting their pros and cons. Arguments for utilizing an inclusive toolbox with regards to method and theory when interpreting the economic landscapes of the past will in this way be advanced in the paper.

**Keywords:** Multimetality, Spatial statistics, Socio-economy, Commodity-chains