

GAMLA UPPSALA – STRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT OF A CENTRE IN MIDDLE SWEDEN

Gamla («Old») Uppsala is an exceedingly singular ancient environment in Central Sweden. Here, we find many monumental graves, the site of Sweden's earliest archdiocese, as well as an unusually large number of references in medieval written sources, even rune stones. In contrast with many other Iron Age centres, knowledge of its onetime major importance has never been lost. It is a classic example for a place rich in symbolism, recurrently brought forward throughout the centuries when the need arose to invoke a golden age¹.

The focus on the monuments and the written sources often displayed in the earlier research has resulted in a fragmented understanding of the site's general context. Settlements, the economy, the landscape and periods with no monumental constructions were often overlooked. This was the state of affairs as recently as the late 1990s, and it is probably still valid today². This in itself is hardly surprising. The first view that meets the eye when visiting Gamla Uppsala is that of the royal mounds, and readers encounter spectacular texts by Adam of Bremen and Snorre Sturlasson³. If your ambition is to write a different and complementary history of Gamla Uppsala, where the monuments and texts are part of a larger context, much basic research, involving a large and fragmented material is necessary, preferably aided by further, targeted excavations.

This article is based on its authors' combined experience of the site and on the results of an ongoing research project. It aims to present our current knowledge of the site and our interpretations of how it develops and is sustained as centre throughout the Iron Age and the Early Middle Ages. The interpretations are based mainly on settlement material, but also on graves, various aspects of the economy, and the landscape.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

An early interest in Gamla Uppsala among history scholars brought about both documented archaeological excavations and landscape studies carried out as early as the 1600s⁴. Since the emergence of archaeology as an actual academic discipline in the latter half of the 19th century, a great number of investigations have been conducted in the area⁵. Up until about 20 years ago, the emphasis lay on the western parts of the historical village. Here, we find the monumental mounds, the church, and the Late Iron Age plateaus with remains of royal manors⁶. By contrast, our knowledge of the settlement structure, the economy and prehistoric landscape is severely limited. Moreover, we still lack comprehensive studies and compilations of the burial grounds and of excavated graves.

During the 1980s, investigations of settlements increased in Sweden, signalling a new focus for archaeology for Gamla Uppsala as well. In the course of small-scale rescue excavations, settlement remains have been found over large tracts dating from the Bronze Age to the Middle Ages⁷. To these can be added research excavations carried out by Uppsala Universitet on different sites in the western part of the area⁸. In addition to purely archaeological endeavours, several paleo-ecological investigations have been conducted,

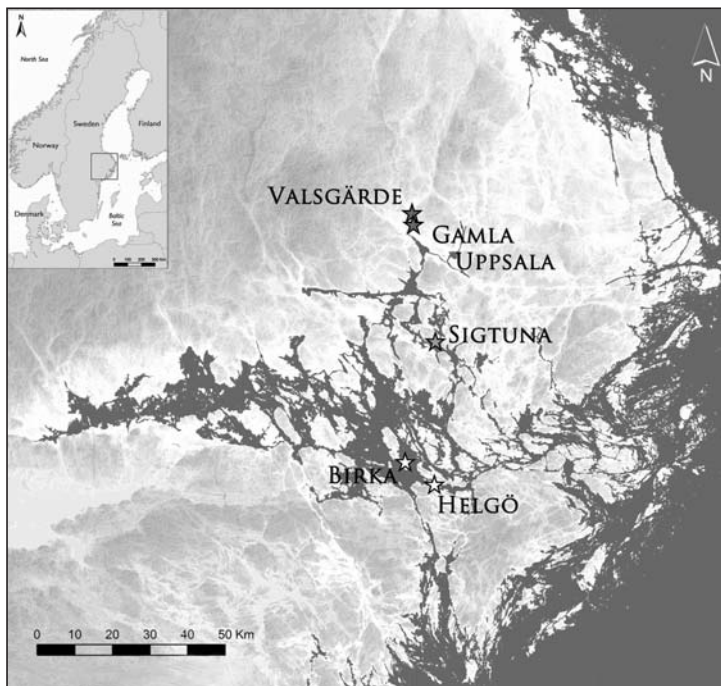


Fig. 1 The position of Gamla Uppsala in the Mälaren landscape along with other important early medieval sites. – (Map D. Löwenborg).

both locally and regionally⁹. Last but not least, written sources continue to form the basis for discussions on power and cult.

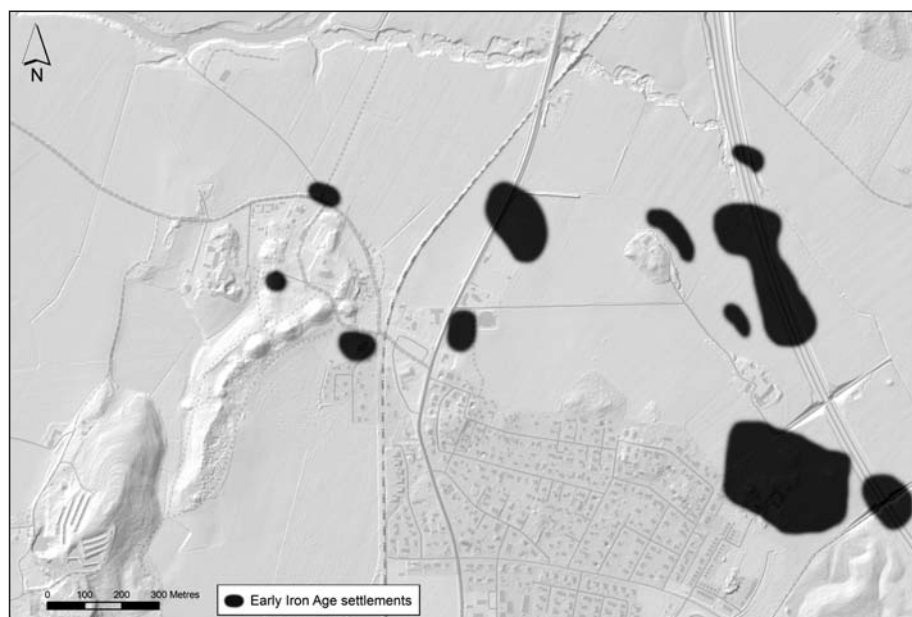
This article is the result of an ongoing research project, where we strive to achieve a comprehensive understanding of the structure of Gamla Uppsala from the Bronze Age to the Early Middle Ages. It is based on collation and compilation of earlier investigations, historical and modern maps, LiDAR data and geophysical surveys. The map data is collated in a GIS-project, while the results from the compilation process are complemented with targeted metal detector surveys, field walks and small-scale excavations. By combining data in a central GIS-project we get an ever improving basis for reconstructions of the prehistoric environment. Several earlier compilations have been undertaken, but never on such a large scale as the current project¹⁰.

For reasons of limitation, we define Gamla Uppsala as the area corresponding to the estates of the historical village, including the adjacent villages of Myrby and Nyby¹¹. However, Gamla Uppsala can never fully be understood without taking into account surrounding villages, and even the region (**fig. 1**). The landscape, social relations, boundaries, ownership, communication, etc. have changed numerous times over the centuries. Gamla Uppsala, despite its unique qualities, has always been a reflection of its time, and part of a larger picture.

SETTLEMENT FROM THE BRONZE AGE TO THE EARLY IRON AGE

The land surrounding Gamla Uppsala was first claimed and reshaped for an agrarian economy as early as during the Early Bronze Age, at a time when the area was part of an inner peninsula. Knowledge of this early phase is sketchy, but traces of graves, settlements and ritual actions exist on several sites in the area¹². From the Late Bronze Age the source material is a good deal greater, in actual Gamla Uppsala as well as its immediate surroundings. From this era we have a much more detailed understanding of an agrarian settle-

Fig. 2 Settlement distribution during the Bronze Age, the pre-Roman and Early Iron Ages. Background based on aerial LiDAR scanning. – (Map D. Löwenborg).



ment, focused on animal husbandry, the growing of hulled barley and wheat, with a specialized handicraft in the form of bronze smelting, but also burials¹³.

Due to shore displacement, large fertile clay soils were continuously exposed. From the onset of the pre-Roman Iron Age this resulted in a relatively swift and large-scale settlement expansion, visible in both archaeological as well as paleo-archaeological data¹⁴. From this point on, there were farms with dwellings as well as outhouses linked to animal husbandry and agriculture. The livestock consisted mainly of cattle and sheep, but horses, swine, goats and poultry were also kept. The evidence suggests that animal husbandry at this time was intense, involving selective winter stabling, outdoor herding, and maintaining pastures¹⁵. Farming was based on the growing of hulled barley, wheat and some extent oats. Early Iron Age fields were probably located adjacent to the settlement and the cattle paths leading from houses on several settlements suggest that pastures were situated around settlements and fields¹⁶. Remains linked to settlement refuse show a change of waste management from the Bronze Age to the Early Iron Age, a change that may be connected with the need for manure to fertilize permanent fields¹⁷. In contrast with earlier periods, large burial grounds began to appear, both in the region as a whole, and in direct proximity to Gamla Uppsala (fig. 2). This pre-Roman settlement expansion can be partially explained by the agrotechnological structure of the Early Iron Age, whose essential components were iron tools and the stabling of grazing animals.

During the Early Roman Iron Age there is dense settlement in the area. This is clearly visible when data from investigated settlements, and the number of excavated radiocarbon dated houses are combined¹⁸. Groups of farms were diffused around land that in the historic era belonged to the village of Gamla Uppsala. From this period there are also more traces of crafts and activities, e.g. in the form of tar production and discernible slaughter sites. The latter seems to indicate a larger output of cattle, not noticeable in earlier periods, around this time¹⁹. Presently, our understanding of agriculture after c. 600 AD in the area is decidedly poorer. However, we can establish that during the Roman Iron Age, the foundations are set for the economy that is to survive on the fertile clay pasture landscape for many centuries.

Among the excavated settlements, many factors support the notion of a more marked social stratification during the Roman Iron Age. In itself the great colonisation should be seen as a sign of wealth and fecundity of the land. We recognize a radically increased variation of house constructions, but also relatively short distances between groups of farms (**fig. 2**). The development towards larger dwellings and outhouses on the farms is seen as a probable increase of production and storage capacity, which in turn seems to refer to a surplus production. A particularly distinct indication of social stratification is a group of large houses with or without terraces, located on topographically well exposed sites, clearly noticeable at this time. The labour-intensive construction and selected location of the houses bear witness to their owners' exclusiveness²⁰. Settlements consisting of fewer or smaller houses, sometimes placed on a lower topographical elevation, and with a specialized agrarian focus, can indicate lower social strata. These characteristics suggest a dependence on the terrace settlements and can be described as satellite farms related to a major estate²¹. Burial customs during the Early Iron Age in the area contrasts widely with the more varied and monumental practices of the Late Iron Age, both in Gamla Uppsala and in the region²². Gamla Uppsala itself lacks distinct stratification during this period, though it must be taken into account that very few graves from this era have been investigated. If on the other hand, you look at the entire parish, distinct high-status graves can be found, dating from both period C 3 of the Roman Iron Age and the Migration Period. These include in particular the rich Fullerö grave (Uppsala län), but also the close chamber graves from Valsgårde (Uppsala län)²³.

A number of factors support the existence of a central place, and the elite graves that began to appear during the late 6th century (see below) were the results of an intensified settlement and social stratification which occurred centuries before. In the centre of Gamla Uppsala, i.e. by the church, increasing evidence of an Early Iron Age settlement has surfaced in recent years²⁴. It is possible that a central farm is established as early as in the Late Roman Iron Age or Migration Period, but we still lack interpretable farm structures or status finds.

A TRANSITION – EARLY TO LATE IRON AGE STRUCTURE

The 4th century sees the onset of a successive change of the dispersed groups of farms (see above) and around 600 AD, most settlements with their roots in the Early Iron Age had disappeared. What remained for some time on the »abandoned« farms were small outhouses, interpreted as fodder barns. The dwellings and most outhouses disappeared. During this time there are clear tendencies of intensifying settlement in a zone around what is now Gamla Uppsala church and in connection to the historical village²⁵. This transition is not unique to Gamla Uppsala. It is part of a singular process, visible, with some variation, all over the Mälaren basin²⁶.

The structural layout of the settlement during and after the transition is still unclear. Unlike the large-scale investigations of older settlements in the peripheral areas, the interpretation of the central field is based on small excavated areas, to which have been added datings from surveys²⁷. Our general understanding of the settlement distribution is continuously improved, but lack totally excavated farms.

At the present, it seems as if the restructuring of the settlements was not a sudden occurrence. Older settlements were gradually abandoned²⁸. Also, it seems as if, when a younger settlement had been established, there was a longer continuity than before; several investigated sites seem to exist for 500-800 years²⁹. Another characteristic is a considerably denser settlement. The population level and number of farms were probably at least as great, but spatially much wider distributed (**figs 2-3**). During the Middle Ages this was the largest village in Uppland³⁰, a position that seems to have been established much earlier.

Fig. 3 Presently known settlement areas dated between c. 600 and 1100 AD, and burial grounds from primarily the same period. Background based on aerial LiDAR scanning. – (Map D. Löwenborg).

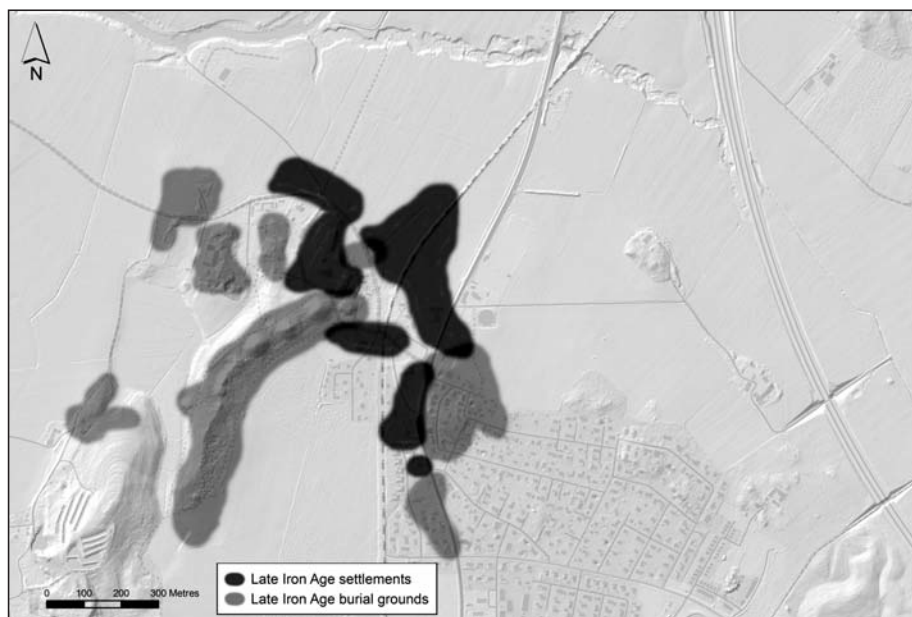


Fig. 4 The map by Truls Arnidsson, produced in 1709 and depicting the village of the period along with burial mounds visible at this date.



Gamla Uppsala is best-known for its monumental mounds, but using the graves to trace structural change is problematic, since the burial grounds today are much damaged. The most intact visualisation available to us is a map produced in 1709, showing a number of smaller and larger burial grounds (fig. 4). The graves marked on this map number between 700 and 800, and the map has proved to be remarkably accurate. Interestingly enough, on at least two sites, graves have been found that are not shown on the map. In other words, already by 1709, many burial grounds were heavily damaged. If these are added to those on the map, as well as graves with no distinct markings, and graves superseded by later graves, the number of graves in the area would originally have numbered several thousand. In contrast with this rough estimate, only around 30 burials have been excavated and documented professionally. This can be compared with Birka (Stockholms län), where more than 1100 graves have been investigated, or the around 180 excavated burials on Helgö (Stockholms län)³¹.

The graves investigated in the central parts of Gamla Uppsala almost consistently date to the late 6th century or later. On at least two locations, inside the present vicarage and the Högåsen burial ground, there is a continuity spanning 300-400 years. Areas with graves from the late 6th and 7th centuries are reused during the 9th-11th centuries³². There seems to be parallels between graves and settlements, in that the site continuity is long.

In the presentation below of the settlement structure in the central parts of Gamla Uppsala, there is reason to divide the description into two main sections. Located at the centre is the royal manor complex. This borders in the east to another complex known as the eastern village. In the Middle Ages the village of Myrby (»the village by the shallow water«) was located immediately west of the royal mounds (figs 3-4). This settlement was probably named during the Iron Age, but both spatial factors and medieval documents of ownership³³, make it reasonable to view it as part of the Gamla Uppsala complex. However, this area has not been subject to close archaeological research. There are burial grounds that can be linked to Myrby, but no located settlement remains.

THE ROYAL MANOR COMPLEX

In the course of the 12th and 13th centuries, the area known as the royal manor complex was donated to the Uppsala archbiscopal table, and during this process Sweden's first archdiocese church is built on the site around and after 1160³⁴. Medieval documents and 17th century surveyors' maps suggest that before the donation, the complex had been a specific part of Gamla Uppsala village; it had been the site for the early medieval royal manor, and at the time was at least 500 years old. Sometime after the donation was made, the royal manor was restructured and divided into several farms/agricultural units of equal size³⁵. It is unclear whether there were several farm units in the area prior to restructuring, or just one royal manor.

Apart from the royal mounds, the most manifested remnant in this field is a hall building on the monumental southern plateau, north of the church. Its phase contained a 50 m long building, which is a monumental hall. The terrace is made up of several layers, with deposited clay and cultural layers. In one of the bottom layers a massive posthole was found, indicating a house from one of the older phases. The terrace appeared to contain several successive houses, built and rebuilt between the 6th and 8th centuries³⁶. The successive extension of the terrace meant its monumental dimensions was not achieved until the end of that period.

There are various other plateaus or terraces in the area. Most visible in the landscape is the northern plateau³⁷. There is also a rise in topography between the church and the southern terrace, which has been suggested as part of a third terrace³⁸. It seems to be made up largely of natural esker sediment³⁹ but clay layers and postholes found during an excavation in 2009 indicate the site of a building on a terrace with a naturally imposing location⁴⁰. Both east and west of the church there are traces of further possible terraces.

In the course of various investigations under the church a number of deposited clay and stone layers have been found⁴¹. There were also large postholes belonging to houses whose orientation, size and construction still evade us⁴². This is due to the excavated surfaces being very small, but also to a stratigraphy disturbed by the erection of the church, as well as by innumerable burials. Over the years the remains have generated datings spanning from the Roman Iron Age to the Viking Age⁴³.

Apart from the royal terraces, the foremost indicators of a high-status group in this area are the monumental mounds⁴⁴. Other indicators are boat graves at Prästgården, dating from the 9th century⁴⁵, as well as other finds, from various contexts, the quality of which has not been met in other parts of Gamla Uppsala⁴⁶.

Around Gamla Uppsala and the royal terraces there are settlements both on the ridge, on its sides and in the low lying farmland. The elevated settlement by the church is vast and very complex, since it has continuity from the Roman Iron Age to the Early Middle Ages, and also has an often disturbed stratigraphy⁴⁷.

To the west of the church, partially in the slope, there are other traces of activity, in the form of hearths and the odd building. Hearths and cultural layers have provided radiocarbon dates from the Migration Period and the Early Vendel period, 400-650 AD⁴⁸.

Other sites with traces of activity, including hearths, are situated west of the royal manor terraces⁴⁹. There are also remains at Prästgården, comprising a terrace⁵⁰. At Prästgården there are as well graves and features older than the ship burials⁵¹.

In the fields north of the terraces there are settlement traces of a somewhat different nature. Here, the remnants can be divided into two distinct phases. An older phase consists of settlement remains dating from the 3rd to the 6th century. The most visible remnants of the younger phase are a stone construction, made up of two parallel rows of stone, and a number of postholes between them. The excavators interpreted this as a rampart surrounding the royal manor. We, however, are more inclined to view it as the foundations of a road⁵². The younger remains also include low terraces separated by ditches. Finds of bead manufacturing, crucibles and iron slag show that various crafts were conducted in or adjacent to the investigated areas⁵³. Later surveys have confirmed the craft indications, most of which dated from the 8th century. Later finds also suggest handicraft from the 9th century and onwards. Surprising traces of silver and gold imply a particularly high quality of the craftsmanship present in the vicinity of the royal manor (see below).

Immediately south of the royal manor complex is the Högåsen burial ground (**figs 3-4**). Here, we find not only the royal mounds, but other monumental graves in numbers without comparison in Sweden. Three mounds are 50-75 m in diameter, one is 45-50 m, and out of the remaining 150, four measure at least 20 m in diameter. Of the three major mounds two have been excavated, the so-called East and West mounds⁵⁴. Both date from the late 6th to the early 7th century⁵⁵. To these another mounds with rich finds can be added. Dubbed the Gold mound (swedish Gullhöyen), this was excavated along with the East mound in 1846-1847⁵⁶. Unfortunately, we do not have any detailed documentation concerning its size, construction, and exact location on the burial ground.

In Central Sweden there is no other burial ground with as many monumental mounds⁵⁷. The datings of the East, West and Gold mounds all seem to fall within a span of 100 years. There is at the moment nothing that indicates that the major mounds represent a sequence of princely burials in large mounds that extends over many centuries. This partly contrasts with the continuity of the central farm, which can be traced from the 6th to the 8th century.

THE EASTERN AREA

East of the royal manor complex is an extensive settlement where various excavated areas display varying continuity⁵⁸. As mentioned above, we still lack totally unearthed farmsteads. However, it seems as if the farms and houses are similar to other agrarian sites in the region. The distribution of settlements closely corresponds with the location of 17th and 18th centuries farms. Interestingly, investigations in the tilled land in the northern and southern parts of Gamla Uppsala have shown extensive Vendel and Viking Age settlement outside the historically known sites. Obviously, the settlement of this era had a partially different location than that of a later age. A future challenge is to establish whether this part also was larger during one or several stages of the 5th-12th centuries.

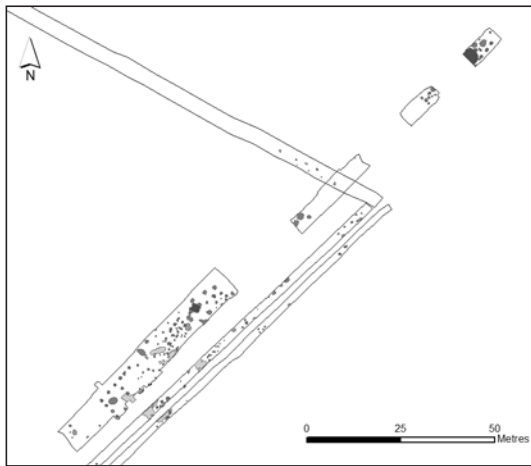


Fig. 5 Trenches from investigations of an early medieval settlement made in 1996. Most prominent are post-built Viking Age houses in the south and further north a crafts area with a pit house, hearths and a group of smithing furnaces. – (Map after Ljungkvist / Hulth 2000).

Throughout the years, traces of handicraft have appeared over vast areas. Iron slag is the most commonly occurring indication from excavations as well as surveys⁵⁹. The most distinct traces were unearthed during an investigation in the northern part of Gamla Uppsala, where at least four Viking Age furnaces were situated on a site with a concentration of hearths, and with at least one sunken-floor hut. The handicraft or artisan area was located just outside a field with post-built Viking Age houses (**fig. 5**). Traces of bronze artisanship are few, so a bronze casting site has yet to be found. However, occasional furnace fragments with bronze drops, crucible and sporadic cast fragments have appeared. The distribution of these finds is large enough to suggest that in all likelihood bronze craft was carried out on multiple sites simultaneously. Metal detector surveys have contributed in encircling at least one locale with numerous bronze smelts, cuttings, and pieces of lead⁶⁰.

Two forms of artisanship stand out; both identified in connection with the royal manor. Early 20th century investigations unearthed traces of bead production in the shape of elongated strands, tesserae and glass shards close to the royal manor terraces⁶¹. They date mainly to the 8th century. Although not identified, the actual production site seems to be located close by. Perhaps the most remarkable evidence of artisanship was found in 2009, when several silver fragments, parts of a silver ingot and a gold smelt were discovered, along with numerous bronze and lead objects such as plates, cuttings, and smelts⁶². These could be dated to the 10th or 11th century. If the indications can be proved, a task for future excavations, only one probably comparable workshop has been found in Central Sweden, the so-called Olof Skötkonung's mint in 11th century Sigtuna (Stockholms län). Both the bead production and the silver craft suggest that more unusual, and exclusive artisanship was conducted in the proximity to the royal manor, closely linked to the centre of power.

DISCUSSION

The vastness of the settlement in the 6th-11th centuries, and the presence of such artisanship, give Gamla Uppsala a special status in relation to its hinterland. Specialized craftsmanship in the form of bronze casting is not uncommon during the period. It seems to occur on almost every site that can be linked to lower elite, e.g. the neighbouring Valsgärde⁶³. At Gamla Uppsala, however, the craft seems to have been undertaken on a considerably larger scale and more widely distributed than on other sites.

Aspects of settlement structure that has been highlighted in recent years are the tendencies towards regulations of the settlement. Investigations of the tilled land just north of the royal manor terraces unearthed surfaces of deposited clay inside the rampart/road. These were bordered by ditches, probably dating from the 8th century⁶⁴. On another area there were parallel ditches superseded by younger features and cultural layers. Parallel to the ditches were also two stone paved roads, one of which covered a house dating from c. 850 to 950 AD⁶⁵. In the Mälaren basin, ditches in tilled land are generally remains of agricultural systems dating from medieval times or later. But in this case, the ditches were covered by features and

cultural layers and filled only with prehistoric material. In other words, we have several indications of farmsteads/units in Gamla Uppsala being systematically delimited in a way comparable to the lots of partly contemporary marketplaces such as Ribe (Reg. Syddanmark/DK)⁶⁶. In addition, we have an unusually large settlement, specialized artisanship, vast burial grounds and the presence of an elite, we may very well have cause to discuss Gamla Uppsala in terms of an urban site during the 8th-12th centuries. The site meets the criteria for what Chris Wickham defines as »a minimum characterization of urban activity«⁶⁷. This implies a demographic concentration, a marketplace, and economic activities structurally different from the hinterland.

The site distinguishes itself – in terms of size, settlement structure and craftsmanship – from the villages and farmsteads of its hinterland. Artisanship has been present on a different scale than on other elite milieus, and can be linked to a possible plot system in some parts of the settlement. A marketplace is harder to identify in archaeological terms, but seems likely for reasons. The prevalence and scale of the crafts share traits with other marketplaces. Literary sources describe a gathering place, which is a good generator for trade. Medieval Uppsala held a yearly market known as *Distinget*. *Disir-* denotes a deity. Presumably, the name and the market, or an older feast, are traces of pre-Christian activities held in Gamla Uppsala before the establishment of modern Uppsala in the 12th century⁶⁸.

Apart from the archaeological sources, Old Norse sources and Adam of Bremen suggest central functions. In *Ynglingatal* Gamla Uppsala is often mentioned as a royal seat⁶⁹. In *Heimskringla* Snorre Sturlasson describes a great thing assembly meeting held around 1000 AD. Two Scanian rune stones as well as medieval chronicles mention a mayor battle near Uppsala around 980 AD. We thus have a combination of various archaeological sources referring to a central place, which can be related to written sources, indicating the central status of the site.

The royal manor structure is very evident in Gamla Uppsala for especially the late 6th-8th centuries. The size, find material and construction of the hall building on the southern plateau place the house among the largest in Scandinavia. Due to that it has been burnt down and thereafter sealed with a layer of clay, probably makes it the best preserved hall ever excavated. We can now state that the Vendel period manor consists of a hall building on the southern plateau surrounded by a number of other buildings and economy areas. Recent excavations on the northern plateau revealed at least two large, burnt down houses, highly connected to specialized crafts. Most striking was the find of more than 550 garnets. Only a very small proportion of the houses have been excavated, which means that the area is still keeping substantial crafts and building remains.

It is becoming more and more evident that the manor area can be related to a number of Scandinavian counterparts such as Tissø (Reg. Sjælland/DK), Lejre (Reg. Sjælland/DK) and Järrestad (Skåne län)⁷⁰. There is no blue print of a manor from the time in question and regional and environmental factors do play a significant role in the layout of these places. However, all of them reflect a common idea of what an estate should look like. Two Scandinavian cases, Järrestad and Lejre, are especially interesting from a architectural perspective. The earliest hall phase in Järrestad, as well as the contemporary house on Tissø, have a distinctive ship shaped form with wall ditches quite similar to the Uppsala hall, which strongly indicates that there was an active interaction between the higher elite in Scandinavia during the 7th-8th centuries, when the last house on the southern plateau was built. One major question remaining for Uppsala is whether a major Viking age manor was in the area. On Tissø, Lejre and Järrestad, generations of the manor can be followed into the very Late Viking Age. After the excavations in Gamla Uppsala in 2011, it now seems all more evident that the southern and northern plateau are burnt down and sealed in probably the 8th century. We have no evidence for buildings on the southern plateau ever after. On the northern plateau, the next known building is dated to the 13th/14th century.

In the Viking Age, Gamla Uppsala was already a long-established large village. Both the thing described in *Heimskringla*, and the battle at *Fyrisvallarna* occurred in a place apart from the rural landscape, a place uniting functions of centrality, administration, judicial questions, and economy. In Scandinavian archaeology of the past 20-30 years there have been two major trends in terms of central, urban and trade related sites in the landscape. During the 1980s and early 1990s, economic functions were intimately linked to urbanization, when Viking Age towns such as Dublin, Ribe, Hedeby (Kr. Schleswig-Flensburg/D) and Hamwic (co. Hampshire/GB) were subject to extensive archaeological investigations⁷¹. Towns meant the major trade sites located by coastal routes. During the 1990s, research on central places became more landscape related, drawing upon sources such as investigations of elite compounds, place name studies, and hoard finds; e.g. the Gudme site (Reg. Syddanmark/DK) acted as an important model. During the 1990s, models for central places were more geared towards structures in the rural landscape. Iron Age power was seen as something fractured and functional, lacking a single central location. More precisely, various components, such as the ritual site, marketplace, the court, workshops, and warriors' dwellings were considered spread out across a limited area, each site performing its function within the system⁷².

When seen in the light of north-western European urbanisation research of the 1980s, or Scandinavian central place research, Gamla Uppsala presents a problem in that it simply does not fit. It differs, structurally, geographically, etc., from the coastal towns of the Viking Age, which have emerged due to a need for economic hubs in the landscape. Also, it does not fit into existing central place models. Evidence coming from both written and archaeological sources indicates a multifunctional site, including perhaps a central royal manor (which can not with certainty be archaeologically dated to the Viking Age) but also a thing site, an artisan centre, and presumably a centre for trade. Functions that according to models should be divided between multiple sites, are here concentrated to a single place. At the same time does the landscape surrounding Gamla Uppsala, present itself as something very vital. We find numerous evidence of elite settlements and graves as well as places where the names indicate functions related to cult or judiciary matters⁷³. One could go out on a limb and claim that Gamla Uppsala, like Uppåkra in Skåne län, is an example of another form of urbanization than what we see in the coastal trade places. In contrast with the coastal emporia or production sites, which seem to have emerged following a decision from an authority, and which have been founded with a particular aim in mind, Gamla Uppsala displays a gradual organic process, from which we can distinguish some steps more clearly than others. The site's general development with very approximate (and assumed) dating is as follows:

1. A large number of farmsteads in a fertile landscape with the emergence of clear social stratification (400/550 AD).
2. Accumulation of settlement which had been previously spread out (200/300-600 AD).
3. Powerful assertion made by elite, through monumental graves of a royal character, monumental buildings, and an increase of specialized crafts (550-700 AD).
4. Tendencies towards a plot system, probably even more crafts, evidence of a central cult and judiciary function (including the establishment of the archdiocese church).
5. A gradual abandoning of the central functions, starting in the 12th century (trade and crafts), and the emergence of Östra Aros/present day Uppsala (1100-1300 AD).

Eventually, the site by tradition has become a focal point. It does not only belong to the royalty, but is also a central point for exchange, justice, and religious practice for the society. During the Viking Age, there does not seem to be any need to create monuments like the Uppsala Mounds, or bury kings on the site. It existed as famous regional centre until enough needs arouse to move it. A new transitional process probably started in the 12th century when present day Uppsala, Östra Aros at the time, emerged as the new marketplace at the mouth of the Fyris river. When the church at Gamla Uppsala was laid waste by fire the

decision was made to move the episcopal seat to the new town, less than 5 km from the old centre. The needs of the rulers of the new age resulted in the cult and ruling stronghold being moved to an advantageous location, better suited for the demands of this time. In 1270 the final decision was made to move the episcopal seat to the new Uppsala. The old site was demoted, becoming at an early stage a symbol of the ancient times, shrouded in myths of bygone days.

A sincere thanks to Robin Lucas for translating the manuscript into English.

Notes

- 1) Rudbeck 1679-1698. – Lindqvist 1945.
- 2) Duczko 1997.
- 3) See compilations in Strömbäck 1971.
- 4) Rudbeck 1679-1698.
- 5) See summaries in Lindqvist 1936, 75-85. – Duczko 1993, 27-34.
- 6) Overview in Duczko 1993, 27-34.
- 7) Fagerlund / Frölund 1993. – Göthberg 2002. – Frölund 2009.
- 8) Duczko 1993. – Duczko 1996. – Nordahl 1993. – Nordahl 1996. – Ljungkvist 2000a-b.
- 9) Königsson / Eriksson / Hellqvist 1993. – Almgren 2005.
- 10) Elgh 1994. – Anund / Göthberg 1998, 78-111. – Ljungkvist 2000a-b. – Göthberg 2008.
- 11) Rahmqvist 1986.
- 12) Frölund 2009.
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Zusammenfassung / Abstract / Résumé / Sammanfattning

Gamla Uppsala – strukturelle Entwicklungen eines Zentrums in Mittelschweden

Dieser Artikel ist das Ergebnis von siedlungsarchäologischen Forschungen in Gamla («Alt-») Uppsala, die in den letzten 20 Jahren durchgeführt wurden. In den Randbereichen des historischen Dorfes wurden seit einigen Jahren mehrere Siedlungsstellen hauptsächlich aus der frühen Eisenzeit untersucht. Zahlreiche, allerdings räumlich sehr begrenzte Ausgrabungen fanden statt. Fasst man diese große Zahl kleinerer und größerer Grabungen der letzten Zeit zusammen, erhält man ein klares Bild von der Siedlungsentwicklung in Gamla Uppsala von der Bronzezeit bis in das frühe Mittelalter. Die Errichtung von monumentalen Strukturen, wie den Grabhügeln von Uppsala, den großen Hallengebäuden auf künstlich angelegten Terrassierungen und der Kathedrale des 12. Jahrhunderts, kann mit Veränderungen in der Siedlungsstruktur verknüpft werden. Weiter lassen sich immer mehr Hinweise auf Metallverarbeitung beobachten – und dies auf immer größeren Flächen. Gamla Uppsala wird immer stärker als Kultort erkennbar, aber auch als ein zentraler Bauernhof mit königlichen Verbindungen und als großes Dorf. Die Siedlung entwickelt sich nun rasch zu etwas, was man in der Wikingerzeit als Urbanität bezeichnen kann. Jedoch ist es bemerkenswert, dass sich die Fundstelle in völlig anderen geographischen Verhältnissen befindet als frühe Küstenstädte wie Birka und Sigtuna. Mit Sicherheit kann man sagen, dass sich die Gesellschaft der späten Eisenzeit in Gamla Uppsala von der des Dorfes unterscheidet, dem wir in spätmittelalterlichen und neuzeitlichen Karten begegnen.

Gamla Uppsala – structural development of a centre in Middle Sweden

This article is a result of settlement investigations in Gamla («Old») Uppsala, which have been carried out regularly over the past 20 years. The material can be divided into two chronological and spatial groups. In the peripheral parts of the historical village several large settlements, mainly dated to the Early Iron Age, have been investigated. In the central area quite many excavations have been made of Late Iron Age and medieval remains. But these are usually small and scattered. By compiling a large number of large and small excavations, accumulated over the years, we may gain a coherent view of Gamla Uppsala's settlement development from the Bronze Age to the Middle Ages. The establishment of monumental edifices – such as the Uppsala Mounds, great halls on artificial terraces and the cathedral from the 12th century – can progressively be related to changes in the settlement structure. Moreover, traces of metal craft increase continuously, and seem to be present over vast areas. More and more, Gamla Uppsala emerges as a place of cult, as a central farmstead with royal connections and as a large village. Gamla Uppsala can now be characterized as something resembling a proto-urban site in the Viking Age. However, interestingly enough, the site is located in a completely different geographical environment to early coastal towns such as Birka and Sigtuna. What can be said for certain is that the Late Iron Age society in Gamla Uppsala is something entirely different from the large peasant village we meet in late medieval and post-reformation phases.

Gamla Uppsala – développement structurel d'un centre urbain en Suède moyenne

Cet article présente une synthèse des travaux d'archéologie de l'habitat menés au cours de ces 20 dernières années sur le site de Gamla («l'ancienne») Uppsala. Plusieurs sites d'habitat, datés principalement du Premier âge du Fer, ont fait l'objet de recherches récentes en périphérie du village historique. De nombreuses fenêtres archéologiques, souvent limitées en étendue ont ainsi pu être ouvertes. En compilant les résultats de ces nombreux chantiers plus ou moins étendus de ces dernières années on obtient une image claire de l'évolution de la structuration de l'habitat à Gamla Uppsala depuis l'âge du Bronze jusqu'au Haut Moyen Âge. L'érection de structures monumentales comme les tumulus d'Uppsala, les grands bâtiments sur terrasses artificielles ou la cathédrale du 12^e siècle peuvent être mises en relation avec l'évolution de la structuration de l'habitat. Par ailleurs de plus en plus d'indices de travail du métal sont observés – sur des surfaces de plus en plus importantes. Gamla Uppsala apparaît comme un lieu de culte mais aussi comme une importante ferme en relation avec la royauté ainsi que comme un gros village. L'évolution du village vers ce qui se rapproche d'une forme d'urbanisation pour la période Viking apparaît assez tôt. L'implantation géographique du site est cependant originale par rapport aux premières villes côtières que sont Birka ou Sigtuna. Il apparaît clairement que la société de la fin de l'âge du Fer se distingue clairement de celle des villages cartographiés pour les périodes médiévales et modernes.

L. B.

Gamla Uppsala – den strukturella omvandlingen av ett centrum i Mellansverige

Denna artikel är ett resultat av boplotsundersökningar i Gamla Uppsala under de senaste 20 åren. Materialet som behandlas kan delas in i två grupper. I utkanterna av den historiska byns ägor har ett antal boplatser med huvudsakliga dateringar till äldre järnålder undersökts. I det centrala området har ett flertal mindre undersökningar av lämningar från hela järnåldern och medeltiden genomförts. Genom sammanställningar av den stora mängden undersökningar som gjorts genom åren är det möjligt att skapa en utförligare bild av bebyggelseutvecklingen från bronsålder till medeltid. Uppförandet av monument såsom Uppsala högar, stora hallar på konstruerade platåer samt katedralen från 1100-talet kan i hög grad relateras till förändringar i bebyggelsestrukturen. Med tiden ökar det specialiserade hantverkets omfattning och spåren av dessa aktiviteter påträffas över stora ytor. Gamla Uppsala framträder efter hand allt mer som en kultplats, med en central gård med kunglig anknytning. Platsen rymmer dessutom en osedvanligt stor bebyggelse med många gårdar. Med den nya kunskapen kan Gamla Uppsala karakteriseras som en tidig urban miljö under vikingatid. Intressant nog är platsen belägen i en helt annan geografisk miljö än exempelvis Birka och Sigtuna. Gamla Uppsala är fascinerande på så vis att här har alltid funnits en stor bebyggelse men den roll platsen har spelat har varit under ständig förändring genom historien. Gamla Uppsalas olika ansikten avspeglas i de lämningar som avsatts i landskapet under historien, och som sammantaget utgör dagens Gamla Uppsala.

Schlüsselwörter / Keywords / Mots clés / Nyckelord

Schweden / Wikingerzeit / Vendelzeit / Königsgrab / Grabhügel
Sweden / Viking Age / Vendel period / royal burial / tumulus
Suède / âge des Vikings / âge de Vendel / tombe royale / tumulus
Sverige / vikingatid / vendeltid / kungliga begravningar / högar

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BESTELLUNG DES ARCHÄOLOGISCHEN KORRESPONDENZBLATTS

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