

The seminar series

Viking Phenomena: current research on late Iron Age Scandinavia

Introducing

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Date: 16th of May 2018

Time: 15 – 17

Place: 2-2033, Engelska parken

Uppsalarummet, A30, Campus Gotland

Contacts between Svear and Finns during the Vendel and Viking period

There is archaeological evidence of contacts between eastern central Sweden and south-western Finland through the ages: in the Neolithic, the Bronze Age, the Early Iron Age, and the Late Iron Age. Archaeologists in Finland have often pointed out the close links between the areas during the Viking Age, whereas Swedish archaeologists have surprisingly seldom discussed these connections. It has therefore been of interest to examine to what extent and during what period artefacts from Finland are found in graves in the Mälaren region and in Birka and thus to find out what can be concluded about the contacts between these regions.

As has been shown by finds of Permian belts and other objects of eastern origin in Vakka-Suomi, groups in Western Finland were linked to routes and networks spanning much further east already in the late 7th century. Probably it was through the population of western Finland that the Svear got information about Fenno-ugric groups in NW Russia and the routes along lakes, streams and rivers that led beyond the Finnish peninsula. Thanks to that knowledge, the Svear were able to travel beyond the Gulf of Finland, to Ladoga Lake and then further east along the Russian rivers down to areas where furs from the north could be exchanged for Islamic silver coins and eastern luxury products.

Welcome!

Neil, John & Charlotte