

The seminar series

# Viking Phenomena: current research on late Iron Age Scandinavia

Introducing

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## **The Viking Age, Eastern Europe, and the World of Islam: towards the joint chronology of coin circulation and trading networks, c. 750-1000 AD**

The early and late periods of the Viking Age (c. 750-1000 AD) are known for their extremely large coin import from the regions of Islam and through the regions of Eastern Europe (the territories of present-day European Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine). In Sweden alone, the number of Islamic silver coins (Kufic dirhams) recorded so far exceeds 88,000. The coins are the best evidence for dense economic relations of the Vikings with the Islamic world, and also of great importance for establishing precise chronologies of internal developments, both cultural and political, for Viking homelands in the North, as well as for Viking (Rus') colonies in Eastern Europe.

Based on the typology of dirhams minted in the Islamic world, from Spain and Morocco (al-Andalus and al-Maghrib) to East Iran and Central Asia (Khurasan and Mawarannahr) in the course of three centuries, c. 700-1000 AD, and drawing on the dynamics of their assemblages in large hoards of the 9th and 10th centuries, I am building up a detailed chronological system consisting of several subsequent stages of dirham circulation in the larger Viking world.

The said results compared to the evidence of contemporary Arabic sources on the Vikings may effectively be made use for a better understanding of the trading networks which formed a basis of state formation in Nordic countries and in Rus'.

Welcome!

Neil, John & Charlotte