

superintendents task to raise the discipline. That the priests were educated at the University of Copenhagen, of course contributed to closer ties between Gotland and Denmark.

It is undeniable that the situation on Gotland significantly improved at the end of the 1500s. The regency of Christian IV sent a special commission to Gotland in 1594, which advised on peasant complaints and tried to correct the discord. It was a thorough inquisition, which included the sheriff Nils Bild's bailiff along with some other officials, who were put in the accused's dock. The punishment that was imposed, testify that the Commission took its task seriously. It also declared that the Gotlanders in litigation, where the outdated Guta Lagh could not be applied, had the right to be judged by Danish law, immediately following the Skåne Law Act. The unpopular Nils Bild was replaced in 1595 as sheriff by Jens Juel, who remained on Visborg until his death in 1607. By all accounts he was a true father of the nation for his island. He understood the peasantry's awkward situation and was vigilant against any attacks from the side of bailiffs.

Also in 1618 Christian IV sent a special commission to Gotland to get a better insight into the situation, particularly in the judiciary. In the case of peasant taxes, day-duty and other charges it achieved a more equitable settlement. However, the still in force Gotlandic Farmers' Republic was repealed on the paper by one from Gotlandic point totally illegal Danish decree in connection with the 'rettertings' Commission in 1618. Legally Gotland would be able to claim the right to independence along with what the Baltic states have done.

The establishment of a special 'Gotlandic trading company' in Denmark in 1621 was a well-meaning but ineffectual attempt to stimulate the languishing trade between cities at Öresund and the distant island in the Baltic Sea region. King Christian made

two visits to Gotland himself. The last was in 1624. After that it would take 230 years before a reigning king set foot on Gotland's soil!

## First Swedish period (1645-1676)

Under Gustav II Adolfs management, Sweden emerged as a great power in the Nordic countries. It had shut out Russia from the Baltic Sea coasts, had forced Poland to give up Livonia, occupied the Prussian harbours and expelled the German emperor from the Baltic Sea coasts. Denmark had in a matter of decades been reduced to a second level power. But without a fight it could not be referred to this position. In 1643 they came again at war with each other. The victorious Swedish great power triumphed again. Its strong fleet controlled the Baltic Sea region. Denmark was both by sea and by land forced on the defensive.

On New Year 1645 began with French and Dutch brokerage peace negotiations, that took place at Brömsebro on the border between Blekinge and Småland. The Swedish delegates, led by the old chancellor Axel Oxenstierna, do not seem to have made any claims on Gotland. The negotiations were long and they came at last to a compromise, that resulted in peace terms signed on 13<sup>th</sup> of August. Sweden had called for Skåne, Halland and Blekinge but had instead as a compromise to settle for Gotland, Jämtland, Härjedalen, Saaremaa and Halland for 30 years (note 44).

It was rather by accident that Gotland became Swedish. Gotland was evidently only intended as a trading object for later peace negotiations.

After the Brömsebro peace had been signed, Christian IV ordered the Danish county sheriff Holger

Rosencrantz to surrender Gotland and Visborg to the queen's council.

With the surrender to Sweden, Gotland came into a sphere of influence, that was completely foreign to the Gotlanders. One could imagine that Gotland in October 1645 with the anxiety and worry for the future looked for the fleet, which with the feared Swedes headed towards its coasts. This was, however, not the case, because most people had little or no track of what was going on. The momentary Swedish war with Denmark had left Gotland relatively untouched and no damage had been suffered. As Swedes, the Gotlanders did certainly not feel, but not as Danes either, though they thought so in Sweden. They were simply Gotlanders. The new supremacy was not met by any enthusiasm.

Without joy but also without much grief the city and island gave themselves up into the new rulers' hands.

Any encouraging improvement in conditions was not noted during the first Swedish time. Documents from the time tell of suffering and hunger. Soon arose discord between the firm and practical but not always psychologically sensitive Swedish authorities and the population. Particularly raised, in Visby, the Gate duty or the so-called small duty a resistance movement with disobedience and sometimes more drastic means trying to bring this odious institution from a practical function. The disappointment of unfulfilled hopes and never discharged grandiose promises from the queen's government contributed also to make both Visby citizens and peasants averse to the great mercantile companies the Swedes started.

Gotland was by the Swedes regarded more like a colony than as a national country. All leadership positions were occupied by Swedes. In a way, Gotland took the same position in the Oxenstierna colonial policies, such as New Sweden. For them it was only

a object for taxation. It took more than 200 years before a Swedish king visited Gotland. The measures were intended, in general, only to raise the taxes to a maximum. On all goods, which were transferred to and from Gotland, was a duty imposed, as well as all imports through the gates of Visby. This angered the Gotlanders much. They had come a long way from the old Merchant Farmers' Republic, with a duty-free trade zone. Visby became even plainer than during the Danish time, and its trade ceased almost completely. As a result of the laxity of the Swedish rule, theft and violence increased to a great extent. Complaints were made more often with the government.

A line of companies appeared now, equipped with extensive privileges which tried to launch industries. As early as 1649 was the Stockholm merchant Christopher Neuman here and started a 'vantmakeri', i.e., a clothing factory, at Kopparsvik south of Visby, where there was a small waterfall, that could be used for the operation. Two years later he received tax exemption for an ironworks at Överstekvarn in Lummelunda, north of the city, later called Lummelunds bruk. This is the only large company that passably survived the impending crises. He also had other businesses in the time and gloried himself in having transferred 130 Swedish artisans to the mill's operation. But the passive resistance of the burghers and peasants contributed, among much else, to the companies would not pay off. The 'vantmakeri' at Kopparsvik was converted into a tannery under an other management. This was in 1655 taken over by Wulf Christopher Polhammar who, however, soon moved the business to Nystu in Tingstäde. It was there that his son Christopher was born, and it was thus in play with ponds and hammer wheels in the quiet rippling Tingstädeån as the little boy developed the mechanical genius that would bear his name over the world.



*Fig 147. When Gotland in 1645 came under Swedish rule, the island was impoverished and had hardly any own shipping. Queen Christina, who after her abdication in 1654 obtained Gotland as her 'skattelän', moved to Rome and rented out Gotland to Jacob Momma Reenstierna. He was a Dutchman who started a shipyard in Slite. The shipyard was below Länna lime kiln. Painting by Erik Olsson.*

In 1652 Queen Christina gave the newly acquired island as a fiefdom to Karl Gustav, who was then Hereditary Prince. He visited Gotland, founded the fortress Karlsvärd and tried to help up the poor state. He was however soon to be king, and then his efforts poured into the sand.

When Kristina in 1654 submitted the Government to Karl Gustav, she got among others Gotland in maintenance. She lived mostly in Rome and leased out the island for an annual sum of 84,000 riksdaler. That the conditions thus did not improve was natural. At the time of the Danish liberation of Gotland in 1676 the structure of the island had changed. It was even poorer and more neglected by tax resi-

dues, deserted farms and poverty in the city and the countryside.

The revenue from Gotland had first gone to the maintenance for the heir Karl Gustaf. At his accession to the throne those were transferred to Queen Christina, whose business in her home country was run by a governor general. During this time emerges a new big company name on Gotland, Jacob Momma, knighted Reenstierna. He was tax-farmer on Gotland and Saaremaa on the Queen's behalf and had as such great power and vast influence, and he was undoubtedly one of the era's most broad based business talents. He might even win the confidence of the peasantry but met, however,



the greatest reluctance among merchants in Visby, perhaps especially because he sought to exploit the old rivalry between town and country. Visby experienced during this time its deepest misery, yes it was even directly threatened to its existence. It had gone so far that the proposal was presented to simply transfer its city charter to Slite, which had an excellent, well-protected deepwater harbor. The new city would become a center for the flourishing lime industry, as it would have good shipping facilities. Reenstierna, who had built a shipyard in Slite, should by no means have been unsympathetic to such a thought. The plan never came to execution, though a fort was built on Enholmen, as a first step in the future city consolidation, but was never completely finished .

## The Danes liberate Gotland

Reenstierna went bankrupt in 1674, and not long thereafter war with Denmark broke out. King Christian V's well equipped armies penetrated south-western Sweden, and the fleet was sent under the brave naval hero Niels Juel to Gotland. The fleet anchored outside Klintehamn. A military force landed. The Danes were received with joy by the people, who greeted them as liberators. Of the two evils were the Danes, after all, the lesser evil. Actually they did not want either Swedes or Danes as intruders on Gotland. The Swedish governor, Gabriel Oxenstierna, sought to prevent the enemy advancing, but his troops were soon dispelled. The Gotlanders let easily anew make themselves to a Danish

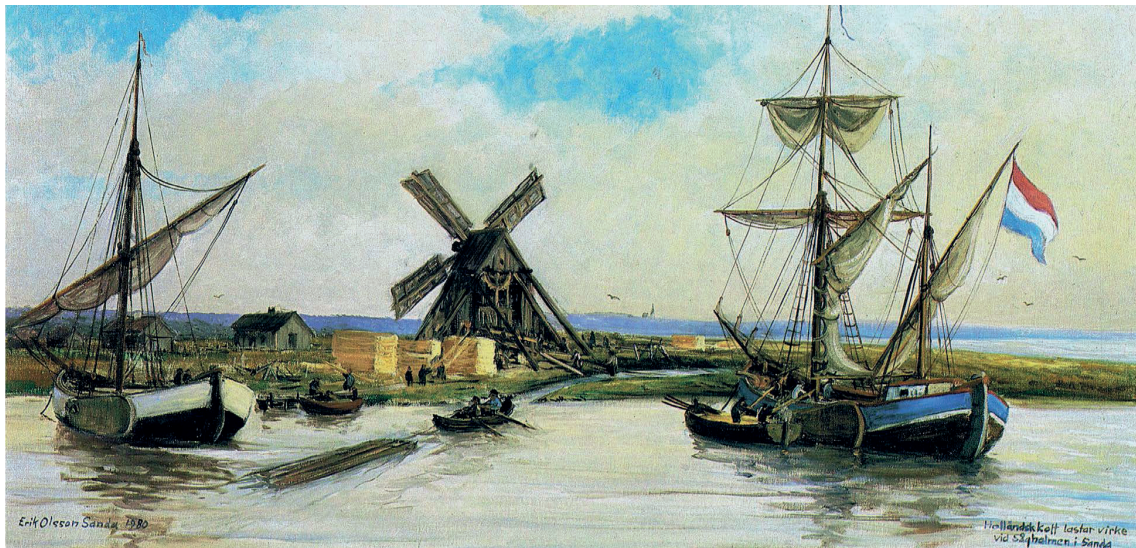


Fig 148. Sågholmen in Sanda.

On April 28<sup>th</sup> 1676 the Danish fleet under command of Admiral Nils Juel came with 40 ships to Klintehamn and captured Gotland. Under canon cover from four smaller vessels, 500 men went ashore on Sågholmen in Sanda in the early morning on 29<sup>th</sup> of April. The Swedish governor named Oxenstierna tried with two small guns to defend Gotland, but must run away to Visby. The fleet went later to Visby and took Visborg Castle on May 1<sup>st</sup>

Painting by Erik Olsson





Fig 149. The fleet consisted of 11 lineships and frigates, 2 burners, 2 kreyter, 1 sno and 2 Galeotes. The CROWN PRINCE with 76 guns was the Admiral vessel. KRISTINUS QUARTUS with 56 guns was commanded by Vice Admiral Christian Bielke and GYLLENLÖVE with 56 guns by Rear Admiral Peter Morsing. Also participated NELLEBLADET and KRISTLANLA with 54 cannons. LINDORMEN and DELMENHOLST with 48 guns and four small frigates, SVENSKA FALK, HAVMANNEN, HUMMERN and SPRENGENDE FALK. In addition, there were approximately 1,500 land troops under the command of Colonel Mårten Barthelsen. Painting by Erik Olsson

tributary subject.

Niels Juel sailed to Visby and let the ships shell the castle. When the Danish fleet approached Visby the governor urged the Visby residents to take up arms to defend the city, but he did speak on deaf ears. Visby locals, true to their old policy of compromise, remained neutral and made no resistance to the Danish army marching into the city. The Swedes were now trapped in Visborg, while Oxenstierna fled in a small boat to Sweden. Although the Swedes returned fire, soon a large part of the walls were shot down. The castle, however, refused to surrender, but finally had to do so for the devastating bombardment by the Danish warships. As the Danish land army also was preparing assault, the castle commandant surrendered. This was the only time Visborg was taken by force of arms. The

Danes remained for three years.

Visby organized itself for a Danish regime during indefinite future, and a Danish-born citizen was elected Mayor. The slogan was: 'Back to before 1645!' The management of Gotland was entrusted to a Gotlander, Thomas Walgesteen. The Gotlanders were treated very well, while the Swedish-minded officials were exchanged against Danish-minded. But in 1679 Gotland was back in Swedish hands, and those who joined the Danes had to sit quite hard in between.

Gotland's final surrender to Sweden was not the result of some Swedish successes against the Danes in the war, but rather the result of Louis XIV's policies. The Danes had been superior to the Swedes, at least at sea. When the Danes left Gotland, they blew up Visborg castle. With sorrow the Gotland-

### Gotland the Pearl of the Baltic Sea

ers watched the Danes depart, and it was long before they could consider Sweden as their fatherland. With that a chapter had been closed in the history and Gotland's ancient right to self-government was forever shattered. Gotland was now not even a self-governing dependency anymore, but was for the first time in its history incorporated in another country, namely Sweden.

With great difficulty the new regime tried to make Swedes out of us Gotlanders. All senior positions were reserved for Swedes and still today no Gotlander has been allowed to be governor of Gotland. In the 1800s Swedish officials complained about

being placed on Gotland. They compared this to be banished to Siberia.

From the Swedish side the thought was that the island has been to so much trouble that they twice tried to get rid of Gotland. The first time was in 1806 when the then Swedish government offered Gotland to the Knights of Malta but they declined. The second time was in 1932 when from Swedish side the thought was that Gotland was so difficult and expensive to have that they had advanced plans to deport all Gotlanders to Sweden and to give Gotland away to the power that wanted it. In that time the Soviet Union.



Fig 150. Visborg castle falls Painting by Erik Olsson

*When the war between Denmark and Sweden broke out in 1675 Gotland's position was very vulnerable. The Danish fleet under Admiral Niels Juel with 40 vessels landed 500 men on April 28<sup>th</sup>, 1676 at S  gholmen in Sanda. Then the fleet sailed to Visby. On the morning of May 1<sup>st</sup> in calm weather were the major warships rowed and warped in under the walls of Visborg castle, so close that the guns of the castle could not be used. From there they bombed and shot down the castle, whose defenders surrendered on the afternoon of that day. When the Danes left Gotland in 1679 they blew up all the towers and the Swedish government built a lime kiln and lime was burned with the whole castle. Therefore, it is so little preserved of it today.*

## Note 1 (page 8)

Gunnar Fritzell writes in the foreword to a facsimil edition of *Gotländska samlingar*, p 5 ff: “Jöran Wallin is a big name in the Swedish formation history, and a polyhistor of great proportions. His interests and skills outside the theological area was vast and extensive, not only humanistic disciplines such as archeology, history, cultural history and language but also science, especially geology and natural physics. He belonged in a time when people started to discover Sweden and the Swedish landscape, when Olof Rudbeck’s (1630-1702) fantasies in *Atlantica* and *Manheim* had opened the eyes for Sweden’s ‘big history’, and Urban Hjärne in his scientific research had created interest for Sweden’s geology and its rocks. Wallin lived in a dazed time when all things were equally new and exciting, and the research of course, had not yet found its shape and applied a scientific critique in the modern sense.

When Jöran Wallin, who just turned fifty years old, came to Gotland in 1736, he had already a large production, mainly of a theological nature, behind him. His historical interests had always been in the background, but was first evident in his book about *Sigtuna* (*Sigtuna stans et cadens*), which is his first historical-topographical treatise.

His decade-long stay on Gotland was to provide even more food for his interest and left deep marks in his production. Here on Gotland he discovered a historical reality, manifested in the Visby city walls and medieval ruins and Gotland’s peculiar history, which made him with ravenous interest pounce on everything that was written and told about the island.”

Jöran Wallin: “That much I can say that had Rudbeck had Gotland so well known as Upland and Sweden, this island that had hitherto had its history mostly as a hidden Delus, had stood in great light

to the world. But it was the misfortune of Gotland that she did not come under this worthy man’s discerning eye and hard pencil”.

## Note 2 (page 10)

The word Varangian was used by Greeks, Arabs and Kievan Rus’ for the merchants from the island in the Baltic Sea region (the Gotlanders).

It was a common word for Gotlandic merchants when trading adventures were undertaken from the Baltic Sea on the Russian rivers. They closed a business contract with each other and pledged to defend each other. Another meaning of the word was for the Gotlanders who later acted as mercenary soldiers to the rulers of *Garðaríki* (Kiev) and *Miklagarðr* (Constantinople).

It probably came from the old Norse word ‘vár’, which means ‘union through promise’, and was used by a group of men to keep them together in an association, and under oath observe certain obligations to support each other in good faith and to share the resulting profits.

In 988 Emperor Basil II formed a Varangian guard with Gotlandic mercenaries.

The etymology of the name al-Rus’/Rhos needs clarification. Many scholars have wrongly maintained that the word Rus’ must be identical with the Finnish word *Ruotsi* and Estonian *Rootsi*.

Sven Ekbo (1981) convincingly connects the word to Old Norse *roðr* meaning ‘expedition of rowing ships’.

On the Russina rivers there were rowing Gotlandic merchants which they accordingly called al-Rus’.

In Finland and Estonia there were rowing *Svear* who conquered their land, and therefore were called *Ruotsi* and *Rootsi*.



### Note 3 (page 14)

Guta Saga, The history of the Gotlanders:

“Gutland was first discovered by a man named þieluar.

At that time Gutland was so bewitched that it sank by day and rose up at night. That man, however, was the first that brought fire to the island, and afterwards it never sank again.

This same þieluar had a son named Hafpi, and Hafpi's wife was called Huitastierna. These two were the first to settle on Gutland. The first night that they slept together, she dreamed a dream. It was just as if three snakes were coiled together within her womb, and it seemed to her as though they crawled out of her lap. She related this dream to Hafpi, her husband, and he interpreted it as follows:

‘Everything in rings is bound. Inhabited this land shall be; we shall beget sons three.’ He gave them each a name, while they were still unborn:

‘Guti shall Gutland claim, Graipr the second by name and Gunnfjaun the third.’

They later divided Gutland into thirds, in such a way that Graipr the eldest inherited the northern third, Gutí the middle third and Gunnfjaun the youngest inherited the southernmost.

Subsequently, from these three men, the population of Gutland increased so much over a long period of time that the land was not able to support them all. Then they cast lots to send every third person away from the island, on the understanding that they should have a right to keep, and take away with them, everything that they owned in the way of moveables.

But then they were unwilling to move away, and went instead into Torsburgen, and lived there. Later the Gutna Althingi was not prepared to tolerate them, but drove them away from there.

They then went away to Faroyrna and settled there. They could not support themselves there, but travelled to an island off Estonia called Dagö, where they settled, and built a fortification, which is still to be seen.

They could not support themselves there either, but travelled up by the watercourse called Dvina. And up through Russia they went, so far away that they came to Greece. There, they requested from the Greek king to settle in new and below. The king promised them that and he thought it was not for more than a month. When the month was over, he wanted to show them off, but they replied that new and below was always and forever, and they insisted that it was them promised. This dispute of theirs came at last to the notice of the queen. She then said, ‘My lord the king, you promised them that they could settle in new and below, then it is for ever and ever, so you cannot take that promise away from them.’ So there they settled and live there and even today they have in their speech track of our language.

Prior to that time, and for a long time afterwards, people believed in groves and grave mounds, holy places and ancient sites, and in heathen idols. They sacrificed their sons and daughters, and cattle, together with food and ale. They did that in accordance with their ignorance of the true faith. The whole island held the highest sacrifice on its own account, with human victims, otherwise each third held its own. But smaller assemblies held a lesser sacrifice with cattle, food, and drink. Those involved were called ‘food companions’, because they all cooked their sacrificial meals together.

Many kings fought against Gutland while it was heathen; the Gotlanders, however, always held the victory and constantly protected their rights. Later the Gotlanders sent a large number of messengers to the Svear, but none of them could make peace

before Avair Strabain of Alva parish. He made the first peace with the king of the Svear.

When the Gotlanders begged him to go, he answered, 'You know that I am now most doomed and ill-fated. Grant me then, if you wish me to expose myself to such peril, three wergilds, one for myself, a second for my begotten son and a third for my wife.' Because he was wise and skilled in many things, just as the tales go about him, he entered into a binding treaty with the king of the Svear. Sixty marks of silver in respect of each year is the Gotlanders' tribute, divided so that the king of the Svear should have forty marks of silver out of the sixty, and the jarl twenty marks of silver. Avair made this statute in accordance with the advice of the people of Gutland before he left home. In this way, the Gotlanders went into a treaty with the king of the Svear, of their own free will, in order that they might travel everywhere in the lands of the Svear free and unhindered, exempt from toll and all other charges. Similarly the Svear also have the right to visit Gutland, without ban against trade in corn, or other prohibitions. The king was obliged to give the Gotlanders protection and assistance, if they should need it and request it. In addition the king, and likewise the jarl, should send messengers to the Gotlanders' Gutna Althingi and arrange for their tribute to be collected there. The messengers in question have a duty to proclaim the freedom of the Gotlanders to visit all places overseas that belong to the king in Uppsala and, similarly, to have the right to travel here from that side.

Although the Gotlanders were heathen, they nevertheless sailed on trading voyages to all countries, both Christian and heathen. So the merchants saw Christian customs in Christian lands. Some of them then allowed themselves to be baptised, and brought priests to Gutland.

Botair of Akebäck was the name of the one who

first built a church, in the place which is now called Kulstäde. The Gutna Althingi was not prepared to tolerate that, but burned it. For that reason the place is still called Kulstäde. Some time later it was sacrifice in Vi. There, he built a second church. The Gutna Althingi also wanted to burn this particular church. Then Botair went up on top of the church himself and said, 'If you want to burn it, you will have to burn me along with this church.' He was himself influential, and he had as his wife a daughter of the most powerful man, called Likkair Snielli, living at the place called Stenkyrka. He ruled most at that time. He supported Botair, his son-in-law, and said as follows, 'Do not persist in burning the man or his church, since it stands in Vi, below the cliff.' As a result, that church was allowed to stand unburnt. It was established there with the name of All Saints, in that place which is now called St Peter's. It was the first church in Gutland to be allowed to stand.

Then, at some time after that, his father-in-law Likkair Snielli had himself baptised, together with his wife, his children, and all his household, and he built a church on his farm, in the place now called Stenkyrka. It was the first church on the island up in the northernmost third. After the Gotlanders saw the customs of Christian people, they then obeyed God's command and the teaching of priests. Then they received Christianity generally, of their own free will, without duress; that is no one forced them into Christianity.

After the general acceptance of Christianity, a second church was built in the country, at Atlingbo; it was the first in the middle third. Then a third was built in the country, at Fardhem in the southernmost third. From those, churches spread everywhere in Gutland, since men built themselves churches for greater convenience.

Later, after this, King Olaf the Saint came fleeing

from Norway with his ships, and laid into a harbour, the one called Akergarn. St Olaf lay there a long time. Then Ormica of Hejnum, and several other powerful men, went to him with their gifts. Ormica gave him twelve yearling rams along with other valuables. St Olaf then reciprocated and gave him in return two round drinking vessels and a battle-axe. Ormica subsequently received Christianity according to St Olaf's teaching and built himself a house of prayer at the same location as Akergarn church now stands. From there St Olaf travelled to visit Jaroslav in Novgorod.

Before Gutland in seriousness appointed a bishop, bishops came to Gutland, who were pilgrims on their way to the holy Jerusalem, or went home from there. At that time the road went east through Russia and Greece to Jerusalem. In the first place they consecrated churches and graveyards, according to the request of those who had caused the churches to be built.

After the Gotlanders became accustomed to Christianity, they then sent messages to the Lord Bishop of Linköping, since he resided closest to them, to the effect that he should come to Gutland, by a confirmed statute, to lend his support, on the following conditions: that the bishop would come from Linköping to Gutland every third year together with twelve of his men, who would accompany him around the whole country on the Farmers' horses, just that many and no more.

Thus the bishop has a duty to travel around Gutland for church consecrations and to collect his payments in kind, three meals and no more for each consecration of a church, together with three marks; for an altar consecration, one meal together with twelve öre, if the altar alone is to be consecrated; but if both are unconsecrated, altar and church together, then both shall be consecrated for three meals and three marks in coin. From every second

priest the bishop has a right to collect payment in kind as a visitation tax, three meals and no more. From every other priest, who did not make payment in kind in that year, the bishop is to take a fee from each one, as is laid down for churches. Those who did not make payment in kind at that time, they shall make payment in kind as soon as the bishop comes back in the third year. And the others have a duty to pay a fee, who the previous time had made payment in kind.

Should disputes arise that the bishop has a duty to judge, they shall be resolved in the same third, since those men know most about the truth who live nearest to it. Should the dispute not be resolved there, it shall then be referred to the consideration of all men, Gutna Althingi, and not from one third to another. Should hostilities or matters of conflict occur, which belong to the bishop to judge, one has an obligation to await the bishop's arrival here and not travel over the sea, unless necessity force it, and it be such a great sin that the rural dean cannot give absolution. Then one shall travel over between Walburga's Day and All Saints' Day, but not after that during the winter, until the following Walburga's Day. A fine to the bishop, in Gutland, is to be no higher than three marks.

Since the Gotlanders accepted bishop and priest, and completely embraced Christianity, they also undertook, on their part, to follow the Svea king on military expeditions with seven warships, against heathen countries, but not against Christian ones. It had to be in such a way, however, that the king should summon the Gotlanders to the levy after winter, and give them a month's respite before the day of mobilisation and, furthermore, the day of mobilisation shall be before midsummer, and no later. Then it is a lawful summons, but not otherwise. Then the Gotlanders have the choice of travelling, if they wish, with their longships and eight



weeks' provisions, but no more. Nevertheless, if the Gotlanders are not able to take part, then they are to pay a fine of 40 mark penningar in coin, in compensation for each longship; but this, however, is at the following harvest and not in the same year that the summons was made. This is called the 'levy-tax'.

In that month the summoning-baton shall pass around for one week and an assembly be announced. When it is agreed that the expedition shall go out, they have a fortnight to arm themselves for the voyage. For a week the men on the muster ought to be prepared and wait for a favourable wind. But if it should happen that no favourable wind comes during that week, they shall still wait seven nights after the day of mobilisation. If, however, no favourable wind comes within that specified time, they then have the right to go home freed from obligation, since they are not able to cross over the sea rowing, only under sail. Should the levy summons come within a shorter period than a month, they do not have to go, but may remain at home with impunity.

Should it be the case that the king is not willing to believe that the summons came unlawfully, or that the wind hindered them at the proper specified times, the king's messengers, who collect the tax at the assembly which is next after St Peter's mass, have a duty to take an oath from twelve commissioners, whom the king's messengers wish to select, that they remained at home for lawful reasons. No commissioned oath shall be given in Gutland apart from the king's oath.

Should the misfortune occur that the crowned king is by some force driven away from his kingdom, the Gotlanders then have the right not to hand over their tribute, but retain it for three years; but they nevertheless have a duty to continue to collect the tribute together each year and allow it to lie, and

then hand it over when three years have passed, to the one who at that time rules the Svear.

A sealed letter with the king's authority shall be sent as proof of the king's right, and not an open one."

#### **Note 4** (page 28)

The Pitted Ware culture (ca 3200 BCE – ca 2300 BCE) was a hunter-gatherer culture in southern Scandinavia, mainly along the coasts of Svealand, Götaland, Åland, north-eastern Denmark and southern Norway. Despite its Mesolithic economy, it is by convention classed as Neolithic, since it falls within the period in which farming reached Scandinavia.

Bra Böckers lexicon: "The Pitted Ware skeleton graves on Gotland are among the most magnificent Neolithic tombs we know in Europe. The dead have a rich grave goods of bone needles, axes, pottery, amber, cereal offering, and jewelry of bird- and seal-teeth. Particularly striking are the many tails of pierced seal-teeth, as well as collars of wild boar tusks, worn by both men and women. Many different types of loin skirts have been born both longer and shorter, where the pierced seal teeth often served as edge applications. In some cases, especially at the Visby settlement, the bikinis of seal teeth were found in women's graves. The best-kept coat tail has been lifted from the grave by a nylon cord attached on both sides of each seal tooth to maintain the exact relationship between the beads and the lines."

We are talking about the same time as they begun grinding the astronomical calendars in the shape of grooves.

## Note 5 (page 31)

Nationalencyclopedia (1990) pages 536-537: "Archaeoastronomy (of archeology and astronomy), sub science in astronomy concerned with the interpretation of archaeological findings by means of astronomical phenomena. Archaeoastronomy is a young science that only recently begun to meet with more interest, and has now obtained the nature of interdisciplinarity.

Most people would have had myths about how the world was created, and how the gods who ruled over the life could be appeased. Some of these gods were located in the heavens, and therefore developed within certain cultural mythic areas where the sun, moon, planets and stars played a central role. These celestial bodies have also calendarically had an important function. The sun's slant height above the horizon has completely regulated the conditions for farming people's survival.

It is in the settled, agrarian cultures we find the large and stately monuments. These are often built with one or more symmetry axes oriented towards the sun, rising or falling at calendarically important times of the year. Example of such monuments may be rows of standing stones. In some cases it has been marked, where one would find oneself in order to see the sun go up or down at some horizontal mark, perhaps a distant mountain or a dip in the horizon."

"On Gotland they have mainly observed the moon instead of the sun. Statistical surveys of the so-called grinding grooves' directions have shown that they have been co-ordinated across the island to such an extent that this would have been impossible without astronomical observations. During the period 3300-2100 BCE the direction of the full moon rising or falling at significant dates has been observed. The grooves have been ground next to

each other in chronological order, usually with 19-year intervals."

According to Henriksson, Fv 1982: "It is very interesting to compare the astronomical interpretations of the grinding grooves at Hajdeby with similar interpretations at Stonehenge. The oldest parts of Stonehenge have been dated with the C<sup>14</sup> method by RJC Atkinson (1956) and calibrated by F. Hoyle (1977) to 2750 BCE  $\pm$  250 years. Newham (1966, 1972) has shown that at Stonehenge there has been conducted systematic observations of azimuth for midwinter full moon rise. The observations were made from the temple's center and directions are marked with a tree that was poled in the ground about 60 m away. Marks from 40 stakes in six rows were found. They normally have a distance to show that the observations were made each year. It is reasonable to imagine that a certain pile at Stonehenge is an exact match in a tie score at Hajdeby. This can not currently be controlled because Newham could not date the individual piles. After rebuilding Stonehenge around 2000 BCE other types of observations have been performed. The moon observations at Stonehenge have probably been for cultivation purposes.

An idea of this type of mandate worship may be the historian Diodorus of Sicily, who in Julius Caesar's time wrote a world history, in which he among others mentions a people who lived in the far north, north of the north wind, called Hyperboreans (2:47. 1-6). They are described as living on an island. Diodorus says that the god returns to the island every 19th year, the period during which the stars will complete its cycle. Diodorus also mentions that "from this [Hyperboreas] island the moon appears to be quite close to Earth," which of course in reality is impossible. In northern latitudes, such as in Scandinavia, the moon goes up, however, sig-

nificantly slower than in Mediterranean countries. When the moon is near the horizon it looks larger and thus closer as opposed to when it is high in the sky and you have nothing to compare with. In summer, the moon is also very low up here in contrast to the south, and this can obviously be seen as the moon is closer to Earth than at other locations. It is considered that the general course in the August moon is unusually large, which must just be a psychological effect. There are several good reasons to believe that Diodorus (or rather his source Hekataios from Abdera, about 300 BCE to whom he refers), intended as extreme northern peoples the Scandinavians when he mysteriously tells about the Hyberboréans.“

See also the article from the symposium in Moscow 2000. Henriksson, G. 2002. “The grooves on the island of Gotland in the Baltic sea: a Neolithic lunar calendar”. In Proceedings of the conference “Astronomy of Ancient Civilizations” of the European Society for Astronomy in Culture (SEAC) and National Astronomical Meeting (JENAM), Moscow, May 23-27, 2000, ed. T. M. Potyomkina and V. N. Obridko, 72-77. Moscow. <http://www.astro.uu.se/archast/SlipskarorJenam2000Publ.pdf>  
See also <http://stavgard.com/stavar/gotslipisk/grindinggrooves.html>

## Note 6 (page 48)

According to Prof. Birger Nerman, Fv 1954 p 274: “The Scandinavian connections during the Late Bronze Age have been areas further east than Eastern Russia, and this will primarily concern Gotland. It is especially to Caucasus where a very rich culture flourished, that contacts during the relevant times apply”. “You can imagine that the Gotlandic merchants during the late Bronze Age went out on the roads

east and southeast of the Baltic Sea. Even people from other parts of the Nordic countries have probably made their way out on these trade routes. The Eastern influences have certainly in a significant way been mediated by the Gotlanders to the other tribes in Scandinavia.”

According to Dr. Vello Louga, *Kontakter mellan Skandinavien och Östeuropa innan vikingatiden*, p 123: “The eastern contact zone between the Scandinavian and Finno-Ugrian tribes is the upper and middle Volga region. Especially the Mari region is interesting in terms of the central area. It seems quite clear that relations between Scandinavia and the Volga region during the late Bronze Age and early Iron Age were direct.” “In the 1970s a well-preserved cemetery from the late Bronze Age and early Iron Age was excavated, the old Achmulova grave field, where there is more than 1000 graves dating back to 800-500 BCE. In this cemetery are many of the skeletons encased in a ship-shaped wooden structure in the ground, but there is no indication above ground. Similar tombs are known from the same time only on Gotland, but there they are in stone vessels and stone coffins, and on the eastern Baltic coast are also some ship graves.”

The Scythians were an ethnolinguistic group of ancient Iranian nomadic tribal cultures living in Scythia, the region encompassing the Pontic-Caspian steppe (in Eastern Europe) and parts of Central Asia throughout the Classical Antiquity. Much of the surviving information about the Scythians comes from the Greek historian Herodotus (c. 440 BCE) in his *Histories* and Ovid in his poem of exile *Epistulae ex Ponto*, and archaeologically from the exquisite goldwork found in Scythian burial mounds in Ukraine and Southern Russia. Two of the largest Scythian tribal confederations were the Sarmatians



of Western Scythia and the Amyrgians of Eastern Scythia.

In a broader sense, the name 'Scythian' has also been used to refer to various peoples seen as similar to the Scythians, or who lived anywhere in the area known as Scythia.

Jean Markale, *The Celts*:

"It has, in fact, been proven that there were major physical upheavals in Northern Europe towards the end of the Bronze Age, which resulted in whole scale migrations of peoples. The Celts left their early homeland in the Harz Mountains to spread throughout Northern and Western Germany, along the Baltic and North Sea coasts. Before long they had established trade relations with their neighbours around the Elbe and in the British Isles, particularly Ireland, which would tend to suggest that there was a first Celtic migration of Gaels into Ireland while the mass of the Britons remained faithful to their former territories.

Geographical and geological evidence show that in the middle Bronze Age, around 1200 BCE, the water level of lakes and marches fell, indicating that a warm, dry period had followed a cold, wet period. This climate change may well have sparked off the shrinking of the Turco-Siberian Sea, which has now been reduced to the bounds of the Caspian and Aral Seas. All the buildings which can be roughly assigned to this period are at some distance from the former shore lines, near some source of water. The great forests of Central and western Europe became less dense. And the peat bogs of Northern Germany and Sweden, as the Swedish geologist Sernander has observed, contain evidence of a stratum of dry land corresponding to this era.

This would appear to have been the time when the civilization of the Scandinavian Straits was at its height; when the Dorians arrived in Greece and

when the Urnfield civilization flourished in Western and Central Europe together with the British Battle-Axe civilization.

At the end of the Bronze Age, after the first Hallstatt period, i.e. around 530 BCE, the lake villages were hastily abandoned by their occupants. Western Europe became suddenly cold and wet again. The Scandinavian bogs indicate that new formations of peat followed a period of comparative drought. The North Sea and Baltic coastlines became areas of inundated marshland. Archaeological evidence indicate vast southward migrations of people escaping the flooded regions. The first and most important migration of Britons to Great Britain can be dated from this period and these movements were echoed in the strange Welsh traditions followed at a much later date."

"Not all the Celts living by the Baltic and North Sea made for Britain, however. Others journeyed to the Rhineland and from there to what later became Gaul, either assimilating or driving back before them the proto-Celtic indigenous peoples of the Bronze and Megalithic civilizations.

This mass migration obviously created considerable disturbances, echoes of which can be seen in the legends concerning Atlantis, so obligingly passed on by Plato."

## Note 7 (page 54)

The Hallstatt Culture is named after a rich find place in the small town of Hallstatt in Austria, a lakeside village in the Austrian Salzkammergut southeast of Salzburg. The culture is commonly linked to Proto-Celtic and Celtic populations in its western zone and with (pre-)Illyrians in its eastern zone.

The Hallstatt culture was the predominant Central European culture from the 700s to 500s BCE (European Early Iron Age), developing out of the Urnfield

culture of the 1100s BCE (Late Bronze Age) and followed in much of Central Europe by the La Tène culture.

By the 500s BCE, the Hallstatt culture extended for some 1000 km, from the Champagne-Ardenne in the west, through the Upper Rhine and the upper Danube, as far as the Vienna Basin and the Danubian Lowland in the east, from the Main, Bohemia and the Little Carpathians in the north, to the Swiss plateau, the Salzkammergut and to Lower Styria.

Through this culture's mediation the iron became known in the Nordic world. The Bronze Age was ending. In the Nordic countries fell transition during a time of severe climatic and commercial interference. This had the effect on the development that it was a stunted, slow progress in stark contrast to the proud ascending curve of development, which marked the transition between stone and bronze age.

The earliest archaeological culture that may justifiably be considered as Proto-Celtic is the Late Bronze Age Urnfield culture of central Europe from the last quarter of the second millennium BCE. Their fully Celtic descendants in central Europe were the people of the Iron Age Hallstatt culture (c. 800-450 BCE) named for the rich grave finds in Hallstatt, Austria. By the later La Tène period (c. 450 BCE up to the Roman conquest), this Celtic culture had expanded over a wide range of regions, whether by diffusion or migration: to the British Isles (Insular Celts), France and The Low Countries (Gauls), Bohemia, Poland and much of Central Europe, the Iberian Peninsula (Celtiberians, Celtici and Gallaeci) and northern Italy (Golaseccans and Cisalpine Gauls) and following the Gallic invasion of the Balkans in 279 BCE as far east as central Anatolia (Galatians).

The earliest directly attested examples of a Celtic language are the Lepontic inscriptions, beginning from the 500s BCE.

By 390 BCE, several Gallic tribes had begun invading Italy from the north as their culture expanded throughout Europe. Most of this was unknown to the Romans at this time, who still had purely local security concerns, but the Romans were alerted when a particularly warlike tribe, the Senones, invaded the Etruscan province of Siena from the north and attacked the town of Clusium, not far from Rome's sphere of influence. The Clusians, overwhelmed by the size of the enemy in numbers and ferocity, called on Rome for help. Perhaps unintentionally the Romans found themselves not just in conflict with the Senones, but became their primary target. The Romans met them in pitched battle at the Battle of the Allia around 390–387 BCE. The Gauls, under their chieftain Brennus, defeated the Roman army of around 15,000 troops and proceeded to pursue the fleeing Romans back to Rome itself and partially sacked the town before being either driven off or bought off.

Now that the Romans and Gauls had blooded one another, intermittent warfare was to continue between the two in Italy for more than two centuries, including the Battle of Allia, the Battle of Lake Vadimo, the Battle of Faesulae in 225 BCE, the Battle of Telamon in 224 BCE, the Battle of Clastidium in 222 BC, the Battle of Cremona in 200 BC, the Battle of Mutina in 194 BCE, the Battle of Arausio in 105 BCE, and the Battle of Vercellae in 101 BCE. The Celtic problem would not be resolved for Rome until the final subjugation of all Gaul following the Battle of Alesia in 52 BCE.

According to Professor Nihlén, *Gotländska gårdar och byar under äldre järnåldern* p 133: "It is the iron that creates a new basis for the future meaningful high, indigenous culture. On Gotland these developments are easy to follow. The island was in the forefront, they imported their own bog ore and

they were likely to early have played a role in the trade of iron. In this way was created in the 100s BCE conditions for the whole rich and multifaceted culture we encounter during the time of 'Kämpgravar'."

The Gotlandic domestic iron production began probably already some centuries BCE and explains the sudden abundance of iron objects that occur.

### Note 8 (page 56)

According to Professor Erik Nylén, Fv 1952 p 225: "Curiously, Gotland is quite alone in the Nordic region with the art boom, which might have caused one of the first big boosts to Gotland as a trading post in the Baltic Sea region. Several of those ornamental details described here are found in Stradonice but occur to some extent also elsewhere in the Celtic area."

Professor Sune Lindqvist, *Sveriges handel under forntiden*, p. 58: "But the geographical location made the Gothic influence in the beginning strongest felt on Gotland which was located in the middle of the Vistula mouth (compare how Tacitus and Jordanes describe Gotland). This island, which is probably counting her sons in large numbers among emigrants, had ever since the Neolithic a highly distinctive culture, due to its on one hand isolated situation and on the other due to its inviting location links to very different directions. The Bronze Age culture was rich. Its oldest Iron Age culture, which should be considered to have been simultaneous with the 6<sup>th</sup> Bronze Age period, is richer than in any other part of Sweden. Even the Celtic and the beginning future culture is distinguished represented. With the sudden flare-up of Gothic influences, Gotland now took a real foreground position. It is

apparently the first full-age appearance of the Gotlandic commercial aristocracy, who then gathered in their hands the threads of vast trading networks throughout the remainder of non-Christian times and even during the first centuries of the Middle Ages, to be broken first by the Atterdag campaign (1361) and by the German Hanseatic League's (founded 1358) cut-throat competition."

### Note 9 (page 61)

According to Professor Adolf Noreen, Fv 1920 p 31: "The people that Pliny called gutones, and Tacitus gotones, lived according to these authors, which also is confirmed by archaeological finds, in their time at the Vistula mouth. They had according to Jordanes migrated from 'the island 'Scandiai', which according to archaeological evidence must have taken place some century BCE".

"They are in the sources closely linked to Gotland, whose inhabitants still today bear the one against Pliny's name direct defendant name Gutar. This is also referred to by Ptolomaïos as the name of one in southern Skandia accommodated tribe Goutai. The Goths called themselves Guthiuda, i.e. 'the people from the Gut', which latter word is the same as German Guss, pour out. I'm inclined, as Lindroth, to regard this as the original name of the current Guteån, which flows through Gotland's oldest main district. This is the same river that has named Gutland, which is then extended to describe the entire island. The main mass of the Vistula Goths drew around 150-200 CE, down to the Black Sea and were called since the mid-200s usually Goths, lat. Got(h)i."

There is archaeological evidence for Gotlandic trading Emporiums on the eastern coasts of the Baltic Sea already in the Bronze Age as well as in Roman Imperial times.

Jordanes writes: "And at the farthest bound of its western expanse it has another island named THULE, of which the Mantuan bard makes mention: And Farthest THULE shall serve thee."

"The same mighty sea has also in its arctic region, that is in the north, a great island named Scandza, from which my tale (by God's grace) shall take its beginning. For the race whose origin you ask to know burst forth like a swarm of bees from the midst of this island and came into the land of Europe."

"Let us now return to the site of the island of Scandza, which we left above. Claudius Ptolemaeus, an excellent describer of the world, has made mention of it in the second book of his work, saying: 'There is a great island situated in the surge of the northern Ocean, Scandza by name, in the shape of a juniper leaf with bulging sides that taper down to a point at a long end.' This island lies in front of the river Vistula, which rises in the Sarmatian mountains and flows through its triple mouth into the northern Ocean in sight of Scandza, separating Germania and Scythia."

According to Professor K.B. Wiklund, Fv 1933 p 108: "The literature shows clearly enough that during the first centuries CE until approximately year 700 in one or more regions in the Gulf of Finland, well most of the south-western Finland, there was a population with an ancient Nordic, not Gothic language, which stood in long and very intimate contact with their Finnish neighbors."

## Note 10 (page 63)

According to Professor Johan Callmer: Verbindungen zwischen Ostskandinavien, Finnland und dem Balticum vor der Wikingerzeit und das Rus'-Problem 1986.

"We now examine what indications, concerning the

relations within the Central Baltic area, the archeology of the early Iron Age to the Viking Age offer us. Since the Stone Age and Bronze Age contacts between the eastern and western coasts of the Baltic Sea are documented. All through history there are two areas in the Baltic Sea region that emerge with an unparalleled wealth of relevant material. As a result of special studies by B. Nerman, on Gotland and Gotlandic Baltic material, Gotland is often regarded as the main mediator of the factual contacts between Scandinavia and the Baltics (Nerman 1929).

**Particularly well documented are the connections between Gotland and the eastern Baltic during the time of the Roman Empire.**

To some extent, these contacts can be regarded not only as an exchange relationship with the eastern Baltic area, but also as marriage connections. The buck elk decorated caps which occur during the older Roman Imperial period on Gotland, can be interpreted in this direction (BLUMBERGS 1982). Even in its earliest stage, they must on Gotland be viewed as a socially integrated loan from Memel, and in all probability, they have the same function on Gotland as a sign of married woman as in the eastern Baltic. There is no lack of more direct evidence of marriage ties, such as a grave where a woman is buried in complete Sarmatian costume (BLUMBERGS 1979). We can therefore conclude that the connections between Gotland and the eastern Baltic were during the early Iron Age well integrated as concerns the social system. However, it is obviously difficult to prove a longer continuity of these connections.

For the later Roman Iron Age there are continuous contacts between the islands of Öland and Gotland and Southwestern Finnland. These contacts are shown not only by found objects, which provide an clear picture of the character of the compounds indicated, but also by certain characteristics of the burial customs, in-depth social contacts. In particu-



lar, the graves of Soukiainen, Letala, Finland need to be considered (Kivikoski 1954)."

According to Professor Johan Callmer: From West to East. The penetration of Scandinavians into Eastern Europe ca. 500-900, 1997.

"INTER-REGIONAL CONTACTS IN THE BALTIC REGION UP TO THE 700s

Cultural change in the Baltic region has, from early times at least from the Neolithic Period on, involved the transfer of cultural impulses over considerable distances and also over water. All major islands with fertile soils were reached in the late Stone Age and it is obvious that social contact and transport facilities for individuals and groups were already well developed (WYSZOMIRSKA 1984). This pattern of contact involving the use of large seagoing vessels was further developed in later periods. Two different cultural systems emerge:

one on the western and another on the eastern coast of the Baltic Sea. On Gotland both systems are in evidence, but the western connection is particularly strong. Beyond this cultural dichotomy which remains constant, the archaeological material indicates cultural exchange and probably small-scale migrations. E.g., there are periods of close cultural parallels on the western and eastern side of the Baltic Sea in the Bronze Age. The Roman Iron Age is marked by increased exchange between Scandinavia and the Continent and between Finland and the East Baltic, Vistula and Neman regions. Cultural exchange between the West and the East also increased.

Gotland was linked to groups in what is now Latvia and in the lower Neman region (BLUMBERGS 1979). South-Western Finland appears to have been included in this network of socially integrated forms of exchange including intermarriage, the exchange of gifts and possibly also migration.

There is evidence for both western and eastern con-

tacts already in the Neolithic Period on the Åland islands, midway between the Swedish and the Finnish mainland. At the beginning of the first millennium CE we note increasing cultural exchange and other contacts between Eastern Middle Sweden, South-Western Finland and Estonia (CALLMER 1986), though it appears that these contacts did not reach the more remote, eastern part of the Gulf of Finland and the lands beyond. The East-West contacts were not as important as those of the eastern regions with the South.

With regard to these patterns of exchange mainly of prestige goods – and the transfer of ideas, the Migration Period marks a new phase more closely linked to later developments. The possibility of acquiring prestige goods through exchange and of using these to consolidate their political position was of importance to local elites. The big islands of the Baltic Sea region maintained their cultural links across the sea, e.g. Öland and Bornholm with the coasts of Prussia and Lithuania (FONNESBECH-SANDBERG 1992). Gotland also kept its earlier contacts with the East. The pattern of material culture on Gotland changes in this period: a distinct local pattern evolves and other cultural forms disappear. This process reaches its peak in the rejection of all foreign design, especially in feminine articles of material culture: nothing with non-Gotlandic design is accepted. There is a similar tendency on the masculine side but less complete. Numerous anthropological parallels suggest that such a process is to be interpreted as the result of increased cultural interaction. This interaction included South-Western Scandinavia as well as the East Baltic lands, present-day Lithuania and Latvia."

An early reference to Amber was Pytheas (330 BC) whose work 'On the Ocean' which is lost, but was referenced by Pliny. According to The Natural His-

tory by Pliny the Elder:

“Pytheas says that the Gutones, a people of Germania, inhabit the shores of an estuary of the Ocean called Mentonomon, their territory extending a distance of six thousand stadia; that, at one day’s sail from this territory, is the Isle of Abalus, upon the shores of which, amber is thrown up by the waves in spring, it being an excretion of the sea in a concrete form; as, also, that the inhabitants use this amber by way of fuel, and sell it to their neighbors, the Teutones.”

Pliny the Elder, *The Natural History*. CHAP. 11.—  
AMBER: “THE MANY FALSEHOODS THAT  
HAVE BEEN TOLD ABOUT IT.

From Carnuntum in Pannonia, to the coasts of Germania from which the amber is brought, is a distance of about six hundred miles, a fact which has been only very recently ascertained; and there is still living a member of the equestrian order, who was sent thither by Julianus, the manager of the gladiatorial exhibitions for the emperor Nero, to procure a supply of this article. Traversing the coasts of that country and visiting the various markets there, he brought back amber, in such vast quantities, as to admit of the nets, which are used for protecting the podium against the wild beasts, being studded with amber.”

Tacitus *Germania*: “Beyond the Lygians dwell the Gothones, under the rule of a King; and thence held in subjection somewhat stricter than the other Germanic nations, yet not so strict as to extinguish all their liberty. Immediately adjoining are the Rugians and Lemovians upon the coast of the ocean, and of these several nations the characteristics are a round shield, a short sword and kingly government. Next occur the communities of the Suiones, situated in the ocean itself; and besides their strength in

men and arms, very powerful at sea. The form of their vessels varies thus far from ours, that they have prows at each end, so as to be always ready to row to shore without turning, nor are they moved by sails, nor on their sides have benches of oars placed, but the rowers ply here and there in all parts of the ship alike, as in some rivers is done, and change their oars from place to place, just as they shift their course hither or thither. To wealth also, amongst them, great veneration is paid, and thence a single ruler governs them, without all restriction of power, and exacting unlimited obedience. Neither here, as amongst other nations of Germania, are arms used indifferently by all, but shut up and warded under the care of a particular keeper, who in truth too is always a slave: since from all sudden invasions and attacks from their foes, the ocean protects them: besides that armed bands, when they are not employed, grow easily debauched and tumultuous. The truth is, it suits not the interest of an arbitrary Prince, to trust the care and power of arms either with a nobleman or with a freeman, or indeed with any man above the condition of a slave.

Beyond the Suiones is another sea, one very heavy and almost void of agitation; and by it the whole globe is thought to be bounded and environed, for that the reflection of the sun, after his setting, continues till his rising, so bright as to darken the stars. To this, popular opinion has added, that the tumult also of his emerging from the sea is heard, that forms divine are then seen, as likewise the rays about his head. Only thus far extend the limits of nature, if what fame says be true. Upon the right of the Suevian Sea the Aestyan nations reside, who use the same customs and attire with the Suevians; their language more resembles that of Britain. They worship the Mother of the Gods. As the characteristic of their national superstition, they wear the images of wild boars. This alone serves them for

arms, this is the safeguard of all, and by this every worshipper of the Goddess is secured even amidst his foes. Rare amongst them is the use of weapons of iron, but frequent that of clubs. In producing grain and other fruits of the earth, they labour with more assiduity and patience than is suitable to the usual laziness of Germanics. Nay, they even search the deep, and of all the rest are the only people who gather amber. They call it *glasing*, and find it amongst the shallows and upon the very shore. But, according to the ordinary incuriosity and ignorance of Barbarians, they have neither learnt, nor do they inquire, what is its nature, or from what cause it is produced. In truth it lay long neglected amongst the other gross discharges of the sea; till from our luxury, it gained a name and value. To themselves it is of no use: they gather it rough, they expose it in pieces coarse and unpolished, and for it receive a price with wonder. You would however conceive it to be a liquor issuing from trees, for that in the transparent substance are often seen birds and other animals, such as at first stuck in the soft gum, and by it, as it hardened, became quite enclosed. I am apt to believe that, as in the recesses of the East are found woods and groves dropping frankincense and balms, so in the isles and continent of the West such gums are extracted by the force and proximity of the sun; at first liquid and flowing into the next sea, then thrown by winds and waves upon the opposite shore. If you try the nature of amber by the application of fire, it kindles like a torch; and feeds a thick and unctuous flame very high scented, and presently becomes glutinous like pitch or rosin.

Upon the Suiones, border the people Sitones; and, agreeing with them in all other things, differ from them in one, that here the sovereignty is exercised by a woman. So notoriously do they degenerate not only from a state of liberty, but even below a state of bondage. Here end the territories of the Suevi-

ans.”

According to Professor John Nihlén, *Gotländska gårdar och byar under äldre järnåldern*, p 62: “The depiction of the Germanic society, Tacitus had the opportunity to study among the northerners on the continent or to them related people, contains many observations, which in an interesting way can be related to the farm and village remains on Gotland. Such a comparison has its special value, also because the Gotlanders on Gotland at this time in many respects stood the continental Germanic peoples close, especially the Goths at the Vistula. It is in important respects, even as large a consensus that with greater certainty than before we can dare to draw conclusions from both the literary sources and archaeological-topographical material.

It is clear from the preceding description of the building types of the ‘Kämpgravar’, how well Tacitus’ observation is true in terms of the varieties of dwelling groupings in general. The Germanics had no cities and they did not like any conglomerate settlements. The ‘Kämpgrav’ districts’ sparse, spacious formation illustrates this admirably. “

p 63 “Those who want an illustration of ‘Tacitus’ description of Germanic villages need only consider some Gotlandic ‘Kämpgrav’ villages.

p 64 “On each farm were, according to Tacitus, several for different purposes buildings. Except for dwelling house for the master and his family, were huts for the serfs and storehouses. That Gotlandic Iron Age farms consisted of several buildings is evident, 2-3 foundations appear generally to highlight a farm.”

p 66 “The Germanic peoples society’s social structure, as it meets us in Tacitus, lets it unite with the building types, which in the previous is depicted for the ‘Kämpgrav’ district. Familia, it is the household, the family, a farm’s inhabitants (Lojsta). Vicus, the village, is the relocated households joint organiza-

tion. It is the family or relatives' attempt to further civic education in the creation of a district (Eskelhem, Källunge). So far social formation had come to us during the Roman Iron Age."

p 141 "The art of shipbuilding during the transition between the Bronze and Iron Age was highly developed in Gotland which seems clear from Gotland's characteristic stone ships."

p 142 "That the carpenter art and square timber has been with us already in the Bronze Age and existed during the Iron Age must be considered inevitable. It was the iron and knowledge of its treatment, that led to the creation of the carpenter axe. The 'Kämpgravar' were built during a time when the Gotlanders had just learned about the art of iron manufacture and the industry had its first flowering."

"The time to which we want to place the beginning of 'Kämpgravar', falls during a time when the Celts dominated much of Europe. Celtic peoples lived in the southern part of present day Germania, in Switzerland, France and England (Helvetians, Gallics, British). Their from the classical culture heavily influenced civilization exercised a great influence on the rest of Europe. One can clearly trace it all the way up in the Nordic countries, not least to Gotland. **The appearance of skeletal graves, which break against previous and subsequent periods of cremations, are likely to count as a Celtic influence.** But there are also certain circumstances, which indicate that the lines during the same time were kept open with the Scythians on the Black Sea."

p 158 "The vague image of the older Iron Age religion we are able to get from e.g. Tacitus' Germania (Chapter 9) allows us to be well-adjusted in this environment. 'Groves and spinneys they sanctify' and they consider it not compatible with the greatness of the heavenly beings to confine gods within walls or to depict them in a figure with human features."

p 159 "The Stavgard pond and groves have also been a common place of worship for this district, for a public area (civitas). The presence of grove (-lund) in the name of the nearby Bandelunda Bay gives further support to the assumption of an existing place of worship here.

The Nerthus cult will also in this context be kept in mind. Tacitus tells how this goddess, Mother Earth, is traveling around among the nations. She has her carriage on an island, which the priests kept under guard in a profane spinney. From here she makes her travels in the carriage drawn by cows."

p 160 "As the waggon is a famous religious attribute on Gotland, it allows easily to imagine that it was used in the cult which is tied to Stavgard in Burs. The major road construction (two sturdy stone rows of filling in between) which extends from the area of the settlement down to the famous Brya (pond) could therefore have been a cult road for the procession or the waggon, which crossed the land to the rural place of sacrifice. That the Brya was one for the village common place of worship is suggested partly by the fact that similar double 'Vasts' (stone rows) from various places could be traced to the place. In this way are probably many of the enigmatic double 'Vasts' to be interpreted on Gotland (Solångarna in Sproge, Botvalda in Stånga, etc.) and probably also in Östergötland. A similar role may even possibly be given some of the 'Vallgatorna' on Öland."

p 221 "The iron production on Gotland is simultaneous with the 'Kämpgravar' and this has been said, that probably a direct correlation exists between the first domestic iron axes and the large buildings, with its advanced timber structures. The 'Kämpgravar' have occurred around 150 BCE. It is just at the time the Gotlanders, as recent studies have shown, began producing their own iron. The slag finds made on Gotland links also almost without exception to the early Iron Age settlements, just as



on Öland, where the so-called 'sinner' ships already by Ahlqvist were interpreted as remnants of ancient smith-workshops".

Tacitus writes further about the Germanics: "The people are divided into tribes and clans, governed by kings or rather chiefs. Moreover, their constitution is primitive democratic, because the chiefs take only the power that their courage and powers of persuasion owe them. They live a life in constant conflict.

Their popular assemblies consist of Things in which men present themselves armed. When a boy grows up they take him to the Thing and provide him with weapons by the chief or his nearest kinsman, and thereafter he belongs to the men's circuit. As a young man he serves at the chief's court and follows his lord in war. While the chief is fighting for victory, the body-guard is fighting for the chief's honor. And their own glory decrees that they do not survive their chief. Their sense of justice is determined entirely by their warlike temperament. Manslaughter and insults are revenged with blood if not atoned with a *wergild*, which is paid in cattle. Due to the strong unity of the family it is distributed among all the kinsmen to the killed, as well as the offensive. As long as the feud is going on the men who consider themselves blood relatives of the fallen have an implacable foe in each of the offensive. The women are healthy and strong and clean to their customs. *Levity*, which is purchased at the expense of chastity, places the girl outside the community. The women also enjoy a high reputation, that they even are considered as a kind of higher being, whose word is always of great importance and sometimes interpreted as premonitory sign. Occasionally, they become a kind of oracle, who through their advice and predictions are leading tribal politics."

Tacitus lists the Eastern peoples, going from south to north and mention Lugia, Goths and Rugi out on the coast. Then he turns to the west and mentions Lemovier, after which he goes straight into the Baltic Sea and mentions Suionum. From there he goes due east to the mainland, and mentions the Aestyan nations.

"After this comes out in the ocean 'Suionum Hinc Civitates' public areas, which are powerful not only by men and weapons but also by fleets. The ships building is so distinctive, not only front but also stern form one to land suitable stem. They do not carry sails and they do not fasten oars in a row along the shipping tables. Oars are affixed loose, as used on many rivers, and removable as the situation demands."

These boats fits well in the Gotlandic ship settings. In addition, the description fits exactly with a picture stone found in Sanda church. If, after this description, someone claims that Suionum means Svear they should probably get a new look at the map.

According to Professor Erik Nylén, *Bildstenar* p 22, "Boats of this type, built with tables and frames are found in archaeological finds from the same time. Most familiar is the large rowing ship from Nydams bog in southern Jutland. Pilots in both fore and aft ministered rapid reversal of these the first real sea-going ships operating in the Baltic Sea."

Tacitus: "Here is also richness high in reputation, which leads to autocracy without any restriction, with an unconditional right to obedience. Also, the carrying of weapons, as with other Germanics, is not everyone's right, but the weapons are kept confined under guard, which is conducted by a slave. Any unforeseen attack by an enemy is prevented by the ocean, and it also makes idle crowds of armed readily obliged to self-indulgence."

Tacitus also mentions the country's good cereal harvests. In its description of the food and drink Tacitus writes that the beer was made from barley and wheat.

In his thesis 'Bidrag till Bornholms befolkningshistoria under järnåldern' (Contribution to Bornholm's population history during the Iron Age) has Fil. lic. Knut Stjerna shown that, in most of the island's burial grounds, graves from 300 and forward completely ceases, while the remaining number falls strongly. He has shown that these conditions can only be explained by assuming a large emigration. A large proportion of the population has broken up and followed that in northern Germany resident, formerly from Bornholm emigrated part of the Burgundians in their migration to the south.

If we transfer this reasoning on Gotland, we find that according to Professor Nerman it reveals a decline in the number of grave finds in the 200s, and it is perhaps even stronger in the 300s. This reduction allows the assumption that quite considerable numbers have emigrated from Gotland during the 200s and 300s. This coincides very well with the Goths moving to the south and the Marcomannic wars. The Gotlanders seem to have had good contact with the Goths when they were in the Vistula estuary.

## Note 11 (page 73)

According to Martin Giertz, *Gotlands Allehanda* 1990, there are striking similarities:

"But what do we know more about the language of the Crimean Goths? Can they even have emigrated from Gotland as the Guta Saga tells? Let us compare a range of Crimean Gothic words with Gotlandic words! The similarity is of course striking. Other words, however, suggest that the language of

the Crimean Goths must be a mix of old Gothic and some North- or Northwest Germanic languages. However the Gotlanders are exactly language historically identical with the Goths, whose name originally was written Gutans, their people the Goths were called Gut-thiuda, the Got-people.

The Goths' so-called tribal saga, recorded by Jordanes about the year 550, says that the Goths came on three ships and had emigrated from the island Gothiscandza before they reached the Vistula area. Is this just merely a fairy tale, an emigration legend, or can the ancient Goths in fact have come from here and be identical to those emigrating Gotlanders?"

They had their own diocese in the Crimea, which they called 'Gothia'.

Crimean Gothic	Gotlandic
Stein (stone)	Stein
Stega (20)	Stäijg
Salt	Salt
Broe (bread)	Broe
Hus	Hus
Lamb (sheep)	Lamb
Wasti (disguise)	vast (fence around the fields)
ga-runs (market)	garn (trading venue)

## Note 12 (page 74)

Ermanaric (Gothic: *Aírmanareiks*; Latin: *Ermanaricus*; Old English: *Eormenric*; Old Norse: *Jörmunrekkr*; died 376) was a Greuthungian Gothic King who before the Hunnic invasion evidently ruled an enormous area north of the Black Sea. Contemporary historian Ammianus Marcellinus recounts him as a "most warlike man" who "ruled over extensively wide and fertile regions". Jordanes describes him as a Gothic Alexander the Great who "ruled all the nations of Scythia

and Germania as they were his own". Ermanaric appears frequently in Scandinavian and Anglo-Saxon legend.

Hervig Wolfram, *History of the Goths*:

"The Ostrogoths (Latin: Ostrogothi or Austrogothi) were a branch of the Goths (the other branch being the Visigoths), a Germanic tribe who developed a vast empire north of the Black Sea in the 200s CE and, in the late 400s, under Theodoric the Great, established a Kingdom in Italy.

Invading southward from the Baltic Sea, the Ostrogoths, at the time known as the Greuthungi, built up a huge empire stretching from the Dniester to the Volga river and from the Black Sea to the Baltic shores. The Ostrogoths were probably literate in the 200s, and their trade with the Romans was highly developed. Their Danubian kingdom reached its zenith under King Ermanaric, who is said to have committed suicide at an old age when the Huns attacked his people and subjugated them about 370.

After their subjugation by the Huns, little is heard of the Ostrogoths for about 80 years, after which they reappear in Pannonia on the middle Danube river as federates to the Romans. However, a pocket remained behind in the Crimea when the bulk of them moved to central Europe, and these Crimean Ostrogoths existed until at least the 1500s. After the collapse of the Hun empire after the Battle of Nedao (453), the Ostrogoths under Theodoric the Great first moved to Moesia (c. 475–488) and later conquered the Italian Kingdom of the Germanic warrior Odoacer. Theodoric became King of the Ostrogothic Kingdom in 493 and died in 526. A period of instability then ensued, tempting the Eastern Roman emperor Justinian to declare war on the Ostrogoths in 535 in an effort to restore the former western provinces of the Roman Empire. Initially, the Byzantines were successful, but under the leadership of Totila, the Goths reconquered most of

the lost territory until Totila's death at the Battle of Taginae. The war lasted for almost 20 years and caused enormous damage and depopulation in Italy. The remaining Ostrogoths were absorbed into the Lombards who established a Kingdom in Italy in 567 CE."

## Note 13 (page 88)

According to Fritz Askeberg, *Norden och kontinenten i gammal tid* (The North and the Continent in old days) p 42: "Through the runes a new means of expression was created, which succeeded the old symbol characters. The familiar ideograms of the rock carvings (sun wheel, footprints, hand, crosses, etc.) have not affected the emergence of the futhark. As to its structure it reveals the unmistakable origin from a southern European alphabet. The evidence for this is not only alphabet historical but can also be seen directly by the runic alphabet's internal structure, which clearly shows, that one has phonetically as accurate as possible tried to reproduce a sound system of an ancient Germanic dialect. The letter magic, the rune names and order are secondary phenomena."

p 69 "These dispersion characteristics, however, are very marked and explained by the marked difference which existed between the North, East and West Germanic culture areas, of which the first two were in close contact with each other. The West Germanic area lacks any trace of runes until about 500. East Germanic area inscriptions are very few, it's true, but the find circumstances outside the nationwide Germanic area was exceptionally bad, and the rune tradition here was of relatively short duration. The occurrence is in any case certainly proven, and Ulfila has demonstrably known runes."

p 77 "During the first rune period, until about 500, the runes changed very slightly. This does not

provide support for the sentence, that the oldest rune finds are the result of a long development for a findless period. The difference the runes show against its classical model, has on the contrary, in all likelihood existed already in the works of the first rune master. The Futhark is not an exact copy but reveals itself through the individual characters' design and grouping as a fairly free revision of the model. All the attempts made to solve the riddle of the runes' origin have failed because they sought to find the exact identity of the Greek, Latin, or North Italian alphabets. They must also fail if one does not ultimately accept the runic alphabet as an individual creation."

p 79 "The distribution of the oldest rune finds to the Vistula area and its foothills to the north corresponds exactly to the very geographical and cultural conditions, which we of alphabet historical reasons presume to be the most ideal. Among the oldest findings represent the five spearheads from Øvre Stabu, Moos, Dahmsdorf, Kowel and Rozwadow a typologically uniform group, with the exception of the heavily fire-damaged from Øvre Stabu. They show a marked South Russian element through its silver inlays and ornamentation. Even Øvre Stabu appears as the first description by Rygh to have had traces of similar ornamentation before the scaling at conservation was removed."

p 82 "In those circumstances we conclude that the runes occurred in the Vistula area before emigration. This conclusion is directly supported in the oldest find distribution. Two of the rune spears, Rozwadow in Wolynien and Kowel in Eastern Galicia are found in the walking direction. Decorated spears of the same type occur, however, not in the south of Russia. From this, one can conclude that the decoration of weapons with South Russian ornaments character was an impulse, which started with Gothic weapon smiths in the Vistula

area. The cultural power that emanated from the Gothic Black Sea area, and which was characterized by a highly developed goldsmith's art, have no runes. Therefore runes could not have been incurred by the immediate contact with a classical culture. This cultural power presupposes a conclusion which we already on other grounds have reached. The Pietroassa ring, that is the only south Gothic find, must be perceived as a conservative residue in a non-Christian-religious context. The alphabet, which had the more intimate contact with classical culture was, however, Ulfilas alphabet. But even this was of short duration as the de-Germanization went very quickly."

p 85 "Based on historical, philological, alphabet historical and typological facts, I would therefore argue that the runes with the lat. alphabet as a model emerged in the course of the 100s CE. among the Goths in the Vistula area."

According to Fil. lic. Bengt Omnelius, *Wulfila och runorna* p 36: "The Goths' literary writing system is known by a few surviving manuscripts, the longest of these is the so-called Codex Argenteus containing a translation of parts of the New Testament - actually a very good and literal translation - from Greek to Gothic (or a Gothic dialect)."

"Codex Argenteus is written with a late, schooled, uncial script and must thus be secondary to an earlier stage of this writing system consisting of rather geometric written capitals. Thus quite similar to runic writing. To take up a detail, it is the runes (form for) 's' which is the original s in the Codex Argenteus that seems to have been borrowed from Latin uncial.

Of the Goths two scripts 'Wulfilan' writing does not seem to have spread to northern Germanic peoples such as the Scandinavian, apart from the Codex Argenteus as such, which of course pushed



further north. The runes on the other hand have found its way from the now Romania and Ukraine to Scandinavia by waterways: Dnieper, Vistula and Daugava, and the waters surrounding Gotland and Scania.

Despite these differing fates, there is reason to compare the Goths both scripts and find out the connection that must exist. The same people, the Goths, used them of course at the same time and in the same locality.

In addition to this agreement round the two writing systems: the Goths, the same time, same place you can find in the writing systems no less than four different kinds of correspondences, we can number as follows:

- 1) The runes and 'Wulfila' represent the same selection from the same two concurrent alphabets.
- 2) They have (originally had) geometrically the same basic appearance.
- 3) Both Wulfila's sequence and the futhark sequence are derived from the Greek numerical sequence.
- 4) The same acronym names have been given to runes and to the Wulfian letters."

According to Professor Sven BF Jansson, *Gotlands runinskrifter*, p 144: "With runes from the older 24-rune futhark are the following Gotlandic inscriptions, named after find places, carved: Almunge in Havdhem, Djupbrunns in Hogrän, Etelhem, Fride in Lojsta, Gurfile in Ala, Kylver in Stånga, Martebo, Moos in Stenkyrka, Roes in Grötlingbo, Slite backe in Othem and Visborgs Kungsladugård.

On Gotland has accordingly been found no fewer than eleven inscriptions of this archaic type. The number in itself may not be particularly large, but a comparison with findings from other Swedish provinces shows that Gotland is able to produce more ancient Norse runic inscriptions than any other part of Sweden. Next to Gotland, Blekinge

has six ancient Norse inscriptions, while Uppland among its more than a thousand inscriptions can only produce two, which are carved with the older futhark runes.

Of the eleven relevant inscriptions on Gotland over half are on bracteates, i.e. the round, one-sided embossed thin gold plates. These are apparently usually worn around the neck as pendants.

Martin Giertz, *Fornvännen* 1993:

"3. Since the inventor of the futhark must have known both the Greek and the Latin alphabet, he should have lived in an area which used both languages. The only areas that are eligible, is the area north of the Black Sea, and Dacia, where Germanics had lived since the time around the beginning of the first century.

4. von Friesen assumed that the Goths on the Black Sea invented the runes. A series of rune researchers have pointed out that chronological reasons speak to the contrary, since the Goths first known crack-down on the Black Sea is first noted to 214 (Odenstedt 1984, p. 78). After von Friesen wrote in the 1920s, we have found a number of inscriptions which are dated to about 200, or somewhat earlier. Goths on the Black Sea could accordingly not have invented the runes - they were not there around 150-175 when runes should have been invented, say these rune researchers. The argument does not hold. In Pontian environment around the Black Sea was at least one Germanic tribe operating from the time of the beginning of the first century, namely the so-called Bastarnae. A number of archaeological influences show that these Germanic tribes conveyed cultural impulses to the north already about the birth of Christ. The Havor Ring is one of the best examples of this. (Nylén 1962, p. 107). Some Germanic, perhaps a Bastarnae, maybe a Goth, it does not matter, may well have invented the runic alphabet

in Pontian environment as early as around 150 CE. 5. The elder futhark has obviously taken inspiration from both the Roman and Greek cursive writing. It is no longer warranted to have some kind of monistic reasoning, as if a new scripture can not arise from two different alphabets. The relevant parallel is Wulfila's Gothic script, which is also a Germanic writing. It originates essentially from the Greek, but has also more purely Latin characters (Stutz 1966, p. 20). Thus a mixed writing, just as the futhark. Rausing is right that the Roman italic should have influenced some runes, but the Greek italic has probably played an even greater role."

## Note 14 (page 92)

Prokopios, born at the end of the 400s, was a lawyer in Constantinople and from the year 527 private secretary to the commander Belisarius in his campaigns against the Ostrogoths in Italy. He says that there are 13 tribes in THULE, each with their own king. He says: "The most populous tribe of them are the Gautoi, next to which the incoming Heruli settled down." Prokopios says that the Heruli, who lived in northern Hungary under emperor Anastasius' (491-518) Government attacked the Lombards. They were, however, beaten, and their king was killed. The Heruli must then (c. 505) break up from their settlements. Some of them went gradually over the Danube into Roman territory, where they by Anastasius were allowed to settle. The remainder went to the north. Through the land of the Slavs, a deserted area, and over the countries of the Varner and Danes they reached the ocean, over which they sailed to THULE.

In History of war Prokopios says:

"But all the other inhabitants of THULE, practically speaking, do not differ very much from the rest of men, but they reverence in great numbers gods

and demons both of the heavens and of the air, of the earth and of the sea, and sundry other demons which are said to be in the waters of springs and rivers. And they incessantly offer up all kinds of sacrifices, and make oblations to the dead, but the noblest of sacrifices, in their eyes, is the first human being whom they have taken captive in war; for they sacrifice him to Ares, whom they regard as the greatest god. And the manner in which they offer up the captive is not by sacrificing him on an altar only, but also by hanging him to a tree, or throwing him among thorns, or killing him by some of the other most cruel forms of death. Thus do the inhabitants of THULE live. And one of their most numerous nations is the Gauti, and it was next to them that the incoming Eruli settled at the time in question.

On the present occasion, therefore, the Eruli who dwelt among the Romans, after the murder of their king had been perpetrated by them, sent some of their notables to the island of THULE to search out and bring back whomsoever they were able to find there of the royal blood. And when these men reached the island, they found many there of the royal blood, but they selected the one man who pleased them most and set out with him on the return journey. But this man fell sick and died when they came to the country of the Dani. These men therefore went a second time to the island and secured another man, Datius by name. And he was followed by his brother Aordus and two hundred youths of the Eruli in Thule. But since much time passed while they were absent on this journey, it occurred to the Eruli in the neighbourhood of Singidunum that they were not consulting their own interests in importing a leader from Thule against the wishes of the emperor Justinian. They therefore sent envoys to Byzantium, begging the emperor to send them a ruler of his own choice. And he im-

mediately sent them one of the Eruli who had long been sojourning in Byzantium, Suartuas by name. At first the Eruli welcomed him and did obedience to him and rendered the customary obedience to his commands; but not many days later a messenger arrived with the tidings that the men from the island of THULE were near at hand. And Suartuas commanded them to go out to meet those men, his intention being to destroy them. The Eruli approving his purpose, immediately went with him. But when the two forces were one day's journey distant from each other, the king's men all abandoned him at night and went over of their own accord to the newcomers, while he himself took to flight and set out unattended for Byzantium."

In the continuation of the same chapter (Bell. goth. II: 15) Prokopios gives us in passing a brief indication of the Heruli who immigrated to the Scandinavian peninsula. This is the last historical notice we can find in any classical authors about the Nordic countries. "The Heruli, who lived in Roman territory, and had committed a homicide on their king sent some of its top men to the island of THULE in order to seek and if possible bring back any one of the royal blood. When they arrived to THULE, they found many of royal blood."

According to Professor Elias Wessén: "The flourishing and strong dynasty in THULE, which is here spoken of, is apparently the same that under whose management one arm of the East Herulian tribe thirty years earlier undertook their journey to the North."

Professor Birgit Arrhenius, *Det forntida Sveariket – en myt eller en arkeologisk realitet*:

"Centuria and hundare. Roman strategy was, that their troops along the Limes boundaries were supplied by allocated plots, carefully measured units

that together formed a Centuria (= 100), and this has been seen as the origin of the hundare division we meet with the Franks and Frisians and the Anglo-Saxon England. But, interestingly also here in Svealand. There is a long and rich debate in Sweden and abroad about the concept of hund, hundare and hundertschaft and its immediate successor and synonym 'häradet', which I have not had time to touch on here. As it is impossible to discuss an ancient Svea Relam, without mentioning hundare and the three "folklanden", I will briefly point out some details that may not have been so widely discussed. First, I point out what was last observed by Halsall in 1995 in the book 'Settlement and social organization. The merovingian region of Metz', that as soon as the written sources begin to appear in the 600s in this area 'pagi' is mentioned. That is public land divided into Hundreds. Each such hundare was headed by a Centenari, while the title of the leading pagi mostly seems to have been a duke (jarl), and he was as Centenari directly related to the king. In fact a relative such as a younger son. Even the Vandals and Visigoths seem to have had a similar system, directly inspired from the original Roman military division."

### **From what time are hundare?**

"The one for the ancient Svea realm important question is how and when hundare and 'folkland' became part of the larger network, which meant that they had a land with a reigning king, that is a king who had a higher position than the local rulers in the subdivisions consisting of hundare, but also in the larger units such as the forming of 'folklanden'."

### **The oldest grave fields in Vendel.**

"There are in Vendel 1100 registered visible prehistoric burial sites distributed on more than 70 cem-

eteries. Most are located on the Vendel ridge. A detailed analysis of the graves in the cemeteries based on the find material from previous excavations and the additional project conducted have shown that the oldest graves consistently are at the top of the ridge in a row quite separated from the others, yet on contemporary burial grounds. All the oldest graves belong to the same stage, namely the last quarter of the 400s. In none of the known cemeteries, we have found graves older than this stage. This also corresponds with pollen analyzes on two separate sites in the district, showing an expansion of the culture with the beginning of this era. **A heavy fire layer in one of the pollen diagrams from the time immediately before Christ, and some very sparse burnt settlement remains from the first centuries CE, which was under a large burial mound from the Late Iron Age is the only thing we found from previous Iron Age phases.**"

"I do not see the immigration to the Vendel area during the later part of the 400s otherwise than a sudden new colonisation that occurs in Vendel at the end of the 400s, or simply the takeover of an urban area not in use from a previous period."

Professor Arrhenius' dating to the end of the 400s is her own. Other researchers have dated it to the first half of the 500s. Procopius who is a contemporary writer is adamant that the immigration of the Heruli to THULE was in 512 CE.

#### **The Younger Edda Translated by Rasmus Björn Anderson Prologue:**

"10. Odin had the power of divination, and so had his wife, and from this knowledge he found out that his name would be held high in the north part of the world, and honored beyond that of all kings. For this reason he was eager to begin his journey from Turkey, and he had with him very many peo-

ple, young and old, men and women, and he had with him many costly things. But wherever they fared over the lands great fame was spoken of them, and they were said to be more like gods than men. And they stopped not on their journey before they came north into that land which is now called Saxland; there Odin remained a long time, and subjugated the country far and wide. There Odin established his three sons as a defense of the land. One is named Veggdegg; he was a strong king and ruled over East Saxland. His son was Vitrgils, and his sons were Ritta, the father of Heingest (Hengist), and Sigar, the father of Svebdegg, whom we call Svipdag. Another son of Odin is called Beldegg, whom we call Balder; he possessed the land which now is called Vestfal; his son was Brander, and his son Frjodigar, whom we call Froda (Frode). His son was Freovit, his son Yvigg, his son Gevis, whom we call Gave. The third son of Odin is named Sigge, his son Verer. These forefathers ruled the land which is now called Frankland, and from them is come the race that is called the Volsungs. From all of these many and great races are descended.

11. Then Odin continued his journey northward and came into the country which was called Reidgotaland, and in that land he conquered all that he desired. He established there his son, who is called Skjold; his son is called Fridleif; from him is descended the race which is called Skjoldungs; these are the Dane kings, and that land is now called Jutland, which then was called Reidgotaland.

12. Thereupon he fared north to what is now called Svithjod (Sweden), there was the king who is called Gylfe. But when he heard of the coming of those Asiamen, who were called asas, he went to meet them, and offered Odin such things in his kingdom as he himself might desire. And such good luck followed their path, that wherever they stopped in the lands, there were bountiful crops and good peace;



and all believed that they were the cause thereof. The mighty men of the kingdom saw that they were unlike other men whom they had seen, both in respect to beauty and understanding. The land there seemed good to Odin, and he chose there for himself a place for a burg, which is now called Sigtuna. He there established chiefs, like unto what had formerly existed in Troy; he appointed twelve men in the burg to be judges of the law of the land, and made all rights to correspond with what had before been in Troy, and to what the Turks had been accustomed..

13. Thereupon he fared north until he reached the sea, which they thought surrounded all lands, and there he established his son in the kingdom, which is now called Norway; he is called Saining, and the kings of Norway count their ancestors back to him, and so do the jarls and other mighty men, as it is stated in the Hælygjatal. But Odin had with him that son who is called Yngve, who was king in Sweden, and from him is descended the families called Ynglings (Yngvelings).

The asas took to themselves wives there within the land. But some took wives for their sons, and these families became so numerous that they spread over Saxland, and thence over the whole north region, and the tongue of these Asiamen became the native tongue of all these lands. And men think they can understand from the way in which the names of their forefathers is written, that these names have belonged to this tongue, and that the asas have brought this tongue hither to the north, to Norway, to Sweden and to Saxland. But in England are old names of places and towns which can be seen to have been given in another tongue than this.”

## Note 15 (page 101)

Bra Böckers Lexikon 1985: “The Gothic language, one of the East Germanic languages, like other such now extinct. The Goths’ wanderings spread their language. It was a living language until about 600 in Italy and until the 900s in Spain. Longest it lived on among some Goths in the Crimea (until the 1700s).

The oldest Germanic language monument is Bishop Wulfila’s Gothic Bible translation from the 300s. The alphabet used in it has probably been created by Wulfila, which was based on the Greek, supplemented with evidence from the Latin and the runic alphabet. Wulfila’s Bible, which is the oldest known monument of Germanic languages (in addition to some runic inscriptions), shows a very archaic form and sound doctrine, which stands close to old Germanic. Among others, remain there living the otherwise completely lost use of dualis for verbs and pronouns. There are also Gothic runic inscriptions.”

“Like the Vandals in Africa the Ostrogoths kept their Arian church, which prevented the assimilation of the Catholic population. The Goths in Italy therefore disappeared almost without trace as did the Vandals in Africa.”

“Wulfila, about 310-383, Visigothic missionary, bishop probably 341. He translated the Bible into Gothic, creating also a Gothic script. Some of his translations are included in the Silver Bible, which is located in Uppsala.”

According to Professor Elias Wessén, Fv 1969 p 27: “There are thus several language barriers across the Nordic language area, and the Gothic line thus always agrees with the eastern parts of Scandinavia, mainly Gutnish on Gotland.”

“If the Gotlanders on Gotland and the Goths in the Vistula area originally were the same people they would still in the first centuries CE have spo-

ken substantially the same language, a language in its later development in Southern Europe emerging as Gothic. It is likely that the mother language of the Gothic and forn Gutnish has not differed too much from the contemporary primitive Norse. In any case, the similarities with Gothic is nowhere in the Nordic region as close as in forn Gutnish .“

According to the Nationalencyklopedin p 574: “The modern Gotlandic dialects are derived from forn Gutnish, the Viking Age and Middle Age language of Gotland. Forn Gutnish exhibit such deviations from Old Swedish (and Old Danish) as it is usually regarded as an independent Nordic language. The forn Gutnish language is represented in quite a significant number of runic inscriptions from the 900s and 1000s until the 1500s, in a medieval manuscript of Guta Lagh (with Guta Saga) and in another couple of manuscripts.”

## Note 16 (page 105)

Bra Böckers Lexikon 1985: “Mansbot (wergild), fines according to the old Nordic law was paid by a murderer or his kin to the slain family, which then declined to exact blood vengeance”.

## Note 17 (page 106)

Gad Rausing's field studies. Fv 1985.

“The lay of Beowulf describes the court of king Hrothgar, who resided in the largest and most magnificent of halls, who rewarded his warriors with golden rings and with magnificent arms, among which ring-swords are specifically mentioned (verse 2042), in terms which suggest the Roman Iron Age or the Migration Period. Apparently the Sköldunga kings had conquered Denmark some generations

earlier and the dynasty appeared well established when an enemy, Grendel, attacked. “So Grendel became ruler”. The war lasted for a long time, twelve years being mentioned. Finally Beowulf, with fourteen companions, came from Geatland to Hrothgar's aid. The description of his voyage and of his landfall is quite clear:

Away she went over the wavy ocean, boat like a bird, breaking seas, wind-wetted, white-throated, till the curved prow had ploughed so far - the sun standing right on the second day that they might see land loom on the skyline, then the shimmer of cliffs, sheer fells behind, reaching capes.

Apparently they sailed across the open sea, making their landfall as planned on the second day out, on a coast of high white cliffs with capes reaching far out into the sea. Modern commentators have always found this description incompatible with their ideas of Danish geography and topography, the site of Heorot usually thought to have been Leire, far inland from a coast conspicuously lacking in cliffs and headlands.

Few commentators, if any, have been sailors familiar with northern waters and few, if any, appear to be familiar with Danish topography. The passage has been taken to be a late addition to the saga, since it appears to describe a crossing of the North Sea and a landing beneath the white cliffs of Dover. Actually, the passage proves that the waters crossed were not to have been the Channel, and thus strongly suggests that the poem was not composed in Britain. Either you cross at Dover, where the Channel is narrow and the crossing a matter of hours, even in an open row-boat, to land beneath the famous cliffs, or you cross elsewhere, either north or south of the narrows, where the passage might require two days, but where there are no white cliffs.

Can any conclusion be drawn from the actual distribution of the Danish archaeological material of

the Iron Age, in conjunction with the geographical features described in *Beowulf*? Obviously, mere map-reading is not good enough. For any conclusion to be valid the observations must have been made in the field or at sea. The geographical features being seen as Iron-Age man saw them, on foot, from horse-back or from a comparatively small, open boat.

In Denmark, the richest burials of the early Iron Age are concentrated in the southern part of Lolland island. This concentration of wealth probably marked the political center of the country or, at least, the territory of the politically and economically dominant families.

In the Later Roman Iron Age, the fourth and fifth centuries, the rich burials were concentrated in south-east Zealand, with Himlingøje as the type locality, with seven 'royal' mounds and a great number of rich burials without mounds. There is a number of rich cemeteries in the area, such as Valløby, Varpelev and others. The same district, centering on Stevns, appears to have remained the richest part of Denmark all through the Migration Period, 500s and 600s. At least, it has yielded the greatest number of gold objects of this period, including the largest of all gold rings known from Denmark, found at Hellested on Stevns. The numerous paved roads and fords which cross the valley and the stream almost separating Stevns from the rest of Zealand also indicate that the area was of special importance, nothing similar having been found anywhere else in Scandinavia.

The center of economic and, probably, also of political power shifting from Lolland to east Zealand may have been caused by the first appearance of the Danes in the country. According to the sagas, they came from central Sweden, where they can be traced in many place-names, such as Dannemora, Danderyd and even Danmark, now a parish in Up-

pland. *Beowulf* is silent on this point, even though Hrothgar only belonged to the fifth generation of the Sköldunga family, (i. e. the fifth generation after the conquest?) and five generations cover no more than 100-150 years. However, the riches described do fit what we know of economic conditions on Stevns in late Roman Times or in the early part of the Migration Period. Everything suggests that, at this time, the royal residence had not yet been moved to Leire but was still somewhere in southeast Zealand.

The description of *Beowulf*'s landfall and of his subsequent march to Heorot leaves little doubt:

... the shimmer of cliffs, sheer fells behind, reaching capes.

A coastguard, usually posted on these cliffs, met the hero on the beach and accompanied him and his companions to Heorot. Paved Roman roads being still in use in 700s England, there would have been no particular reason for mentioning them, had the poem been composed in that country. Denmark was different. There, paved roads of Iron Age date are few indeed, and there is but one single area in Scandinavia, corresponding to the description: high white cliffs jutting into the sea, a neighbouring beach for landing, a paved road leading to the royal residence of late Roman times or of the early Migration Period: Stevns Klint in Denmark.

The white chalk cliffs of Stevns rise straight out of the sea, more than 40 m high, facing east. Behind them stretch downs, bordered in the west by a river valley about 500 m wide, running almost the whole way from Køge Bay to Faxe Bay, separating Stevns peninsula from the rest of Zealand. This valley and its river is crossed by a number of prehistoric paved roads and fords, those at Varpelev, Elverhøj, Harlev and Karise I dating from the end of the Late Roman Iron Age and the beginning of the Migration Period. Down one of these marched *Beowulf* and his companions on their way to king Hrothgar.

“There was stone paving on the path that brought the war band on its way.” This passage also proves that the scene can not have been set on Rügen, the only other place where white chalk cliffs face the Baltic Sea, since it lacks the paved roads and the rich Iron Age of Beowulf’s tale. The description fits the picture of the Iron Age settlement pattern outlined by Nylén, a situation where sea-borne attacks might be expected at any moment and where, in consequence, farms and settlements were always at some distance from the shore.

But what conclusions can be drawn as to the land of the Geats, Beowulf’s country? As mentioned previously, the account of the voyage has been taken to describe a crossing of the North Sea and a landfall in Britain. The factual evidence of the saga having been thus disposed of, the land of the Geats could be located anywhere in south Sweden or in Denmark and it has even been suggested that the waters separating the land of the Geats from that of the Swedes might have been lake Vänern and the lakes of central Sweden.

But if we accept the description of the actual voyage, with the wind directions prevalent in the South Baltic Sea in early summer, and the time stated, a different explanation appears more plausible. Apparently, Beowulf made his landfall on the second day out from the land of the Geats. It is expressly stated that he used sail. There is no indication as to the size of the ship. However, since the band comprised but fifteen men, the vessel must have been quite small, nothing to compare with the Nydam boat or with the Sutton Hoo ship. The Nydam vessel, some 25 m between perpendiculars, and close on 18 m on the waterline, appears to have had fifteen pairs of oars. The minimum crew must then have been 62 men, two watches of 30 oarsmen and one helmsman each. The Sutton Hoo vessel appears to have had 20 pairs of oars, and consequently a min-

imum crew of 82. Beowulf’s vessel must have been very much smaller, presumably a square-rigged boat with 3 pairs of oars, with an overall length in the order of 10 m. Such a boat would have had a waterline of about 7-7.5 m.

The distance from Cape Hoburgen, the southern tip of Gotland, around the southern tip of Öland and Utklippan island, between the Hammers of Scania and of Bornholm, the latter a high cape visible from a great distance, and onwards, along the Scanian coast but largely out of sight of it, to the cliffs at Stevns, is 229 nautical miles. For this distance to be covered in 48 hours, an average speed of no more than 4.8 knots is required, well within the capability of a Gotlandic sixern (tremänning) of today in the prevailing fresh easterlies of early summer.

However, when returning home, Beowulf is reported first to have sighted the “cliffs of the Geats”, probably cape Hoburgen and the “raukar” at its foot. If Beowulf calculated his landfall as do modern sailors, i. e. from the moment the 36 m high Hoburgen sank into the sea to the moment he raised 40 m high cape Stevns and his eye-level, in an open boat, was about 2 m above the waterline, his sailed distance was no more than 198 nautical miles and the required an average speed no more than 4.1 knots.

It thus appears likely that the island of Gotland was the land of the Geats.

Today, the natives of Gotland, in high Swedish the ‘Gotlänningar’, call themselves ‘Gutar’. In the early Middle Ages, the spelling of Guta lagh, the Gotland Law, proves the pronunciation to have been “Gutar”, without “au” diphtong. This has been taken to prove that the name “Geats” can not have referred to the Gutar but only to old Norse ‘gautar’, modern high Swedish ‘götar’, the people by the ‘Gautelfr’ in modern Västergötland. This may be true - but we

do not know how Beowulf himself pronounced the word written 'geat'. This spelling, which indicates a diphthong, is recorded from the Beowulf manuscript, whereas the Liber Monstrorum, also from an Anglo-Saxon scriptorium but older by 200 years, has 'Getae', without a diphthong. The scribes spelled the names as they, themselves, pronounced them, in their own local dialect. We can not draw any conclusion as to how the Geats of the early sixth century pronounced their name or that of their country from the way west-Saxon scribes of the eighth and tenth centuries spelled them.

In Scandinavia, summer nights are very short and never quite dark. Even so, in the days before light-houses, any prudent sailor would schedule his passage so as to pass cape Öland, Utklippan and the Hammers in daylight. This means setting out from cape Hoburgen in the late afternoon, spending the first night at sea between Gotland and Öland, passing cape Öland and Utklippan in daylight, with a second night between Utklippan and the Hammers, passing the latter in the early morning hours and making a landfall at Stevns in the afternoon of the second day, at the expected time, "the sun standing right on the second day".

There are numerous large mounds and cairns on Gotland, mostly dating from the Bronze Age. However, Ugglehaug in Stenkyrka parish dates from the Migration period and so probably also do the mounds at Havor in Hablingbo and a few others, all of a size to compare favourably with the contemporary royal mounds of Sweden, those of the Ynglinga kings, thus testifying to the power and wealth of the families who built them.

There are but three kinds of men: the living, the dead and those who sail the sea. After his final battle, lying mortally wounded on Earnanes, the cape of the eagles, the childless Beowulf felt no ties to

the living. He chose to rest where his monument could be seen from afar and where he would be remembered by his equals, those who sailed the sea, rather than being buried inland, close to the settlements, as was the usual custom. He ordered young Wiglaf.

Bid men of battle build me a tomb  
fair after fire, on the foreland by the sea  
that shall stand as a reminder of me to my people,  
towering high above Hronesnes  
so that ocean travellers shall afterwards name it  
Beowulf's barrow, bending in the distance  
their masted ships through the mists upon the sea.

Today, one of the southern parishes on Gotland is named Rone. Beowulf's 'Hronesnes' has been taken to be derived from Anglo-Saxon 'hron', whale. This word is not known from any other Germanic language. Although whaling is usually associated with the Atlantic, until recent times it played a very important part in the economy of south Scania, of Öland and of Gotland. The dolphins, (*Phocaena phocaena*, L.) who enter the Baltic Sea in spring and leave in the autumn, were netted by the thousands. Their meat, fat, bone and hides were all utilized.

The derivation of the name 'Rone' is not known. It appears as 'Ronum' and 'Rone' in the fourteenth century (Karl Inge Sandred, pers. comm. 10.2.1984). It may be no more than a coincidence, there being no linguistic evidence either way: can possibly 'Rone' be derived from 'hron' as 'the place where dolphins are caught?' It is suggestive that a hill on the next headland to the north, now called cape Nabbu, called Arnkull, Eagle Hill.

Gad Rausing's comments on 'Beowulf, gutarnas nationalepos' in Fornvännen 1995:

"In his introduction Gannholm reminds us that we



still suffer badly from earlier generations' 'Swedish - centered' historical research. History was always written by the victors, the 'history' of the defeated and that of conquered territories usually being ignored or even misinterpreted. This is true, not only for Gotland but for all those landscapes which were conquered in the 1600s and also, *mutatis mutandis*, for those parts of the old Sweden which were lost. Who now knows anything about the Middle Ages of Karelia or of Ingermanland or, for that matter, of Finland? Gannholm reminds us that Gotland's history must be seen as that of Gotland and of the "gutar", the people of Gotland, not as part of Sweden's, at least not until after 1645.

One expression of the 'Swedish-centered interpretation of history' is that the period from the 'treaty of Aivar Strabein' to the Danish conquest of 1361 is usually interpreted as being one when Gotland "was Swedish, formed part of the Swedish realm". Even though the Swedish king at times exerted great influence in local politics, Gotland remained an independent 'state', paying tribute to the Swedish king in exchange for certain trade privileges. Not until 1361 did Gotland lose its independence, did the people of Gotland become the subjects of a 'foreign' king.

When considering Gotland, and developments in Gotland, we must always keep the island's unique geographical position in mind as well as its consequences for the islanders' economy. As Gannholm reminds us, Gotland was a very important trading centre in prehistoric and early historic times, one through which trade flowed. The abundant archaeological material from Gotland must not make us forget that a great part of the goods imported into the island, perhaps the greater part, was re-exported, and that this transit trade was one of the sources of Gotland's wealth. A great proportion of this trade may have been in the hands of Gotlandic merchants

and skippers, but Gotland is unique in one respect, one which has probably contributed to its position as a mercantile centre until the compass was introduced and reasonably accurate pilots' directions became available: in being accessible. The coasts of Sweden and Finland shelter behind an extremely complex labyrinth of islands, islets and rocks. In the sailing season the prevailing winds are from the sea towards the land, which means that the breakers fall away from the navigator of a ship approaching those coasts, being thus extremely difficult to see. By the time the mariner can see them it is too late, his ship is already among the rocks, being pounded to pieces. The land and the islands are of the same height, and of the same colour. From the sea it is almost impossible to discern the discrete islands and to spot the leading marks, if any. Only very experienced pilots, such as are thoroughly familiar with the particular stretch of coast ahead, can find their way in. This is true not only for the coasts of Finland and of Sweden—also the entrance to the Bay of Riga, the Irbensund, is an exceedingly dangerous one, winding between sandbanks far out of sight of any landmarks and around the infamous Domesnäs, and equally the mouth of the Neva shelters behind a maze of shallows."

## Note 18 (page 111)

According to Professor Mårten Stenberger, *Det forntida Gotland* (The Ancient Gotland), p. 86: "The following list give an idea about the found objects of both the high standard of the time and the roads the trade with foreign countries essentially followed. The earthed man had been a warrior in full armor. A splendid, two-edged iron sword belonged to him, three spears with iron lace and a number of arrows with tips of iron had honored him. There was also a helm formed dent for the shield. Costume buckle

of bronze, finger ring and bracteate of gold, numerous belt fittings, thereof one with buckles of silver, comb, razor and other things are items of high class. Most valuable gifts have certainly been the tall and slender cups of green glass and the large vessels of bronze, that the tomb also contained. The latter two objects are representatives of the glass and bronze goods industry, which at that time, and also during the following centuries, maintained the Roman craft traditions of Western Europe. The tomb at Barshaldar is the richest found from the Migration Period on Gotland. Its construction would have been about 500.”

According to Professor Sune Lindqvist, *Arkeologiska studier* (Archeological Studies), p 73: “Already before the end of the 100s CE the Goths stood close to, by Rome dominated, rich areas on the shores of the Black Sea. Archeologically were the repercussions in the Nordic countries very clear at that time, especially on Gotland, which was already flourishing in intensive trade relations. But the Slavs’ advance from the east forced soon a shift in the relations with the Black sea Goths farther west, over Silesia towards north-west Germany and Denmark. At the end of the Roman period the latter country in particular degree profited from both emigration to the southwest as to the southeast.

Nevertheless, the eastern parts of Scandinavia, especially Gotland and Uppland, judging by the archaeological finds, have received the most enduring impulses from the Roman culture. It was there, that a series of new, strange weapons and jewelry forms at the end of the Roman period or for the next stage, drew its roots so firmly. One can truly speak of an independent persistence of the inoculated culture even long after the immediate contact with the country of origin had been lost.”

## Note 19 (page 111)

According to Professor Birger Nerman in *Die Vendelkultur im Lichte des gotländischen Funde* (The Vendel Culture in the Light of the Gotlandish findings) p 94: “The earliest objects from this culture in Scandinavia are clean import things. These are found in more numerous scale on Gotland than elsewhere. About 550 has in Scandinavia the fully pronounced Vendel culture been formed. Gotland has played the decisive role for the rise of this culture.”

According to Professor Sune Lindqvist, *Vendelkulturens ålder och ursprung* (The Age and Origen of the Vendel Culture): “We must therefore assume that the appearance of new forms on Bornholm, Gotland, etc., at least to a significant part depends on impulses not from the north, but from the south.”

page 101 “The facts Nerman has the merit of having drawn forth let themselves with equal or greater benefit be understood if the new forms are assumed to have won a standing on the Baltic islands and other parts of eastern Scandinavia already about 500 or perhaps as early as the latter half of the 400s.”

Sune Lindqvist, *Sveriges handel under forntiden* (Swedish Trade during Old Times), p. 58: “What we find in Gotland’s and Uppland’s noble weapon graves from the following centuries is based on the same basic forms, which we find e g in the Germanic burial grounds at Nocera Umbra some 100 km north of Rome. Theodric and Anastasius’ time is thus the forming epoch not only in Italy’s history, but also in Scandinavia. Now the solid foundation is completed on which the following centuries Vendel Culture rests.”

“Eminent attired chieftain graves at Vendel church and at Valsgårde in Gamla Uppsala parish show

that imports of fine glass beakers (from the Rhine district?) is still going on around 700. The distinctive, richly varied design style III is a further evidence of relations with the West. Gotlandic Merchant Farmers and Upplandic chiefs have in their service had artists, who did not lack the contact with contemporary art practice in Ireland or in any of the monasteries, which planted its distinctive taste from far away, such as St. Gallen. Otherwise apparently the bustling business in enterprise, trade and transport has been with areas which are the prerequisite for the understanding of Gotland's and Uppland's rich flowering. In particular it has been directed at areas with an illuminated sphere with richer historical sources outside the Christian world."

Sune Lindqvist, *Ynglingaättens gravskick* (The Way of Burial by the Ynglingars) p 154: "Procopius tells about the Heruli (De Bell. Goth. II: 14): As soon as someone got old and weak or sick, he must ask his relatives as soon as possible to help him die. They amass a lot of wood to a great pile and place the man on top of the exceedingly large woodpile and then send one of the Heruli, though a stranger, for it is not custom that a kinsman should be slayer, with a knife to him. After the man who killed their mate has returned to them they ignite all the wood, starting outside. But when the flames have ceased, they collect the bones and hide them immediately into the soil. Apparently we have in this story at the same time a depiction of the Heruls common form of burial and a testimony of the Scandinavian custom to shorten one's life, which has become heavy, what we usually associate with the name 'ättestupa'. This could be performed in a form, which corresponds to a conventional funeral."

## Note 20 (page 115)

Göran Henriksson says in 'Riksblothen i Uppsala (State Sacrifice in Uppsala)', p 19: "According to Lars Olof Lodéns book, *Tid* (Time), Bonniers 1968, the Julian calendar's first day coincides with the first day of the 709<sup>th</sup> year after Rome's foundation. This revival, when one for the first time could see the crescent moon, took place on 2 of January year 45 BCE, but the new moon occurred already on January 1<sup>st</sup>. The first full moon in the Julian calendar took place on January 15. Curiously the year 45 BCE is included in the eight-year cycle, which among others contains the year 476 and is in good agreement with the historical information presented below! Have the Scandinavians joined a Roman eight-year cycle, which started from the Julian calendar's first year?

It is very exciting to find that one of the important calendrical shifts took place in 476, according to the 304-year rule that still in the 1600s was credited to King Aun. This year is centrally located within the interval of time, about 450-500, set out as Aun the old's reign."

"Before the Julian calendar was introduced they probably used a rule-related behavior of the full moon to the solar year, but when the Julian calendar was introduced the hinterland farmers kept track of the date that full moon happen to fall under the rules that are ascribed to King Aun."

According to Professor Sune Lindqvist, *Vår svenska guldålder* (Our Swedish Golden Age), p. 101: "This funeral ceremony, which I have in the previous chapter sought to describe in detail obviously through obscure verses in *Ynglingatal*, is in fact known even from ancient times. Particularly striking are in many cases the compliance with one of a Roman writer, Herodianus in the 200s depiction of the imperial action of faith in Rome. This is more than a coincidence. When a Roman emperor was burned, the

main concern was that the event was witnessed by a large crowd. They were so eager to prepare this amusement, that one got a waxen image of the deceased and burnt it, in case the family tradition prescribed interment of the corpse.

Among the spectators at the Roman consecrations were certainly many Germanic people. Certainly, the Roman precedent has set a model for numerous Germanic peoples and contributed to a richer form of burial order. An order they already in principle and perhaps in many of the details implemented in the same way. That this has occurred, confirm the examples from the Edda poems and Beowulf, which apply to non-Svear heroes. Judging by Ynglingatal the Svea royal family, thanks to the conservatism, which would characterize a long lasting autocracy, preserved the same ceremonial faithfully far beyond what has been done elsewhere.”

## Note 21 (page 118)

Pollen Analysis according to Professor Lars-König Königsson, Fornsigstuna p 20: “Probably about 500 CE or somewhat later (radioactive datings are important) the utilization of the landscape changed dramatically. Pasture ground indicators became more and their total share of the pollen sedimentation rose sharply. It was primarily the dry pastures that dominated the pollen sedimentation. Maybe the surrounding hills were primarily used for the amounts of horses, which one would imagine were related to the king’s retinue, as it regularly exploited royal estates. Cultivation indicators are also more intensely represented. In addition to barley is now even rye grown. Hemp fields and digestion plants for hemp must have been obvious features of the landscape.”

Country antiquarian David Damell, Fornsigstuna p 124: “The C<sup>14</sup> dating and dated finds appear to point

to an intensification of activities in the area from the 400s and 500s and onward. This can hypothetically be interpreted as meaning that the activities of the old Thing and cult site expanded to include such as marketing activities. Pretty soon has also a growing central power in Uppland established itself on the ground to gain influence and control over operations, especially economic. A royal estate has been established.”

According to Professor Märten Stenberger, STF årsskrift (Swedish Tourist Organisation) 1962 p. 53: “The number of farms with the name tuna, Altuna, Ärentuna, Ultuna etc., which are scattered in the Uppland rural areas are likely to have originally been the seats for chiefs or public leaders and formed central points, main campuses in communities with possibly both religious, judicial and mercantile importance. Ancient finds next to such farms give reason to suppose that they evolved in the end of the Roman Iron Age or slightly later and is connected with the oldest Svea kingdom.”

## Note 22 (page 135)

Saxo Grammaticus: Gesta Danorum

Dan 8.3.13 (p. 217,15)

“The fleet of Gotland was waiting for the Swedish fleet in the harbour named Garnum. So Ring led the land-force, while Ole was instructed to command the fleet. Now the Goths were appointed a time and a place between Wik and Werund for the conflict with the Swedes. Then was the sea to be seen furrowed up with prows, and the canvas unfurled upon the masts cut off the view over the ocean. The Danes had so far been distressed with bad weather; but the Swedish fleet had a fair voyage, and had reached the scene of battle earlier. Here Ring disembarked his forces from his fleet, and

then massed and prepared to draw up in line, both these and the army he had himself conducted overland. When these forces were at first loosely drawn up over the open country, it was found that one wing reached all the way to Werund. The multitude was confused in its places and ranks; but the king rode round it, and posted in the van all the smartest and most excellently-armed men, led by Ole, Regnald, and Wivil; then he massed the rest of the army on the two wings in a kind of curve. Ung, with the sons of Alrek, and Trig, he ordered to protect the right wing, while the left was put under the command of Laesi. Moreover, the wings and the masses were composed mainly of a close squadron of Kurlanders and of Esthonians. Last stood the line of slingers.”

“Gutonica vero classis in portu, cui Garnum nomen, Sueticam opperiebatur. Itaque Ringo terrenum ducabat agmen; at Oloni navalibus praeesse copiis imperatum. Igitur Gothis obviam Suetis veniendi inter Wic et Werundiam locus cum tempore denuntiatur. Cernere tum erat late proris exaratum mare, prospectumque pelagi explicata malis carbasa praestuebant. Et iam classis Suetis prospera navigatione usa, Danis adhuc adverso laborantibus caelo, maturius belli locum petiverat. Ubi Ringo expositas classe copias simulque, quas ipse terreno ductarat itinere, gregatim in aciem dirigere parat. Quae ubi campis laxius explicari coeperant, cornu alterum in Werundiam extrahi compertum est. Quam multitudinem rex locis ordinibusque confusam equo circuiens, in fronte promptissimos quosque et praestantiori armatura cultos sub Olone, Reginaldo Wivilloque ducibus collocat; deinde veluti flexu quodam in duo cornua reliquam aciem cogit. E quibus dextrum Yngonem cum Elrici filiis Trygonemque tueri iubet; at laevum Lesoni parere iussum. Ceterum alas globosque maxime Curetum Estonumque consertior turma texuerat. Ultima funditorum acies stabat.”

## Note 23 (page 135)

Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan (646 – 8 October 705) was the 5<sup>th</sup> Umayyad Caliph. He was born in Makkah and grew up in Medinah (both are cities in modern day Saudi Arabia). Abd al-Malik was a well-educated man and capable ruler, despite the many political problems that impeded his rule. 1300s Muslim historian ibn Khaldun states: “Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan is one of the greatest Arab and Muslim Caliphs. He followed in the footsteps of Umar ibn al-Khattab, the Commander of the Believers, in regulating state affairs”.

Abd al-Malik is credited with centralizing the administration of the Caliphate, and with establishing Arabic as its official language.

In his reign, all important records were translated into Arabic, and for the first time a special currency for the Muslim world was minted, marked by its aniconic decoration, which supplanted the Byzantine and Sasanian coins that had previously been in use. Abd al-Malik also recommenced offensive warfare against Byzantium, which led to war with the Byzantine Empire under Justinian II. The Byzantines were led by Leontios at the Battle of Sebastopolis in 692 in Asia Minor and were decisively defeated by the Caliph after the defection of a large contingent of Slavs. The Islamic currency was then made the only currency exchange in the Muslim world. Also, many reforms happened in his time as regards agriculture and commerce. Abd al-Malik consolidated Muslim rule and extended it, made Arabic the state language, and organized a regular postal service.

The Byzantine and Sassanid empires relied on money economies before the Muslim conquest, and that system remained in effect during the Umayyad period. Pre-existing coins remained in use, but with phrases from the Quran stamped on them. In addition to this, the Umayyad government began to



mint its own coins in Damascus (which were similar to pre-existing coins), the first coins minted by a Muslim government in history. Gold coins were called dinars while silver coins were called dirhams.

To assist the Caliph in administration there were six Boards at the Centre: Diwan al-Kharaj (the Board of Revenue), Diwan al-Rasa'il (the Board of Correspondence), Diwan al-Khatam (the Board of Signet), Diwan al-Barid (the Board of Posts), Diwan al-Qudat (the Board of Justice) and Diwan al-Jund (the Military Board)

The Central Board of Revenue administered the entire finance of the empire, it also imposed and collected taxes and disbursed revenue.

A regular Board of Correspondence was established under the Umayyads. It issued state missives and circulars to the Central and Provincial Officers. It co-ordinated the work of all Boards and dealt with all correspondence as the chief secretariat.

In order to check forgery Diwan al-Khatam (Bureau of Registry) a kind of state chancellery was instituted by Mu'awiyah. It used to make and preserve a copy of each official document before sealing and despatching the original to its destination. Thus in the course of time a state archive developed in Damascus by the Umayyads under Abd al-Malik. This department survived till the middle of the Abbasid period.

Mu'awiyah introduced postal service. Abd al-Malik extended it throughout his empire and Walid made full use of it. The Umayyad Caliph Abd al-Malik developed a regular postal service. Umar bin Abd al-Aziz developed it further by building caravanse-rais at stages along the Khurasan highway. Relays of horses were used for the conveyance of dispatches between the caliph and his agents and officials posted in the provinces. The main highways were divided into stages of 12 miles (19 km) each, and each stage had horses, donkeys or camels ready to

carry the post.

The Arab ibn Fadlan, who probably is the best eye-witness describer of Varangian lives, has extensively reported on a meeting in the year 922 with Varangians in the City of Bulgar in the Volga Bend. Furs and slaves seem to be the chief commodity.

He says: "I saw the al-Rus' that had come there on business and settled on the river Atil. I have never seen such perfect bodies. They were like palm trees, blond and ruddy. They have neither jackets (*kurtak*) or caftans. The men wear a suit, which covers one side of the body but leaves one hand free.

Every person has with him a hatchet, a sword and a knife, and these tools he never leaves. Their swords are broad, grooved, of Frankish manufacture. From the nail next to the neck they are tattooed green with trees and other images.

All their women have over the breast a box secured, which is of iron, silver, copper or gold, after the man's wealth and income. For each box is a ring in which a knife is attached, also at the breast. Around the neck they have neck rings of gold or silver. For every man who owns ten thousand dirhams (Islamic silver coins), he lets make a necklace to his wife, if he has twenty thousand he makes two, so that every ten thousand means a new necklace for his wife. Often a woman has many such neck rings.

Their most precious jewels are green beads of the same kind of pottery as they have on the ships. For them, they pay much. They give a dirham for a single pearl. Of those they are making the necklaces for their women. The al-Rus' dirhams (i.e. coins) are skins of squirrel and sable, with no hair but with the tail, forelimbs, hind legs, claws and head. If anything is missing, the skin is rejected of that reason. The skins can not be exported. They are left in exchange for goods."

The Arabic author al-Masudi (born c. 896, Baghdad, died September 956, Cairo, Egypt, was an Arab historian and geographer, known as the 'Herodotus of the Arabs.' Al-Masudi was one of the first to combine history and scientific geography in a large-scale work.) lets us know that the al-Rus' and Slavs took employment as warriors and servants at the Jewish-Khazar Khagan, kingdom (Khaganate) north of the Caspian Sea.

The Norsemen also settled down inside the East Slavic area, forcing their subordinates to feed them and obtain merchant goods (Rus' Khaganate).

John Julius Norwich, *Byzantium The Apogee*:

"In about 830 they had established a principality or khaganate around the upper Volga; a quarter of a century later they were using that mighty river, together with the Dnieper and the Don, to carry their dreaded longships southward against the great trading cities of the Black Sea and the Caspian. With them came their Slav subjects, by whom they were soon to be completely absorbed: almost - but not quite - the last of the barbarian tribes to strike terror into the hearts of the citizens of Constantinople.

Individual Rus' (as they called themselves) had been seen in the capital before - notably in 838-9, when a small group of them had arrived on an unspecified diplomatic mission to the court of Theophilus. There was, however, nothing diplomatic about the present occasion, and the situation was made more serious still by the absence in Asia of the Emperor, his commander-in-chief and the bulk of his army. What happened at this point is not altogether clear; it seems virtually certain, however, that the Prefect Oryphas, who had been left in command of the capital, sent messengers after Michael to alert him to the emergency. He returned at once, but by the time he reached Constantinople the raiders had sailed back up the Bosphorus into the Black Sea and headed for their homes."

"In 882 or thereabouts the Varangian Oleg had headed south from Novgorod and sailed down the Dnieper to Kiev, which he had captured and made the capital of a new Rus' state; since then trade had steadily expanded and, where Byzantium was concerned, had been regulated by a commercial treaty signed with Leo VI in 911, according to which preferential treatment was to be accorded."

"But the armada that Igor dispatched at the beginning of June 941 was all too real. This time the Greek chroniclers put the number of vessels in the Rus' fleet at ten or, in one case, fifteen thousand."

"The following spring (942), a delegation arrived from Kiev to conclude a new political and commercial treaty. Drawn up in the names of Igor on the one side and those of Romanus and all his co-Emperors on the other - and transcribed verbatim in Nestor's chronicle - it laid down a detailed set of conditions regulating trade between the two states, the duties and responsibilities to be accepted and the privileges to be enjoyed by the merchants of each in the territories of the other. Article II e.g. stated that Rus' wishing to enter Constantinople might do so only in unarmed groups of up to fifty at a time, accompanied by an imperial representative; any merchandise purchased for more than 50 zolotniki would be delivered in bond and excise duty levied. Other articles related to the treatment of escaped slaves, extradition arrangements, punishments for crimes committed by Rus' in the Empire or Byzantines in Rus' and, in the event of threats from any third power, the duty of each of the signatories to send immediate and unlimited assistance to the other.

After the Emperor had affixed his seal the Rus' returned to Kiev, together with imperial representatives empowered to sign the ratification documents once the Grand Prince had similarly given his approval. Both sides were well pleased with what they

had achieved, and so relations between Rus' and Byzantium were to remain unruffled for a quarter of a century."

"Liudprand and Liutefred, the ambassadors from the Caliph of Cordova and their respective staffs were not the only foreign envoys to be received by Constantine Porphyrogenitus. In 946, a year after his coming to power, there had been a Saracen embassy from Saif ed-Daula to discuss an exchange of prisoners; in 949, the same year as the other three, the Magyars sent a high-powered delegation which not only concluded a treaty of non-aggression but actually submitted itself to Christian baptism. Most important of all, however, in its long-term effect was the visit in 957 of Princess Olga of Rus', Igor's widow and now Regent of the young Kievan state, on a mission of peace and good will. After a series of magnificent receptions, the climax came with her own christening by the Patriarch in St Sophia, in the course of which she adopted the name of the Empress Helena, who stood proxy. If the Byzantines had hoped that this ceremony would be immediately followed by the mass conversion of her people, they were disappointed. But the seed had been sown; and thirty years later, under Olga's grandson Vladimir, it would become clear that it had fallen on fertile ground."

Niketas Ooryphas first appears in our sources in 860, as urban prefect of Constantinople, when a Rus' fleet suddenly appeared in the entrance to the Bosphorus and started pillaging the city's suburbs.

Sune Lindqvist, *Uppsala högar och Ottarshögen* (Uppsala Mounds and the Ottar Mound) p. 247: "Judging by the costume description and other conditions, ibn Fadlan has seen men and women from Gotland rather than men and women from Uppland."

## Note 24 (page 138)

According to Frederick Ochsner, *Gotlands kristnande* (The Christianization of Gotland), p 25: "The otherwise known churches on Gotland, as archaeological excavations and time provisions give notice of, are the stave churches in Hemse, Guldrupe and Silte. They seem to have been built around the year 1000. At least for the part of Silte one can with regard to the coin finds even venture a guess at the end of the 900s. According to Guta Saga, these churches belong to them, which were later built 'for greater convenience' for the Merchant Farmers and people in the country. The churches in Stenkyrka, Atlingbo and Fardhem are older according to Guta Saga and must therefore have been built and inaugurated sometime in the 800s and 900s. Pilgrim Bishops and traveling missionary bishops must therefore during these centuries have visited Gotland. Reasonably, we can also assume that one and another archbishop of Hamburg-Bremen ventured out on an inspection tour in their great predecessors wake. One has in any case demonstrably done so, namely Archbishop Unni. It may be of interest to recall an old farm legend from Hunninge in Klinte, that certainly can not be accorded any scientific evidence, but that certainly is as a clue puzzling.

Archbishop Unni reigned between 918-936. He was like most of his predecessors only a monk at the monastery Korvey, later chaplain and secretary to the canon Leidrat at the Bremen Cathedral Chapter. Emperor Konrad I granted Unni the Bishop rod, and thus ignored the clergy and the people, who chose Leidrat. The emperor Henry I the Fowler, after his victory over the Danes in 934, pacified territories to the north where the Danes had been harrying the Frisians by sea. The monk and chronicler Widukind of Corvey in his *Res gestae Saxonicae* reports that the Danes were subjects of Henry the Fowler. Henry incorporated into his

kingdom territories held by the Wends, who together with the Danes had attacked Germany, and he also conquered Schleswig in 934. Now Unni resumed missionary work in Scandinavia. He came to Schleswig, Jutland, Gotland and Sweden. He died in 936 during this trip and is buried at Birka. At Klinte is an old farm, called Hunninge. The church floor has a grave slab with runes, which means: "With God's grace, Rodwaldr from Hunninge has given a tenth of his landed property for his soul and his Father's soul and Alvasts' soul. The legend says that Rodwaldr descended from Bremen and that the Archbishop Unni during his missionary journey had lived with him for a long time. The farm would have had his name and then really be called Unnigård. A dirt road behind the farm, leading to Lojsta, is still called the Bishop Street. Lojsta on its part is located near Fardhem, which according to Guta Saga was the first church in southern three-section. Of course, we must not construct the connection, which we do not have a clue about, but it is certainly strange that on a farm in Gotland we preserve the memory of an archbishop and his missionary journey from the early 900s.

At the cemetery in Sund on Åland is an old tomb cross in stone preserved, on whose crossarm has been carved UINI E, which can be interpreted Unni Episcopus or Erkibiskop. The design of the letters suggest the 900s. The also carved Peter Cross, the symbol of the Pope, may be indicative of Unni's legate for the Nordic countries. It might well be Archbishop Unni's memorial cross. According to Adam of Bremen was Unni during the mission trip in 936 buried at Birka. This statement need only mean that Unni is buried in the diocese of Birka, which included the islands in the Baltic Sea, and the site may well be Sund on Åland. Of that reason is neither Sund or any other place in Åland the market town of Birka, after which the diocese was named."

According to Professor Birger Nerman, *En kristen mission på Gotland* (A Christian mission on Gotland) p 38: "Gotland has during the whole Vendel Period, as in some other parts of the Iron Age been the center of the Baltic Sea trade, and undoubtedly has been the leading Nordic area in the arts and crafts. In the second half of this period can on Gotland stronger than elsewhere be observed relations with countries from which the Christian mission was emanated to the non-Christian peoples of the North Sea and the Baltic Sea. In the late 600s, and during the first half of the 700s there are strong Irish influence, primarily resulting in rich band and knot ornaments. During the second half of the 700s come strong influences from the Carolingian area, which bring with them the earliest wave of Carolingian art. This wave, which is characterized by medallion subdivision of the surfaces, the naturalistic 'lion figures' and bird images, has so far only been found copied on Gotland. But under such circumstances, it would be very natural, if a Christian missionary soon found his way to Gotland."

"Gotland during the Vendel Period stood in especially close links with the Lake Mälaren area. If you take into consideration all circumstances, one must find it almost surprising, if not before or during the Frankish mission in Birka about 830 no attempt was made to spread Christianity on Gotland. In fact, a mission on this island should have been the natural precursor to the mission in the Lake Mälaren area."

According to Professor Elias Wadstein, *Friserna och forntida handelsvägar i Norden* (The Frisians and ancient trade routes in the North) p 11: "Birka, Birkö, Berkö, Biarkö described thus an area (an island), which was what the Danes call a 'Birk', i.e. an area that had its specific jurisdictions and laws. It was also in earlier times common that in trading places and cities, special laws were in force. As Birka,

Birkø etc in Sweden and Norway were just trading or market places, these names were soon synonymous with ‘market town’ or ‘venue’. Over time, the same names that included the foreign word with the similar native tree name, Sw. björk, da. birk (in earlier times, in some forms also biark, biærk) and then converted the names to Sw. Björkö, No . Biarkøj. As specifically Birka in lake Mälaren is concerned it has occurred relatively late. Still in the year 1415 the site’s name was written Byrkö. In that way became the name of the in a ‘birk’ applicable law; da. birke-ret in Sweden to Biærkøarætter and in Norway to Biarkøyiaætrtr.“

## Note 25 (page 139)

According to Lena Thunmark-Nylén Gotlandsparadoxen. (The Gotlandic paradox.) Tor 1985: “There is a significant difference between the churchyard tombs and the contemporary grave field graves. In the latter are often found weapons and cooking utensils with ‘food for the final journey’, but this kind of burial objects are not found among the churchyard graves objects. There the ancient things only belong to the suit, daggers, combs, and keys have hung in the men’s belts, or in women’s so-called implement buckles, deposited on the suit.”

“Gotland is an outsider in more ways than one as it meets us in the archaeological sources of shapes and objects. What strikes one is that there are so many old things and that the old things are peculiar as compared with those in the rest of Scandinavia. Both are striking in the Late Iron Age, especially the youngest Viking Age.

The specific shape of the form world in Gotland emerges most clearly in women suit buckles, jewelry and other accessories. The best known example is the pair of buckles on the woman’s suit, which for the Viking Age Gotland always consists of a pair of so-called animal head shaped buckles while the

rest of Scandinavia have a few so-called oval clamping dents. The third buckle in the suit, which holds together the outer garment, shawl, is on Gotland usually a known dosage form clasp or sometimes a back button closure. On the Swedish mainland they have instead used the round flat buckles or trice lacinated or the like.

The buckles and belts with buckles and fittings on men’s attire are more international and are often of types common in particular to Finland and East Baltikum, although the detailed shapes usually can specify the area of origin. If one finds a ring strap with ends in the form of animal heads with triangular ears, it can be assumed that it is a Gotlandic product.

The proportions of the quantity of archæological relics is shown in the relationship between oval buckles and the animal head shaped buckles, two buckle varieties, used for the same purpose, on the Swedish mainland and by the Gotlandic women. From the Swedish mainland, including Birka and Öland are a total of around 1500 oval buckle clasps known, and from the small island of Gotland nearly as many or approximately 1200 animal head shaped buckles.“

## Note 26 (page 139)

### The Rus’ Khaganate

The origins of the Rus’ Khaganate are unclear. The first Norse settlers of the region arrived in the lower basin of the Volkhov River in the mid-700s. The country comprising the present-day Saint-Petersburg, Novgorod, Tver, Yaroslavl, and Smolensk regions became known in Old Norse sources as ‘Garðaríki’, the land of forts. Gradually Norse warlords, known to the Turkic-speaking steppe peoples as ‘köl-beki’ or ‘lake-princes’, came to dominate some of the region’s Finno-Ugric and Slavic peo-



ples, particularly along the Volga trade route linking the Baltic Sea with the Caspian Sea and Serkland. The Rus' Khaganate was a state, or a cluster of city-states, set up by a people called Varangians or al-Rus', (Gotlandic merchants from the Baltic Sea region) in what is today northern Russia. It flourished roughly between the late 700s and early-to-mid- 800s. The region's population at that time was composed of Baltic, Slavic, Finnic and Turkic peoples.

According to contemporaneous sources, the population centers of the region, which may have included the proto-towns of Holmgård, Aldeigjuborg, Lyubsha, Alaborg, Sarskoye Gorodishche, and Timerevo, were ruled by rulers using the Old Turkic title Khagan. The Rus' Khaganate period marked the genesis of a distinct al-Rus' ethnos, and its successor states would include Kievan Rus' and later states from which modern Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine evolved. The ruler of the al-Rus' is mentioned by the title of 'Khagan' in several historical sources. Primary sources make it plausible that the title of Khagan was applied to the rulers of the al-Rus' during a rather short period, roughly between their embassy to Constantinople (838) and Basil I's letter (871). All Byzantine sources after Basil I refer to the Rus' rulers as Archons (Greek for 'ruler').

The dating of the Khaganate's existence has been the subject of debates among scholars and remains unclear. There are no primary sources which mention the al-Rus' or its Khagans prior to the 830s. Equally contentious has been discussion about the date of the khaganate's disintegration. The title of Khagan is not mentioned in the Rus'-Byzantine treaties (907, 911, 944), or in 'De Ceremoniis', a record of court ceremonials meticulously documenting the titles of foreign rulers, when it deals with Olga's reception at the court of Constantine VII in 945. Moreover, ibn Fadlan, in his detailed account of the al-Rus' (922), designated their supreme ruler as Ma-

lik (chieftain). From this fact, Peter Golden concluded via an argumentum ex silentio that the khaganate collapsed some point between 871 and 922. Zuckerman, meanwhile, argues that the absence of the title 'Khagan' from the first Rus'-Byzantine Treaty proves that the khaganate had vanished by 911.

## Note 27 (page 140)

The Arab ibn Rustah (a 900s Persian explorer and geographer born in Rosta district, Isfahan) says that the al-Rus' came by ship to the land of the Slavs, and that they live on an island, surrounded by a lake. This island, on which they live, has an extent of three days' journey (about 120 km) and is covered with forests and swamps. It is unhealthy and to an extent so marshy that the ground when you put your foot on it rocks. Ibn Rustah and Gurdesi also relates that the al-Rus' attacked the Slavs with arms, brought them off as slaves and sold them. They did not own farmland, but supported themselves by what they took from the Slavs, by forcing them to hand over various kinds of goods.

In these notices, which depicts conditions in early 900s we thus meet details about veritable slave hunts, when the Gotlanders went on to the East.

Emperor Constantine Porphyrogenetos (905-959) depicts how the Rus', in the winter, lived among the subjugated Slavs, while they spent the spring and summer in Kiev and on trading trips.

He further says that when the Rus' have passed the last of the Dnjepr rapids they performed a ritual sacrifice and put down a circle of arrows around a large oak. Such a practice is only known from Gudingsåkrarna in Vallstena in Gotland.

According to Professor Sune Lindqvist: "Nerman imagines that they were sat in a circuit, in such a

way as some spearheads actually have been found on Gudingsåkrarna. He supposes further, that in this way they have encompassed the mighty oak, or other trees in the Gotlandic meadows.

Why would the spears in Gudingsåkrarna, as in this case, have been stuck down askew, as was said to have happened? Unfortunately we are not notified in which direction they leaned. Can we still not, until clarity is gained about this, assume that all the spears of the same chip are set so the upper ends of the shafts could be connected? The arrows or spears have, in this case, formed a conical cage, or at least the carcass around the living birds they had offered as a sacrifice. There they stay until the lot finally decides their fate.

If this interpretation, as an observation from Gudingsåkrarna is correct, it gives the emperor's words certainly a peculiar detail, a sharp image of a Norse place of sacrifice. One must imagine the eagerly cackling or crying birds crammed into spear cages under the holy tree's bushy crown!"

As earlier noticed the Gotlandic merchants to the east of river Elbe were called Varangians or al-Rus'. Vikings only appear west of the river Elbe.

## Note 28 (page 140)

**Timerevo** (Russian: Тимерёво, Timeryovo) is an archaeological site near the village of Bolshoe Timeryovo, seven kilometres southwest of Yaroslavl, Russia, which yielded the largest deposits of early medieval Arabic coins in Northern Europe.

The site covers an area of five hectares and has no fortifications. It seems to have been operated by the Varangians from their principal base at Sarskoye Gorodishche, near Rostov. Like Sarskoe, it is situated at a distance from a major waterway, the Volga River. Nevertheless, substantial amounts of

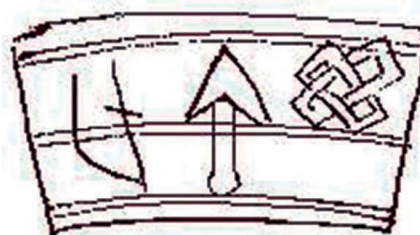


Fig 151. Inscription upon a chess piece unearthed at Timerevo.

Arabic coins indicate its position as the most important Gotlandic Varangian trading outpost in the proximity of the Volga trade route.

The site was first settled by a mixture of Gotlandic merchants and local population in the 800s. This dating is based on three major hoards of dirhams that were detected at Timeryovo since the 1960s. The first hoard, numbering about 2,100 coins, was dispersed before scholars learnt about its existence. Only seventeen coins are known from this deposit, the earliest datable to 867. Another hoard also numbering more than 2,000 dirhams (entire and in pieces), was the largest deposit of such coins ever found from Early Medieval Europe. The earliest coin was issued by Idris II (who reigned from 805 to 829 in Morocco). Many dirhams have Runic graffiti carved on them. The site was abandoned towards the end of the 800s, only to be revived half a century later. At least 400 druzhina kurgans were erected there in that period. The burial rite normally featured cremation. Excavations revealed an unusual amount of Gotlandic pottery and a surprising number of crosses, indicating that a large portion of the Gotlandic population was Christianized. Among other finds were amber artifacts from the Baltic Sea region, a unique roaster, a spatha labelled by a certain Ulfbert from the Rhine, and a chess piece with an enigmatic Runic inscription (illustrated, above).

The site was definitively abandoned in the early

1000s, simultaneously with the decline of Sarskoe Gorodishche and the foundation of Yaroslavl. The latest coin found at Timerevo was issued by Bruno II of Friesland (dating it between 1038 and 1057).

**Smolensk** is among the oldest Russian cities. The first recorded mention of Smolensk was in 863, two years after the founding of Kievan Rus', when the Varangian chieftains Askold and Dir, while on their way to Kiev, decided against challenging Smolensk on account of its large size and population. According to the Russian Primary Chronicle, Smolensk was located on the area settled by the West Slavic Radimichs tribe. It was probably located slightly downstream, at the archaeological site of Gnezdovo.

Oleg of Novgorod took it in 882 when passing from Novgorod to Kiev.

The first foreign writer to mention Smolensk was the emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus. In *De Administrando Imperio* (c. 950) he described Smolensk as a key station on the trade route from the Varangians to the Greeks.

**The Rus' people sailed from the Baltic Sea up the Western Dvina as far as they could, then they pulled their boats out onto the ground and dragged them along to the upper Dnieper.**

It was in Smolensk that they supposedly mended any leaks and small holes that might have appeared in their boats from being dragged on the ground and they used tar to do that, hence the city name.

**Gnezdovo or Gnyozdovo** (Russian: Гнёздово) is an archeological site located near the village of Gnyozdovo in Smolensk Oblast, Russia. The site contains extensive remains of a Slavic-Varangian settlement that flourished in the 900s as a major trade station on the trade route from the Varangians to the Greeks.

The archaeological site comprises a 'citadel' (goro-

dishche, Russian: Городище), formerly situated at the confluence of the Dnieper and Svinets Rivers, and a ring of ancient rural settlements (selitba) which occupy an area of 17.5 hectares, of which roughly 5,000 square metres (54,000 sq ft) had been excavated by the end of the 1900s. This makes the site one of the largest survivals of the Viking Age in Europe: only Hedeby covered a larger territory (24 hectares), with the sites of Birka (13 hectares), Dublin (12 hectares), Ribe (10 hectares), and Gdańsk (1 hectare) trailing behind. There are about 3,000 burial mounds, arranged in eight clusters of kurgans. Of these, about 1,300 mounds have been explored by Russian and Soviet archaeologists, starting in 1874.

There is some disagreement among scholars as to which ethnic element predominated at Gnyozdovo. Although a Varangian presence is pronounced, nineteen mounds out of twenty contain ordinary burials of Krivich and Baltic men and women. The burial rite is mostly cremation. The most numerous finds are household utensils and pottery. As a general observation, the Gnyozdovo tumuli have parallels with the "druzhina kurgans" of Chernigov, such as the Black Grave.

Seven hoards of Byzantine and Arabian coins and a Byzantine dish bearing an image of Simargl have shown that the local community carried on a prosperous trade along the Dnieper. The metal objects represented include hauberks (not typical for Scandinavian sites), helmets, battle-axes, Carolingian swords, and arrows.

Gnyozdovo is situated downstream from the Dvina–Dnieper portages, at a point where the Svinets and several small waterways empty into the Dnieper. Like Smolensk at a later period, Gnyozdovo flourished through trade along the Dnieper going south to Constantinople and north over portages to the Dvina and the Lovat, two rivers flowing to the Baltic Sea. At the time of its establishment, the local

citadel served a defensive function against possible attacks on the portages, where the Varangian traders would be at their most vulnerable. After internal tensions within Kievan Rus' settled down, the site of Gnyozdovo "formed the critical exchange centre and refitting base on the route from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea".

The settlement declined in the early years of the 1000s, simultaneously with other Varangian trade stations in Eastern Europe. By the end of the century, Gnyozdovo's importance as a trade centre had been completely supplanted by nearby Smolensk.

The ruling Kievan Rus' grand prince seems to have used Gnyozdovo as a pogost from which he levied tribute from the Krivichs. Since the knyaz's družina was composed primarily of the Varangians, a substantial Varangian presence at Gnyozdovo seems to be well motivated. Concurrently, Smolensk was an urban centre of the Slavic (Krivich) population, where the regional veche was held. After Vladimir the Great established a local principality for his son, the administrative centre of the region and the seat of princely power was moved from Gnyozdovo to Smyadyn Castle near Smolensk.

**Staraya Ladoga**, Finnish: Vanha Laatokka or the Aldeigjuborg of Norse sagas, is a village (selo) in the Volkhovsky District of Leningrad Oblast, Russia, located on the Volkhov River near Lake Ladoga, 8 km north of the town of Volkhov. The village used to be a prosperous trading outpost in the 700s and 800s. A multi-ethnic settlement, it was dominated by Gotlandic Varangians who were called by the name of al-Rus' and for that reason is sometimes called the first capital of Russia.

Dendrochronology suggests that Staraya Ladoga was founded in 753. Until 950, it was one of the most important trading ports of Eastern Europe. Merchant ships sailed from the Baltic Sea through

Staraya Ladoga to Novgorod. An alternative way led down the Volga River along the Volga trade route to the Khazar capital of Atil, and then to the southern shores of the Caspian Sea, all the way to Baghdad.

Tellingly, the oldest Arabian Middle Age coin in Europe was unearthed in Staraya Ladoga. Old (staraya means 'old') Staraya Ladoga's inhabitants were Gotlanders, Finns, and Slavs, hence different names for the city. The original Finnish name, Alode-joki (i.e., 'lowland river'), was rendered as 'Aldeigja' in Norse language and as 'Ladoga' in Old East Slavic.

#### **Staraya Ladoga under Rurik and Rurikids**

According to the Hypatian Codex, the legendary Varangian leader Rurik arrived at Ladoga in 862 and made it his capital. Rurik's successors later moved to Novgorod and then to Kiev, thus laying foundations for the powerful state of Kievan Rus'. There are several huge kurgans, or royal funerary barrows, at the outskirts of Ladoga. One of them is said to be Rurik's grave, and another one—that of his successor Oleg. The Heimskringla and other Norse sources mention that in the late 990s Eiríkr Hákonarson of Norway raided the coast and set the town ablaze. Ladoga was the most important trading center in Eastern Europe from about 800-900 CE, and it is estimated that between 90 to 95% of all Arab dirhams found in present day Sweden, mainly Gotland, passed through Ladoga.

**Holmgårðr** (Holmgård) is among the oldest cities of Russia.

The Sofia First Chronicle first mentions it in 859; the Novgorod First Chronicle mentions it first in the year 862, when it was allegedly already a major station on the trade route from the Baltic Sea to Miklagårðr.

The Varangian name is Holmgårðr or Holmgarðir

mentioned in Norse Sagas as existing at a yet earlier stage, but in this case historical facts are difficult to untangle from legend.

Originally, Holmgård referred only to the stronghold southeast of the present-day city, Ryurikovo Gorodishche (named in comparatively modern times after the Varangian chieftain Rurik, who supposedly made it his ‘capital’ around 860). Archeological data suggests that the Gorodishche, the residence of the Knyaz (prince), dates from the mid-800s, whereas the town itself dates only from the end of the 900s. Hence the name Novgorod, ‘new city’, from Old Russian Новъ and Городъ (Nov and Gorod).

#### Princely state within Kievan Rus’

In 882, Rurik’s successor, Oleg of Novgorod, conquered Kiev and founded Gardariki, the state of Kievan Rus’. Novgorod’s size as well as its political, economic, and cultural influence made it the second most important city in Kievan Rus’. According to a custom, the elder son and heir of the ruling Kievan Rus’ grand prince was sent to rule Novgorod even as a minor. When the ruling monarch had no such son, Novgorod was governed by posadniks, such as the legendary Gostomysl, Dobrynya, Konstantin, and Ostromir.

The dichotomy of a Slavic veche centre and a Varangian druzhina station has parallels in other areas of Kievan Rus’. Compare Novgorod and Holmsgard, Chernigov and Shestovitsa, Rostov and Sarkoye Gorodishche, Yaroslavl and Timeryovo. In later centuries, the ruling princes from the House of Rurik preferred to settle in a fortified castle at a distance from their capital: in Vyshgorod rather than Kiev, in Smydyn rather than Smolensk, in Kideksha rather than Suzdal, in Bogolyubovo rather than Vladimir.

## Note 29 (page 145)

### Medieval World’s Greatest Kingdom

The Khazar Khaganate, Khazaria (c. 600-1016 CE) was a successor state of the Western Turks, a poly-ethnic-multifaith state with a population of Turkic, Uralic, Slavic, and Caucasian peoples. Khazaria was the first feudal state to be established in Eastern Europe. They were a semi-nomadic Turkic people who established one of the largest polities of medieval Eurasia, with the capital of Atil and a territory comprising much of modern-day European Russia, western Kazakhstan, eastern Ukraine, Azerbaijan, large portions of the northern Caucasus (Circassia, Dagestan), parts of Georgia, the Crimea, and north-eastern Turkey. **Khazar inscriptions are mainly in an eastern Turkish runic script.** Khazaria was one of the major arteries of commerce between northern Europe and southwestern Asia, as well as a connection to the Silk Road. Atil was located along the Volga delta at the northwestern corner of the Caspian Sea. The city is referred to as Khamlij in 800s Arabic sources, and the name Atil appears in the 900s. At its height, the city was a major center of trade, and consisted of three parts separated by the Volga. The western part contained the administrative center of the city, with a court house and a large military garrison. The eastern part of the city was built later and acted as the commercial center of the Atil, and had many public baths and shops. Between them was an island on which stood the palaces of the Khazar Khagan and Bek. The island was connected to one of the other parts of the city by a pontoon bridge. According to Arab sources, one half of the city was referred to as Atil, while the other was named Khazaran. The name “Khazar” is found in numerous languages and seems to be tied to a Turkic verb form meaning ‘wandering’ (Modern Turkish: Gezer). Turkic people today still call the Cas-



pian Sea the Khazar Sea. Pax Khazarica is a term used by historians to refer to the period during which Khazaria dominated the Pontic steppe and the Caucasus Mountains. A perplexing people who rose to European and Asian dominance. They are most famous for their national conversion to Judaism. Khazar Correspondence is one of the very few primary sources on history of the Khazars.

The period when the Khazars had their greatest power corresponds with the European Dark Ages, and took place at a very important time for the creation of capitalism. Its strategic importance between China on one side and the Middle East and Europe on the other, temporarily gave all of Eurasia incredible riches.

In medieval (800s-1000s) Byzantine sources written in Greek, Khazaria was referred to as Eastern Tourkia, whereas the Principality of Hungary was referred to as Western Tourkia.

The Khazars appear under their own name in Byzantine sources for the first time in 626, when they concluded an alliance with the Byzantine Empire for common offence against the Persians.

Khazaria had an ongoing entente with Byzantium. The Khazars aided the Byzantine Emperor Heraclius (610-641) by sending an army of 40,000 soldiers in his campaign against the Persians in the Byzantine-Sassanid War of 602-628. In the 700s, they waged a series of wars against the then superpower the Caliphate, serving their partner in wars against the Abbasid Caliphate. In 775 Leo was crowned as sole Emperor of the Byzantine Empire (he was son of Tzitzak, a Khazar princess and daughter of Khagan Bihar who became the first wife of Byzantine Emperor Constantine V, 741-775). Sarkel (a Turkish word meaning White Fortress) was built in the 830s by a joint team of Greek and Khazar architects to protect the north-western border of the Khazar state. The chief engineer during the construction of Sarkel was Petronas Kamateros

who later became the governor of Cherson.

Historians agree that this prevented Europe from becoming an Islamic continent. The Khazar merchants (Radhanites) dominated part of the world trade, controlling much of the Silk Road. In the Spilling treasure in Gotland a silver coin minted in Kazaria, called Yarmaqs, was found, bearing the inscription 'Moses is the Prophet of God' (Fig 82).

The Khazars played a role in the balance of power and destiny of world civilization. After Kubrat's Great Bulgaria was destroyed in 668 by the Khazars, some of the Bulgars fled to the west and founded a new Bulgar state (present day Bulgaria) near the Danubian Plain, under the command of Khan Asparukh. Most of the rest of the Bulgars fled to the north of the Volga River region and founded another state there called Volga Bulgaria (present day Chuvashia). The eldest son of Kubrat, Bat-Bayan Bezmer allied his Kara-Bulgars (Black Bulgars) with the Khazars. Kara-Bulgars were descendants of the tribes from Attila's state called Kutrigurs.

The Khazars had, for years, been venturing forth southward, in their marauding raids on the Muslim countries south of the Caucasus.

In a hadith, Khazars are mentioned as follows:

Allah's Apostle (Mohammed) said, "The Hour will not be established until you fight with the Turks; people with small eyes, red faces, and flat noses. Their faces will look like shields coated with leather. The Hour will not be established till you fight with people whose shoes are made of hair." (Volume 4, Book 52, Number 179)

The major attempt of the Muslim armies to take control of the Transcaucasus came in 622 while Mohammed was still leading Islam. Islamic armies conquered part of Persia, Syria, Mesopotamia, Egypt, Armenia, and what is now the modern-day Azerbaijan and surrounded the Byzantine heartland (present-day Turkey) in a pincer movement which ex-

tended from the Mediterranean to the Caucasus and the southern shores of the Caspian. This was the time when the long series of wars called the Arab–Khazar Wars began. These wars largely ended with Arab defeats, with a fairly well-known commander, Abd ar-Rahman ibn Rabiah, perishing in one instance. The Arab armies' inability to traverse the Caucasus played a role in preventing them from succeeding in their siege of the Byzantine capital Constantinople. Coupled with the military barrier presented by the Khazars themselves, this protected Europe from more direct and intensive assaults by the forces of Islam.

Historians, and medieval historians in particular, should be aware of the important existence of this powerful kingdom which played just as crucial a part in the stemming of the Arab advance into Europe as Charles Martel did at the Battle of Tours in 732. However, this Khazar kingdom was neither Christian nor Muslim at the height of its power but Judaic, which makes study of it all the more interesting, since it places a powerful Judaic military presence amidst the power politics of the period in question. This kingdom held considerable sway between the early 600s and early 1000s, extending its power from its homeland in the northern Caucasus to Eastern Europe and beyond. It was only in 1016 when a joint Rus'-Byzantine expedition was launched against the Khazars that the Khazar empire suffered irremediable loss and its decline was sealed. Most of our evidence for the history of the Khazars comes from literary sources.

Both the Byzantine and the Arab empires viewed the Khazars as a linchpin in the power-diplomacy game and an all-important factor in any balance of power considerations. Byzantium regarded Khazaria as more important than any Western kingdom, as can be seen from the Byzantine emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus' *De Cerimoniis*, a treatise

written on state protocol in the 900s, where letters of correspondence to the Khagan of the Khazars were to be given a gold seal worth three solidi, whereas those addressed to the pope in Rome or the 'Emperor in the West' were given a seal worth only two solidi. The Khazars did resist culturally attempts to not allow any of the outside powers to gain influence in their territories. This is amply illustrated by the decision of the royal family, sometime in the 700s-800s under either the kingship of Bulan or Obadiah, to take the unusual step of converting to Judaism. In this way neither Christian Byzantium nor the new Muslim empire to the south could gain power indirectly through religious blackmail and other such means. By adopting Judaism the Khazar khagan ingeniously managed to give a neutral impression to those powers that were involved in Christian-Muslim, and Christian-Christian squabbles. Thus Khazaria not only resisted religious influence, and the political influence that accompanied it, from Christian and Muslim powers but also managed somewhat to divert their perceptions of hostility which would have arisen had the Khazars converted to one of these faiths.

The story of the Khazar conversion, although largely fictional, contains revealing insights into the power-politics of the day and how religious considerations played a major part. According to the story the khagan, on hearing the various arguments put forward by Christian, Muslim and Judaic missionaries, asked each in turn which of the other two religions was considered more acceptable after their own. As to what the Jewish representative replied is of no consequence since both the Christian and Muslim representatives (fearing each other) answered that after their own the Jewish faith would be the most acceptable. The consequences of a Khazar conversion to either Christianity or Islam could have been disastrous to the unsuccessful party. As

things turned out the Khazars opted for a path which attracted least hostility, least obligation, and least cultural influence from any of the other major powers of the day.

As to the origins of the Khazar kingdom, this can be traced back to the West Turkish empire – a confederation of Turkic tribes, of which the Khazars were but one, stretching from the Black Sea to Turkestan in the mid-500s to mid-600s. Some time in the 600s this empire began to dissolve and the Khazars later emerged as dominant in the area north of the Caucasus. Later expanding their domains, until by the end 800s they controlled an empire which ranged from the plains of Hungary to the Aral Sea and Ural Mountains. The Khazar merchants (Radhanites) controlled all trade passing through south-east Europe towards the Byzantine and Arab empires and the numerous peoples living in this vast area. Thus Khazaria was not only strategically important and a military force to be reckoned with but controlled an important trade route. Their capital, Atil, was at the crossroads of east-west as well as north-south trade routes, and the Khazars extracted a large revenue from taxing goods passing through their territories, not only towards the high civilisations of Islam and Byzantium but also towards the western European kingdoms, northern Europe, and the Turkic peoples to the east of their domains. In their capital Atil the Gotlandic Varangians met the Khazarin Radhanite merchants and exchanged goods. Most of the state revenues came from taxes imposed on trade passing through the Khazar empire, and taxes exacted upon subject peoples. It was, mainly the military might of the Khazars that kept the empire intact. Once this had been weakened, by persistent Kievan Rus' attacks in the late 900s to early 1000s, there was not much else to hold the empire together.

There is also mention that Gotlandic Varangians

served as mercenaries with the Khazarian Khagan. Kiev was a Slavic settlement on the great trade route between the Baltic Sea and Constantinople, and was a tributary of the Khazars, until seized by the Varangians in 882. Under Varangian rule, the city became a capital of the Kievan Rus'.

According to Professor John Nihlén, In 'Under rutat segel' (Under chequered sail):

"Does ibn Rustah (a 900s Persian explorer and geographer born in Rosta district, Isfahan, Persia) depict Gotland?" The archaeological discoveries are not the only evidence of the Gotland-Rus' contacts. Ibn Rustah's description of the land of the Rus' which we have already become acquainted with is in some details such that, in my opinion one can suspect, that the Rus'-country, at least in this case refers to Gotland. He is saying at the beginning of the already quoted paragraph:

"What the Rus' concern, they live on an island, surrounded by a lake. This island, on which they live, have an extent of three days' journey (about 120 km) and is covered with forests and swamps. It is unhealthy and to an extent so marshy that the ground when you put your foot on it rocks. They attack the Slavs, go to them on ships ...."

This description could well apply to Gotland. An island, from which one easily sailed over to the land of the Slavs, was just Gotland. And the extent of three days' journey, or about 120 km is almost exactly the length of Gotland. We also know that Gotland in ancient times was full of forests, swamps (most of which are now drained) and marshes.

## Note 30 (page 147)

Ellis H.R. Davidson, *The Viking Road to Byzantium*, p. 57: "In *Annales Bertiniani* for the year 839 it says that the Greek ambassadors from the Byz-

antine emperor arrived in Ingelheim. This note can be found in the section written by the Bishop of Troy, Prudentius, who was a reliable columnist. It is said that the Greeks had come to ask Louis Pious for help. They had with them some men who said they were called al-Rus' (Rhos). These men had been on a diplomatic mission to Constantinople, but could not get back because of hostile tribes blocked their path. Emperor Theophilus asked Louis to allow them to return through his territory. As Louis became curious about the men and thought they could possibly be spies, he questioned them closely and found that they were from far away ('comperit eos gentis esse Sueonum') (from the Baltic Sea).

The leader of their nation is called Khacanus (Kha-gan) in the annals. We know that the title was later used for the princes of Kiev in the 900s. One can assume that the al-Rus' took the title from the Khazars and applied it to their own leader."

"Kiev was a Slavic settlement on the great trade route between the Baltic Sea and Constantinople, and was a tributary of the Khazars, until seized by the Varangians in the mid-800s. Under Varangian rule, the city became a capital of the al-Rus'. This is the first written document we have that the Varangian merchants used the Dnjepr route to Constantinople."

The Gotlanders had close contact with the Byzantine Empire during late 800s, 900s and 1000s.

It is not clear when the al-Rus' and the Byzantines first came into contact. One of the first mentions of the al-Rus' (Rhos) near the Byzantine Empire in addition to Annales Bertiniani comes from Life of St. George of Amastria a hagiographic work whose dating is debated. According to this the Byzantines had first come into contact with the al-Rus' in 838. The exceptional timing of the attack in 860 suggests the al-Rus' had been informed of the city's



Fig 152. *The al-Rus' under the walls of Tsargrad (Constantinople). Detail from a medieval Russian icon.*

weakness. It demonstrates that the lines of trade and communication did not cease to exist in the 840s and 850s. Nevertheless, the threat from the al-Rus' in 860 came as a surprise. It was as sudden and unexpected 'as a swarm of wasps', as Photius puts it. The empire was struggling to repel the Arab advance in Asia Minor. In March 860, the garrison of the key fortress Lulon unexpectedly surrendered to the Arabs. In April or May, both sides exchanged captives, and the hostilities briefly ceased. Beginning of June Emperor Michael III left Constantinople for Asia Minor to invade the Abbasid Caliphate. The al-Rus'–Byzantine War of 860 was the only major military expedition of the al-Rus' Khaganate recorded in Byzantine and Western European sources. Accounts vary regarding the events that took place, with discrepancies between contemporary and later sources, and the exact outcome is unknown. It is known from Byzantine sources that the al-Rus' caught Constantinople unprepared, when the empire was occupied by the ongoing Byzantine-Arab Wars and unable to deal with the al-Rus' threat. After pillaging the suburbs of the Byzantine capital, the al-Rus' retreated, although the nature of this withdrawal, and indeed which side was victorious,



is subject to debate. This event gave rise to a later Orthodox Christian tradition, which ascribed the deliverance of Constantinople to a miraculous intervention by the Theotokos (Greek title for Mary, mother of Jesus).

On June 18, 860, at sunset, a fleet of about 200 al-Rus' vessels sailed into the Bosphorus and started pillaging the suburbs of Constantinople (Old East Slavic: Tsarigrad, Old Norse: Miklagarðr). The attackers were setting homes on fire, drowning and stabbing the residents. Unable to do anything to repel the invaders, Patriarch Photius urged his flock to implore the Theotokos to save the city. Having devastated the suburbs, the al-Rus' passed into the Sea of Marmora and fell upon the Isles of the Princes, where the former Patriarch Ignatius of Constantinople was in exile at the time. The al-Rus' plundered the dwellings and the monasteries, slaughtering the captives. They took twenty-two of the patriarch's servants aboard ship and cut them into pieces with axes.

The attack took the Greeks by surprise, "like a thunderbolt from heaven", as it was put by Patriarch Photius in his famous oration written on the occasion. Emperor Michael III was absent from the city, as was his navy dreaded for its skill in using lethal Greek fire. The Imperial army (including those troops that were normally garrisoned closest to the capital) was fighting the Arabs in Asia Minor. The city's land defences were weakened by the absence of these garrisons, but the sea defences were also lacking.

The invasion continued until August 4, when in another of his sermons, Photius thanked heavens for miraculously relieving the city from such a dire threat. The writings of Photius provide the earliest example of the name al-Rus' (Rhos, Greek: ῥως) being mentioned in a Greek source. Previously the dwellers of the lands north of the Black Sea were referred to archaically as "Tauroscythians". **The learned patriarch reports that they have no su-**

**preme ruler and abide in some distant northern lands.** Photius called them ἔθνος ἄγνωστον, "unknown people", although some historians prefer to translate it as "obscure people", pointing out to earlier contacts between Byzantians and al-Rus'.

The early phase of the state is sometimes known as the al-Rus' Khaganate, while the history of al-Rus' proper begins in 882, when the capital was moved from Novgorod to Kiev, after Varangians, who were called al-Rus', liberated this Slavic city from the Khazars' tribute.

As early as 911, Varangians are mentioned fighting as mercenaries for the Byzantines. About 700 Varangians served as mariners in Byzantine naval expeditions against the Emirate of Crete in 902 and a force of 629 returned to Crete under Constantine



Fig 153. Oleg of Novgorod leads an army to the walls of Constantinople. Miniature from Radziwiłł Chronicle (early XIII century). The Rus' - Byzantine War of 907 is associated in the Primary Chronicle with the name of Oleg of Novgorod. Oleg is, however, not mentioned in the trade treaty between the Gotlandic merchants and the Byzantine Emperor of 911. The chronicle implies that it was the most successful military operation of the Kievan Rus' against the Byzantine Empire and that the Byzantines paid a tribute of twelve grivnas for each al-Rus' boat.. Paradoxically, Greek sources do not mention it at all.



Porphyrogenitus in 949. A unit of 415 Varangians were involved in the Italian expedition of 936. Varangian contingents fought the Arabs in Syria in 955. During this period, the Varangian mercenaries were included in the Great Companions.

In 907 Constantinople was attacked by the Kievan Rus' under Oleg of Novgorod, who was seeking favourable trading rights with the empire. The Emperor Leo VI paid them off and they left.

Instead in 911 an al-Rus'-Byzantine Trade Treaty was signed by a delegation of Varangians and the Emperor. This was the most comprehensive and detailed Treaty concluded between the Byzantine Empire and the Varangians in the 900s.

The text of the document, incorporated into the Primary Chronicle, has many affinities in content and phrasing with the trade treaties later concluded by Byzantium with the merchant republics of Italy. It was composed in two languages and signed personally by Emperor Leo VI. The text also includes speeches of the parties on the occasion. No treaties of comparable complexity and antiquity are known among the other societies in Europe of that time. The treaty opens with a lengthy enumeration of the al-Rus' envoys, whose names are exclusively Norse: Karl, Ingjald, Farulf, Vermund, Hrollaf, Gunnar, Harold, Kami, Frithleif, Hroarr, Angantyr, Throand, Leithulf, Fast, and Steinvith. The articles 3 to 7 regulate criminal law and the life of their colony at Miklagarðr. There is also a proviso on inheritance of a merchant who died in the imperial capital. The article 8 is dedicated to maritime law. The following articles enlarge on ransom of captives, exchange of criminals, and the status of the Varangian mercenaries in Byzantine service.

Most conspicuously, the treaty regulates the status of the colony of Varangian merchants in Constantinople. The text testifies that they settled in the quarter of Saint Mamas. The Varangians were to



Fig 154. *Varangian Guardsmen, an illumination from the Skylitzis Chronicle*

enter Constantinople through a certain gate, without weapons, accompanied by the imperial guard, not more than fifty people at a time. Upon their arrival, they were enregistered by the imperial authorities in order to be supplied with food and monthly alimentation in the space of half a year.

In the concluding lines of the treaty, the Byzantines kiss the cross, while the Varangians swear by their arms, invoking what the Primary Chronicle calls *Perun* and *Veles* (the names are likely translations of the names of the Norse god Thor in the language of the Primary chronicle). The Gotlandic Varangian merchants were mainly amber and fur traders who were entertained by the emperor himself.

In 988 Basil II requested military assistance from Vladimir I of Kiev to help defend his throne. Vladimir, had usurped power in Kiev with an army of Varangian warriors. In compliance with the treaty made by his father after the Siege of Dorostolon (971), Vladimir sent 6,000 men to Basil. In 989 these Varangians, led by Basil II himself, landed at Chrysopolis to defeat the rebel general Bardas Phokas.

Basil's distrust of the native Byzantine guardsmen, whose loyalties often shifted with fatal consequenc-

es, as well as the proven loyalty of the Varangians, many of whom served in Byzantium even before, led the emperor to employ them as his personal guardsmen. Therefore Basil II in 988 formed a Gotlandic Varangian Guard which became an elite unit of the Byzantine army under the emperor.

In this connection Vladimir I of Kiev officially adopted Christianity in Kievan Rus', and in exchange Vladimir was given Basil's sister, Anna, in marriage. The Gotlandic mercenaries formed the nucleus of the Varangian Guard, which saw extensive service in southern Italy in the 1000s, when the Normans and Lombards worked to extinguish Byzantine authority there. In 1018, Basil II received a request from his Catepan of Italy, Basil Boioannes, for reinforcements to put down the Lombard revolt of Melus of Bari. A detachment of the Varangian Guard was sent and in the Battle of Cannae, the Greeks achieved a decisive victory.

The Varangians also participated in the partial reconquest of Sicily from the Arabs under George Maniakes in 1038. Here, they fought alongside Normans recently arrived in Italy seeking adventure and Lombards from Byzantine-held Apulia.

Harald Sigurdsson (Old Norse: Haraldr Sigurðarson; c. 1015 – 25 September 1066), in the sagas given the epithet *Hardrada* (*harðráði*, roughly translated as 'stern counsel' or 'hard ruler') was the King of Norway from 1046 to 1066 as Harald III. He also unsuccessfully claimed the Danish throne until 1064, and the English throne in 1066. Before becoming king, Harald spent a period in exile as a mercenary and military commander in Kievan Rus' and in the Byzantine Empire.

When he was fifteen years old, in 1030, Harald fought in the Battle of Stiklestad together with his half-brother Olaf Haraldsson. Olaf sought to reclaim the Norwegian throne, which he had lost to

the Danish king Cnut the Great two years prior. In the battle, Olaf and Harald were defeated by forces loyal to Cnut, and Harald was forced in exile to *Garðaríki* (Kievan Rus'). There, he spent some time in the army of Grand Prince Yaroslav the Wise, eventually obtaining rank as a captain, until moving on to *Miklagarðr* (Constantinople) around 1034. In *Miklagarðr* he quickly rose to become the commander of the Byzantine Varangian Guard, and saw action on the Mediterranean Sea, in Asia Minor, Sicily, possibly in the Holy Land, Bulgaria and in Constantinople itself, where he became involved in the imperial dynastic disputes.

Harald entered Northern England in September 1066, raided the coast and defeated English regional forces in the Battle of Fulford near York. His luck came to an end, however, in the Battle of Stamford Bridge, in which he was defeated and killed by Harold Godwinson's forces.

Harald's death at Stamford Bridge, which brought an end to his invasion, is often recorded as the end of the Viking Age. Harald is also commonly held to have been the last great Viking king, or even the last great Viking.

## Note 31 (page 158)

Abu'l Qasim Ubaydallah ibn Khordadbeh (c. 820 – 912)

Around 846-847 CE ibn Khordadbeh wrote *Kitab al Masalik wa'l Mamalik* (The Book of Roads and Kingdoms with the second edition of the book being published in 885). In this work, ibn Khordadbeh described the various peoples and provinces of the Abbasid Caliphate:

“The al-Rus' come from the farthest corners of the Slav's country. They travel over the Roman Sea to Constantinople and sell their goods, furs of beaver and black fox and swords.”

According to Nordisk Familjebok:

“Radhanites, is a name for Jewish merchants, who in the 800s and 900s were the chief commercial intermediaries between Europe and Asia and between those with each other hostile Christian and Muslim worlds. For Viking Age Scandinavian trade relations with the Orient they have played a major role. They should also have actively contributed to the build up of the Jewish capital, which in later centuries was of significance in the European societies transition to monetary management.”

## Note 32 (page 183)

According to Fjalar Linge, *Gotländska studier 2* (Gotlandic studies) p. 29: “The three Baltic states, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, are populated by three distinct peoples, as in national respect is clearly distinctive and owning their own ancient languages. Estonian belongs to the Finno-Ugric language group, while the Latvians and Lithuanians speak Baltic languages. The latter belong to the Indo-European language group, to which even the Germanic and Slavic languages belong. The Baltic languages are closer to the ancient Indo-European languages than any other contemporary language. Their ancestral character in terms of sound and grammar has a large relevance to linguistics.

Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians and others with these related, now extinct tribes are very old, settled people. Originally lived in these areas Finno-Ugric tribes from which the current Estonians and the nearly extinct Livonians originated (in 1935 there was in Latvia only 944 Livonians left). The original Balts arrived to the current East Prussia, Lithuania and Latvia around 2000 years BCE.

The first to mention the Balts is Tacitus (98 CE). Those of him mentioned Aists are without any doubt Fornbaltic peoples. As a result of trade and

military contacts the number of Baltic peoples and tribes mentioned gradually increases. Ptolemy mentions such as Galindians, Selonians and Prussians, who were all Baltic tribes. In the 800s Rimbert tells about Curonians and in the 1000s a number of chroniclers mentions Semgallians, Selonians and Lithuanians. After these chroniclers, one can very well decide the Baltic tribal territory, which is later evidenced by archeological finds and excavations.

Curonians, Semgallians and Selonians combined to the Latvian people. The Livonians were Lettized. The Semaites and Aukštaitians came to form the Lithuanian people. The old Prussian tribes became in the 1400s Germanized. *Knytlinga Saga* says about one of the Prussian tribes the Sembrians that one of their chiefs, Vitgaut, was baptized in Schleswig, and he at that time gave Duke Canute Lavard 800 squirrel hides. The Gotlanders had already a trading Emporium before the 800s in the Prussian trading center Truso, later Germanized to Elbing.

Gotland's nearest neighbors to the east were the Curonians, who themselves called their country *Kursa* (even *Kurse* or *Kuorsa*), hence the German *Kurland*. Since *Kursa* of all Baltic Sea residential areas is closest to western Europe, we have most data on this country. Contacts between the Curonians and the other peoples of the Baltic Sea region were very lively, both in war and in peace. Ancient graves in Grobina testify that there is between the years 650-850 a Gotlandic trading Emporium in Courland protected by a Svear garrison. In 875 Rimbert wrote in the *Vita Ansgarii* that the Curonians in the 800s drove the Svear colonists from their capital (*Urbs Regni*) Seeburg (present day Grobina?). Between 853-854 the Danes tried to conquer the land of the Curonians, but were defeated by the Curonians, who conquered half the Danish fleet, along with gold and silver. After the Danes came King Olof from Birka and burned Seeburg. He left his fleet there

and reached after five days' march Apule, which he took after nine days of fighting. In 862 the Svear were expelled but they returned and began to build forts in Courland.

Egil's Saga tells of the Iclander Egil Skallagrimson's ravages in Courland in the years 920-925. Egil was captured in Courland and imprisoned in a cellar where there were already three Danish slaves. Egil managed to escape and took a jar full of silver. Egil's saga shows that the Curonian farmers were rich and they worked their fields with the slaves, while they themselves were concerned with trade and piracy. In the 1000s Denmark is so often ravaged by the Curonians that in the Danish churches they prayed, 'Lord God protect us for the Curonians.'

That the Curonian attacks against Denmark and the Swedish mainland continued first half of the 1200s testifies Henry Letten's chronicle. Many details about the Curonians we find in the Danish historian Saxo Grammaticus (c. 1150-1220) work *Gesta Danorum*. There we also find information that the Curonian fleet visited Järnlöks harbour on Öland.

Although the Curonians were well aware of the Catholic faith they were at the beginning of the 1200s still not Christianized. They were convinced that the transition to the Christian church would mean the loss of their freedom. The Curonians very early saw through the Germans' plans in the Baltic Sea region and attacked Riga already in 1210, even though the Curonians themselves at this time were not at all threatened by the Germans.

The Curonians, however, used the papal legate, the Cistercian monk Balduin of Alnas visit to Latvia in 1230, to make contact with the pope. The Roman Curia (papal government) had the great idea to master the Baltics directly from Rome and to found National Catholic states. On December 28, 1230 the papal legate signed a treaty with the Curonian King Lamekin. The Curonians promised to be baptized

and accept the one by the pope invested bishop and to pay to the church the same taxes as the Gotlanders paid. The Curonians also promised, that within two years, to appear in Rome and surrender their land in the Pope's hands. In return, Balduin promises the Curonians eternal freedom and promised that the Kursa should not be subject to either the Danish or Swedish kingdoms. The Germans and the Livonian Brothers of the Sword are not mentioned in the Treaty. In 1231 the Pope confirms the treaty.

That same year, the Brothers of the Sword Order are attacking and ravaging Kursa and even manages to steal away the Balduin Treaty. The Curonians send delegates to the Pope, but those were arrested in Visby. After the Brothers of the Sword were totally exterminated in 1236 at the Battle of Saule, the Teutonic Knights took over the conquest of Latvia and thus also of Kursa. The Curonians' freedom struggle is going on for many years. Finally, the Curonians had in August 1267 to sign a peace treaty with the Germans. The Treaty was largely similar to the treaties that already Estonians and Latvian tribes had to sign. However, this Treaty regulated the Curonians rights at sea.

After a 25 year old very bloody struggle for freedom the Curonians had surrendered and lost their political independence, but despite of the Germans' hard regiment the Curonians continued for a long time to deal with shipping and trade.

Through protracted and bloody wars the Teutonic Knights had conquered Prussia, Latvia and Estonia. Prussia was colonized by German farmers. The inhumane and massive extermination of the ancient Prussian people, in the name of the Christian Teutonic Knights are among the darkest and saddest chapters in European history. For Estonia and Latvia, it would take 700 years before their people regained freedom.

The nationally more united Lithuanians managed however to maintain their national independence and experienced in the 1300s and 1400s under their Kings Gediminas and Vytautas the Great (1382-1430), a namesake of the above-mentioned sembian chief, their heyday. Lithuania extended then, thanks to victorious wars against the Germans and Russians, from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea. Lithuania was also the last stronghold of pre-Christianity in Europe. In 1569 Lithuania and Poland were united through the Lublin union. The Lithuanian nobility were Polandized and Lithuania lost its independence.“

### Note 33 (page 184)

Common place name forms.

Prof Arved Svabe, *Lettlands historia* (The Latvian History), writes that in the Gotlandic land books from the 1500s there are Baltic names present, which according to him, suggest that representatives of the Baltic peoples at an unspecified time should have taken up residence on Gotland.

To understand the relationship better here comes information about the subject's grammatical forms in the Latvian language: In masculine is the suffix in the nominative singular always -s, in the feminine -a or -e. Neuter exists in Lithuanian, but not in the Latvian language. Nominative plural is always the masculine ending -i and in the feminine -as or -es. While the names of larger towns, such as Riga and Sigulda, and river- and stream-names, such as the Daugava, Venta, stands in the singular, the farm names are in the plural (Gudingi, Banderi, Nores).

Here are some examples:

Ahlunds - farm names in Burs, Hogrän and Sanda

Alande - stream in Courland

Amlings - farm name in Linde

Amelynge - farm name in Courland as to the 1200s

chronicles

Apse - farm names in Burs and Linde

Apse - stream in Courland. The Latvian Apse corresponds to Swedish tree name asp

Augstens - farm name in Vamlingbo

Augstienes - farm name in Courland. Means in Latvian height

Bander - farm name in Bara and Mästerby

Banderi.- (nom.sing. Banders) - farm name in Courland.

Banda means in Curonian leased land, in old Lithuanian - cattle

Bringes.- (Bringsarve), farm name in Norrlanda.

Brinki - farm name in Courland (nom, sing, Brinks).

Bäste.- swamp on Gotland

Beste - stream in Courland

Dalbo - farm name in När and Halla

Dalbe - stream in Courland

Garde.- parish on Gotland

Garde.- river in Lithuania

Gudings.- farm name in Alva, Eke and Vallstena

Gudingi - (nom.sing. Gudings) farm name in Courland.

Except Gudingi - there are at present farm names such as Gudi, Guden, Gedenieki. The Curonians called the Gotlanders for Gudi (nom.sing. Guds) or, in the Latvian language commonly present diminutive shape Gudings (nom.sing.). It is assumed that Gotlanders lived on these farms

Ihre - Farm and stream name on Gotland

Ihre - (in Latvian Irbe) - Liv name for a stream and fishing village in Courland

Kambs - farm name in Halla and Lummelunda

Kami - (nom.sing. Kams) farm name in Courland The verb “Kampt” means in Latvian grip, tearing at himself

Kyllaj - fishing village on Gotland

Kylla - is the designation for Livonian village. In the Livonian village Ykskyll (Yksen, kyll - village) Gotlandic artisans built in 1185 the first Christian church in Latvia



Käbbe - farm name in Eksta  
Kebbe - stream in Courland. Is in Latvian twisted root  
Lauks - farm name in Lokrume  
Lauki - (nom. sing. Lauks) farm name in Courland  
Lauks - means in Latvian field  
Länna - farm name on Gotland  
Lenna - place name in Courland. Means in Livonian west. The Baltic Sea is called by the Estonians  
Lääne-meri = The West Sea  
Nabbe - fishing village in När  
Nabbe - stream in Courland  
Nore - farm name in Vamlingbo  
Nores - (nom.sing. Nore) farm name in Courland  
Nore - means in Latvian field not used  
Roma - parish Name on Gotland  
Romene - sacred place of worship in 1200s Lithuania  
Sigulds - farm name in Lye  
Sigulda - city in Latvia  
Sigvalde - farm and swamp names in Etelhem  
Sigvalde - city in Latvia  
Slite - market town on Gotland  
Slitere - a range of hills (Slitere hills) in northern Courland. Actually, a high limestone formation along the ancient coastline, which rises above the surrounding area  
Vale - farm name in Stenkyrka  
Vales - (nom.sing. Vale) farm name in Courland  
Vale - means in Latvian hay-drying hurdle  
Vanges - (Vänge), farm name in Burs. Parish Name on Gotland  
Vangas - (nom.sing. Vanga) farm and place names in Courland. Means in Curonian - three field. The older meaning - bog  
Vede - farm name in Follingbo  
Vede - place name in Courland

## Note 34 (page 188)

Dr. Jacqueline Simpson, 'The Viking World', has the following to say:

"In medieval Scandinavian languages, a Vikingr is a pirate, a freebooter who seeks wealth either by ship-borne raids on foreign coasts or by waylaying more peaceful seafarers in home waters. There is also an abstract noun Viking, meaning 'the act of going raiding overseas'.... Strictly speaking, therefore, the term should only be applied to men actually engaged in these violent pursuits, and not to every contemporary Scandinavian farmer, merchant, settler or craftsman, nor even to warriors fighting in the dynastic wars of their lords or in their own private feuds. However, it was the raiders who made the most impact on the Pope Christian Europe of their time why it has become customary to apply the term 'Viking Age' to the period of Scandinavian History beginning in the 790s, the time of the first recorded raids on Western Europe, and petering out somewhere round the middle of the 1000s, by which time raids and emigrations had ceased. The settlements established abroad had become thoroughly integrated with the local populations, and social changes in the Scandinavian homelands had marked the transition to their true Middle Ages. Indeed, the term is such a convenient label for the distinctive culture of this period that one now talks not only of 'Viking ships' and 'Viking weapons' but of 'Viking art', 'Viking houses', and even 'Viking agriculture', expressions which would have seemed meaningless to people living at the time."

We have to go the Arabic writers to learn about the Varangians, i.e. the merchants from the island in the Baltic Sea (the Gotlanders) who again, after the cold period, from the 600s dominated trade in the Baltic Sea and from end 700s controlled the trade on the Russian rivers. They were no Vikings.

In the Baltic Sea region the Vendel era and Viking

Age is a continuous era and starts with the immigration of the Heruls to the Lake Mälär area in the 500s and the wars between the Gotlanders and the immigrant Heruls. It should more correctly be called the VARANGIAN AGE (550-1050).

Olaf II Haraldsson (995 – July 29, 1030), known as the Holy (or St Olaf), was King of Norway from 1015 to 1028. He was posthumously given the title *Rex Perpetuus Norvegiae* (English: Norway's Eternal King) and canonised in Nidaros (Trondheim) by Bishop Grimkell, one year after his death in the Battle of Stikletad on 29 July 1030. Olaf's local canonisation was in 1164 confirmed by Pope Alexander III, making him a universally recognized saint of the Catholic Church. He is celebrated at Olsmässodagen, 29 July. He was the son of Harald Grenske and was for some time engaged to the daughter of Olof Skötkonung, princess Ingegerd Olofsdotter, though without Olof Skötkonung's approval. After Olof Skötkonung had married off Ingrid to grand prince Yaroslav in Kiev, Olaf II Haraldsson married Astrid Olofsdotter, Olof Skötkonung's illegitimate daughter and half-sister to his former fiancée. Together they had one child, Ulfhild of Norway. Olaf's only son, Magnus I Olavsson, was an illegitimate offspring.

His Holiness appeared immediately with a large number of miracles that occurred near the battle in the vicinity of his hidden corpse. Shortly after his death, the Nidaros Cathedral in Trondheim was built, where his relics were kept.

Olaf became Scandinavia's most popular saint. In Gotlandic and Swedish churches he appears on frescoes and triptychs, as statue and in reliquary cabinets, often along with Eric the Saint. Attributes: depicted as king (i.e. with the crown, sometimes also with orb; major battle axe, with a curbed blade, and standing on a defeated enemy, 'underliggare').

Olaf was in his younger years a successful Viking. He plundered in the Baltic Sea region, in the Lake Mälär area, and around the coasts of Denmark. Strelow has mentioned that Olaf seems to have acted in the same way to extract hidden treasures during his stay on Gotland in 1007-1008. He participated in the wars of succession in England, where he destroyed the London Bridge. In Normandy he adopted Christianity.

In 1015 he landed with a few men in Norway and defeated Earl Sweyn, hitherto the virtual ruler of Norway, at the Battle of Nesjar. He founded the town Borg by the waterfall Sarpsfossen, later to be known as Sarpsborg in Østfold county, which became Norway's capital. Within a few years he had won more power than had been enjoyed by any of his predecessors on the throne.

As king he continued to Christianize Norway in the same heavy-handed manner as his relative Olav Tryggvason. In all that time he sought to Christianize the Norwegians, who worshipped the old gods, by force. During the summers he went from fjord to fjord and summoned to a Thing. There, he invited the people to adopt Christianity and to confirm it by baptism. Those who did not want to be baptized were mutilated in every conceivable way. In addition, he took hostages to prevent the recurrence of paganism. He had the petty kings of the South annihilated, subdued the aristocracy, enforced the acceptance of Christianity throughout the kingdom, asserted his suzerainty in the Orkney Islands, and conducted a successful raid on Denmark. He made peace with King Olof Skötkonung of Sweden through Þorgnýr the Lawspeaker.

However, he got the people against him. They sent several messages to King Canute of Denmark and England, to help them against Olaf. Canute who wanted to claim Norway, responded to the invitation in the year 1028, and helped the Norwegians

against Olaf.

Olaf fled through the forests to Sweden. He stayed with a wealthy and powerful man, Sigtrygg, until the spring. When it was summer in 1029, he prepared himself for the journey to be continued and got ships. His wife Astrid was left behind, probably in the Aros district. He took his son with him and went straight to his brother in law, Grand Prince Yaroslav in Garðaríki (Kiev).

After some time he received intelligence from Norway that suggested that re-conquest was possible. He began preparing for the return trip, and when the ice went up he went to King Anund in Sweden to collect soldiers. On the way to Sweden, he visited Gotland and probably got men even from here.

The Guta Saga tells that Ormíca from Hejnum visited him at Akergrn where he lay with his ships, and gave him slaughtered animals and bread and got gifts in return. Olaf persuaded Ormíca to convert to his doctrine, which Ormíca did. Strelow has interpreted this visit to 1029, but this appears to be incorrect. Whereas Snorri says that the visit on Gotland was in 1030.

Finnur Jonsson, *Kong Olaf den heliges ophold på Gotland, i : Festskrift Eugen Mogk 1924* (King Olaf the Saint's stay on Gotland), p. 81 f., has focused attention on a small detail, which in his opinion definitely speaks in favor of Snorri. When King Olaf fled from Norway, Hakon Jarl took possession of his ships. One of these, Visunden, he left for an Icelander named Jökull Bardarson to captain. "It may here be mentioned in brief," says Snorri, "that it happened much later that Jökull ran into King Olaf's men on Gotland and was taken prisoner." He was beheaded, and after the first blow, which struck him in the head and caused a very large wound, he wrote a verse, which Snorri also quotes. "It is without doubt true, and the story gives the impression to be all through reliable." "The narration

about kong Olaf and Jökull is, in my opinion true, and verifiable, that Olaf came to Akergrn on his journey from Holmgardr (Novgorod)."

In the summer of 1030 Olaf marched with his army through Jämtland and into Norway, but before then his army had united with the army that his half-brother Harald had managed to collect. Olaf was careful to only have Christians, baptized men in his army, and therefore lost some people, although many were baptized.

A few days before the Battle of Stiklestad Olaf had a muster of his army, which amounted to 3 600 men and it was found that 900 were not baptized. Olaf then asked them to adopt Christianity and be baptized. The unbaptized held council and 400 decided to be baptized, but 500 returned home.

In Norway, a peasant army had assembled, mostly from Trøndelag, who marched against Olaf's army. The Armies met at Stiklestad in Trøndelag on the late summer 1030. Olaf's army was beaten and Olaf himself was killed.

The peasant army that Olaf met at Stiklestad consisted not only of non-Christians but also of Christians. It was not a religious war.

## Note 35 (page 195)

The Gotlandic Varangian merchants were mainly amber and fur traders who were entertained by the emperor himself. They came in close contact with the Byzantine religion and its churches. The Byzantine art must have made an impression on them. Surely there must have been artists among those Gotlanders who brought back home the Byzantine art to Gotland and influenced the Gotlandic painting schools when painting the wooden churches in late 900s and 1000s. Only planks are left from these churches on Gotland but it is enough for the art

historians to decide the motives.

There are also many stone churches that possibly were decorated with Byzantine art but have been replaced with newer churches. See also fig. 109-112.

Extract from 'Spaden och Pennan'

PhD Svetlana Vasilyeva writes:

**"Gotland's artistic life during the first part of the 1100s**

**Gotlandic painting on wood and the relationship to art in medieval Rus'**

The Gotlandic 1100s culture is a unique phenomenon in northern Europe. One of the most interesting features of the Gotlandic cultural life at that time was that its traditions were associated with the Byzantine and Rus' art.

Given the historical situation in Gotland during the second half of the 1000s and the 1100s, this is not surprising. During the second half of the 1000s and on into the 1100s Gotland became an important trading centre that had lively contacts with both Western and Eastern Europe. Gotland came together with the other Nordic countries, after the church split in the 1000s to be directed against the Roman Catholic doctrine, as the missionary work first and foremost came from Western Europe (Nyberg 1986). This did not, however impede the island's contacts with Rus' (Russia) and Byzantium. At the turn into the 1100s had on Gotland been established foreign commercial farms with associated churches (Melnikova 1996, p 92-106; Rybina 1986, pp. 15-41). These conditions were promoting influences from both the Western European culture and the Eastern Christian world. The influences were then probably incorporated into the local Gotlandic traditions.

The most complete idea of the Gotlandic, artistic culture gives us the painting, thanks to those to our time preserved fragments, which are in relatively good condition, but also because they are made

with different techniques and belong to different periods from the 1100s. To the first part of the century belongs painted boards, found in the Gotlandic churches in Eke, Sundre and Dalhem. From the second half of the century murals have been preserved, which primarily can be seen in Garde and Källunge churches. Besides this painting has, according to many researchers' opinion, 'Byzantine' related stone sculpture been preserved. In the literature it dates back to the second part of the 1100s - and I mean first of all the works done by the stone master given the anonymous name 'Bysantios'.

This article will deal with the island's paintings on wood from the 1100s, as these are the first extant monumental church paintings on Gotland. They can give us an idea of the Gotlandic cultural life in the early part of this century and the artistic movements that came to be established then. Of particular interest is, that in such early works one can observe direct connections to the Byzantine and Rus' art.

**Previous research and new methods for the analysis of the paintings**

The Gotlandic contacts with Eastern Europe placed in conjunction with the painted boards have long been the subject for various researchers' interest. Furthermore, the fact that in the Gotlandic culture were currents that show that Byzantine patterns were known, strengthens the notion that the murals in Garde and Källunge churches on Gotland belonged to this circuit.

The Gotlandic painting on wood has been dated by scientists first to the beginning of the 1200s. This view is based on the idea that the boards would have belonged to the existing stone churches. However, Berit Wallenberg dated the Gotlandic boards to the 1140s, after comparing paintings on wood and the composition 'Constantine and Helena' in the Saint

Sophia Cathedral in Novgorod (Wallenberg 1971, p. 131). A possibility of an even earlier dating was brought forward by Erland Lagerlöf who used the most recent results in archaeological and scientific studies (Lagerlöf 1973, pp. 29-41). Gunnar Svahnström has presented a dissenting opinion. It is based on the comparison between the Gotlandic paintings on boards and murals in St. George's Church in Old Ladoga (not earlier than the second half of the 1100s), and he finds that these paintings from stylistic point of view are close. As a consequence of this observation he dates the painted boards to the second part of the 1100s (Svahnström 1993, pp 173-178).

Thus, most scientists today believe that the painted wood panelling has belonged to wooden churches which probably stood on the site of the present stone church, dated to the 1200s. All three groups of paintings are today generally, by Swedish specialists, dated to between 1125 and 1150. These demarcations in time are based primarily on archaeological data. The early dating is based on results of a dendrochronological analysis, which showed that some of the panels belonging to Eke stave church are from the 1120s (Lagerlöf 1973, pp. 29-41). The latter dating is based on the advent of the first stone church in Dalhem, which was set at 1150 (Roosval 1947-52, p 182; Lagerlöf 1997, p 145).

Regarding the iconographic program the researchers agree that the composition on the Eke board was part of a large production of the Ascension (Lagerlöf 1984, pp 123-132). All painted boards from Sundre have, according to the researchers, been part of a representation of the Last Judgment (Roosval 1932, pp 56-59; Florin 1936, pp 3-36; Svahnström 1993, pp 143-151; Lagerlöf 1990, pp 143-151). Further it is believed that the fragments from Dalhem have shown a composition of the Last Judgment and / or the Ascension (Svahnström 1993, pp 143-151; Lagerlöf 1997, pp. 145-152).

Most researchers agree that the three groups of

paintings on wood are made by Greek or Rus' artists. As evidence they state the simplified forms of the characters, a trait considered to indicate precisely a Rus' master's work (Söderberg 1971, p 38 and see there special cited literature). Among the closest stylistic parallels are indicated, however, paintings which show significant differences in both style and time, such as the composition 'Constantine and Helena' from the Martyrs Chapel in St. Sophia's Cathedral in Novgorod, dated to mid-1000s until the early 1100s, the murals in St. George's Church in Old Ladoga from the second part of the 1100s, as well as the murals in Garde and Källunge churches on Gotland, dated to sometime from the mid 1100s until its second half (Wallenberg, 1971, pp. 131; Lagerlöf 1999, pp 58-59; Svahnström 1993, pp 173-175; Florin 1936, p 24).

The Gotlandic paintings on wood have been discussed also by two Russian scientists, Iurij Grenberg and Grigory Shtender. Also they consider this Gotlandic painting as a possible stylistic analogy to the aforementioned composition 'Constantine and Helena' from Saint Sophia Cathedral in Novgorod. Shtender agrees with the Swedish researchers that the narrations on the boards have close stylistic similarities with the Byzantine art. e.g. with the Novgorodian composition (Shtender 1988, pp 186-207). The Gotlandic painting is in his work dated to the first third of the 1100s, and in his opinion, the Gotlandic boards give an idea of how murals might have looked like in the Rus' wooden churches. His view is not shared by Grenberg, who dates the painted boards on Gotland to about 1200 and considers the Gotlandic wooden carvings as Romanesque painting (Grenberg 1983, p 159; Grenberg & Pisareva 2004, pp 21-27). It must be noted that S.H. Fuglesang in a brief note about the painted boards writes that German, Byzantine-influenced examples could have worked as prototype for the Gotlandic paintings (Fuglesang 1996, p 146).



In spite of this great interest, several aspects are still not mentioned. Firstly it is needed that the iconography be closely analyzed. If you from this viewpoint look at the fragments from Sundre, which by the researchers have been interpreted as a representation of the Last Judgment, one becomes hesitant to the identification of the scene on e. g. board XII (numbering according to Florin 1936. pp 30, 34). According to Florin's reconstruction, this is a fragment of the Blessed, that was located in the left part of the fourth register in the Last Judgement scene. The costumes the characters wear do not, however, resemble the clothes of the Blessed but recalls first of all those of the apostles and angels. In addition the rest of a kneeling figure in the right part of the composition certainly is that of an old man. It could e.g. be one of the scenes from the Old Testament, and in particular the one when three angels come to Abraham (1 Genesis 18:1-15). This motif is illustrated including the mosaics in the Cathedral Monreale in Sicily (ca. 1180-1194) (Lazarev 1986. fig. 384). These reasonings lead us to the question whether the Sundre fragments could have belonged to different compositions included in legend- and passion frizes. In this case, they should be placed not only on the west, but also on the Church's southern and northern walls.

Another problem is whether the three groups of painted boards have been added simultaneously or they belong to different decades?

**Neither has the question been asked whether we should consider the paintings on wood as belonging to a tradition that was existing on Gotland, or if we here see singular examples of a foreign culture current from an almost simultaneous date of origin?**

There is still another issue that for some reason has not received any major attention in the literature and that is the relationship between the Gotlandic paintings and the Romanesque art? That the Ro-

manesque influence reached the Nordic countries from Western Europe is well known, and Gotland had a strong connection to this area and its cultural traditions. Evidence of this can be found both in architecture at the first part of the 1100s (Lagerlöf & Svahnström 1973) and in sculpture from the middle to second part of this century (Roosval 1918).

Because of these unanswered questions, it is necessary to implement the following two studies:

1. to analyze whether the analogies and chains of evidence that scientists have used to bring the painting of boards to a Rus' or Greek artist really is so compelling.
2. if these Byzantine features exist, to determine who the artist was: an interpreter of the Byzantine tradition or a true representative from the East?

Before we begin to regard the paintings, we will briefly treat the techniques which have been used in the research on the island's paintings on wood. The perception that dominate Swedish literature is that all painting on boards preserved from the 1100s is considered to belong to the Rus'-Byzantine tradition, based on external, typological similarities between the Gotlandic painting on wood and some paintings from Rus'. Yet none of those who have studied the painted boards have noted that just in the 1100s the Western art showed major influence from just the Byzantine tradition. These trends are evident in murals in Italy and France (Demus 1970. p. 44).

To determine which artistic tradition the Gotlandic painting on wood belong to it is not enough to refer to only two paintings especially when these have been added during different periods, 'Constantine and Helena' dated to the period from the mid 1000s up to the first quarter of the 1100s (Lifshits 2004a. pp 70-86; Etingof 2005, pp. 411-416. 496-498), while the murals in St. George's Church in Old Ladoga belong to late 1100s artistic direction (Sarab'ianov 2002a. pp 193-265). In or-

der to determine the question of Romanesque artistic influence the research must absolutely be more detailed. In Novgorod there are, in addition to the said depiction in the Saint Sofia Cathedral, very important mural paintings that can't be unchecked in this context. In the same Cathedral, the murals in the central dome have been preserved (1109). And in the Martyrs Chapel where 'Constantine and Helena' are placed is also a depiction of Deisis (1144) (Lifshits 2004b. pp 184-406; Briusova 1968, pp. 108-125). Furthermore we have the murals in the Church of the Nativity of the Mother of God in the Antoniev monastery (about. 1125), and murals from the north-western tower's dome in the Cathedral in the St. George's (Yuriev) Monastery (ca. 1130) and those of the Savior Cathedral in the Mirozhsky Monastery in Pskov (about 1140) (Sarab'ianov 2004. pp 531-773; Sarab'ianov 2002b. pp 365-398; Sarab'ianov 2002c).

Furthermore, the Rus'-Byzantine painting from the first part and the middle of the 1100s can be viewed in illuminations and icons, such as in "Mstislavs Gospel" (early 1100s) (Inventory Sin. 1203, the State Historical Museum Moscow); Popova 2003. pp 263-265) and the 'Annunciation from Velikij Ystyg' (first third of the 1100s) (Tretjakov gallery. Moscow): Etingof 2005. pp 423-426). All these paintings are characterized by a very high artistic quality where no simplified features can be detected.

To find answers to our questions, we must also consider works of art from the whole of Scandinavia, Western Europe and Italy. One should, for example, take into account the murals in Vå Church in Skåne (first third of the 1100s), those in Berze-la Ville in France (first third of the 1100s), the murals in the crypt in Aquileia (turn of the century from 1100 to 1200), and mosaics from the 1000s and 1100s in San Marco in Venice (Nisbeth 1986. p 22; Koehler 1941. pp 63-87; Demus 1970b. p 601, pp 306-308; Demus 1984).

One should also note that the Romanesque art to

a larger or lesser extent has been influenced by the Byzantine art that appeared in original Byzantine countries, such as the mosaic of the Nativity in Bethlehem (1169) (Hunt 1991. pp 69-85).

The first step towards an answer to the questions just asked is therefore a careful analysis of the style of the wood paintings. With this in mind, we will now look at the painting on wood from Gotland during the 1100s.

### **The painted boards as a historical source**

The relatively large width and thickness of the boards give us reason to believe that the boards from Eke, Sundre and Dalhem are fragments of monumental representations. In Byzantium and Rus' have no monumental paintings on wood from the 1100s survived, and only Icons are now left from this period. There the painting, however, is performed on a thick base of chalk or gypsum, and as bonding liquid egg yolk has been used. Accordingly the icons have been made in a technique for multilayer painting. Gotlandic painting on wood on the other hand was done on a thin base and the bonding liquid used consisted of an organic substance originating from plants (Lagerlöf 1999. p 55). Examples of such limewash on wood is preserved both in Western Europe (ceiling painting in St Martin's Church in Zillis from second part of the 1100s and in the Michael's Cathedral in Hildesheim from about 1200) (Demus 1970b. p 601; Denninger 1969, pp. 79-81) and in the Nordic countries (church paintings in the chancel of the today burned church in Södra Råda Värmland, from the first third of the 1300s) (Karls-son 2003. pp. 139-146).

On Gotland had the custom or habit of decorating wooden churches with e. g. carved ornaments been around for quite some time. Fragments of such ornaments have been found in e. g. the churches in Hemse, Guldrupe and Silte (see Lagerlöf & Svahnström 1973, pp. 10-11). In the 1000s such ornaments had adorned even the painted board from Eke. Of great

interest is that this oak board, after a dendrochronological analysis carried out in 2005, can be dated to after 920 but before 1000 (Dendrochronological analysis of oak board from Eke stave church on Gotland. Report No. 2005:37, the National Historical Museum, Stockholm). In the first half of the 1100s the ornament was, however, by polishing almost completely removed and replaced with the current painting (Lagerlöf 1984, pp 124-125). Just at this time probably the tradition of adorning churches with carved ornamentation was replaced with the new colorful painting. Obviously these technological characteristics influenced the style of painting.

These simplifications, the roughness of the characters' design in paintings on wood, have by Swedish researchers been considered as a national Russian traits (Söderberg 1971, pp. 38, 45). But this can not really often be seen in paintings from the Rus' Empire. It has been explained that especially during the 1000s and the first part of the 1100s, most clients were princes and representatives from the highest spiritual layer (Lifshits 2004a; pp 18-20). Accordingly the Rus' art developed in the context of the artistic traditions in the capital. This meant access to the knowledge and careful work of professional masters. These features are common to artwork on an other social and cultural level, which is very different from the one that was directly linked to the ordering by the princes and the artistic traditions in the capital of Byzantium and the Rus' Empire in the 1000s and 1100s.

Therefore, we should instead seek parallels to the Gotlandic paintings on wood in the areas where the capital's traditions were much weaker, where the local masters came to play an important role: rustic paintings in Greece, e.g., murals in the Church Mavriotissa at Kastoria from the beginning of the 1100s (Wharton-Epstein 1982, pp 21-29) or thumbnails from the first half of the 1100s from the monas-

tery on Mount Athos, the painting on the islands (Cyprus, Corfu) in the Aegean Sea and the Ionian Sea (Stylianou & Stylianou 1985). Such examples have certain traits that were easy to follow and yet easy to spread among different cultures. In the Rus' Empire also some paintings belonging to the provincial environment have been preserved, such as illuminations from the turn of the century 1100, embedded in the Miljatino Gospel (1188-1215) (Russian National Library St. Petersburg, see Lifshits 2004a, pp 105-106).

Among all the paintings that we now know from the medieval Rus', this latter probably is the closest parallel to the Gotlandic paintings on wood, and first and foremost them from Dalhem. In both scenes are figures made in a very schematic way with graphic clarity. But before we draw any conclusions about these artworks if they belong to the same artistic tradition or not, we will further analyze the stylistic features of the paintings. In the analysis, I assume that the difference between the Roman and the Byzantine artistic tradition is in the artists perception of the plastic mold. Even if a Byzantine artist can consider a pretty rough shape, simple and schematic, in all cases he starts from the classic, three-dimensional shape. Accordingly the plastic art is exerted on a flat surface.

The Western artists, even if they are trying to produce three-dimensional shape, start from and are dependent on a strong sense of the flat surface. They stylize the volume very much and distinguish it with bright colors. This make their compositions look like schedules or ornaments that spread out on the surface. Western European paintings have always had a particular contrasting full coloring and strong expressiveness, which is often not matched by the depicted scene's character. Only the Italian artists came to approach the contemplation of the plastic mold in the same way as the Byzantine.

To characterize the painting's stylistic characteris-

tics we should look at the best preserved representation from the church in Dalhem. Certainly here is a standing figure. The artist bases the composition through the categories of the flat surface and consequently builds up through the addition of a spacious flat layer above another. The painter is trying to reproduce large, sharp movements in the composition, which is indicated by the intense angled wings and the sharply raised right arm. A very important role play the contrasts, which are clearly revealed by a comparison between the color fields. We can clearly distinguish three levels, e.g. can the bright surface of an angel's hand be placed on the dark field of a wing, which in turn strongly marked is on the red background.

In the paintings on wood the line does not only play a big role in the depiction, but it also dominates over the other artistic modes of expression. It loses all its function as shadow and shows only the border for the images. Especially well we can see it in the image where the fabric is gathered and forms many folds, such as bending of arms or legs. The color of the costume is constant. On its surface are painted more vertical lines marking the folds of the clothing. This increases even more the similarities between production and outline. To note is also the way the artist shows the light in the depiction. This is shown primarily by differences in the white line density - crisp and tight lines on the jacket, almost transparent on the tunic, more intense but also pretty clear on the wings. Consequently, you get the illusion that the light pulses on the flat surface.

Important to note is that the artists who painted boards hardly made any difference between the way of painting the naked skin or the costume. Everything is painted in a single spacious field. The representation spreads out like ornaments on a surface without marking individual parts of the volume.

We see that the artists to the paintings on wood were

focused on the Byzantine models and it is where they fetched ideas that helped them to express their intentions more exactly. These ideas, however, met the artists in their own way, using the methods they themselves were educated in.

The artistic methods used in the Novgorodian Gospel miniature is to its external equal, but the miniaturist does not build the ornamental part of the depiction in the way we observed in Dalhem. He thinks through categories in space. For him it is important to show the composition of spatial unity. Therefore does the artist not divide the composition in individual spatial layers. The Apostle Paul appears as if he is behind John's back. With the head slightly tilted and bowed forward he dictates the sacred text for John. Through this bending begins the development of the composition's spatial movement whose completion is reached in the semi-open book where John writes down his revelations.

If the artist in Dalhem at the building of the coloration used sharp contrasts, a method of rhythmic comparisons between color fields on the surface, the illumination artist solved the same problem on the notions of uniform plastic form and its movement from the depths of space. That's why he does not let the colors be produced in strong contrast. For him it is important that they harmonize with each other. In connection with this, more gradations of color tones are added - this we did not observe in the painting on wood. The full coloration is built up proportionately, softer and calmer.

The Miniaturist's professional knowledge was not refined, yet was not the notion of the classical form lost, though it admittedly was deformed. He notices the color's plastic possibilities. The artist adds color with dense brush strokes so that the form is filled and covered.

When the miniaturist is painting the faces and the

hands, he uses special methods which are very different from those used for the preparation of the robes. In this way the faces and the hands are distinguished on the fabric background of the painting. This painting is denser, the artist makes more gradual transitions between light and shadow – methods we could not observe in the painting on wood. These procedures are intended to mark up the volume on the main parts of the narration and to show light movement in space, but not on a flat surface, as we noted in Dalhem. In the comparison with the Rus' miniature the smoothed Romanesque features of the style in wood painting is moved in the foreground.

In the Swedish research is considered the most important confirmation that a Rus' master work with the wood painting be the comparison with the composition 'Constantine and Helena' from the Sophia Cathedral in Novgorod, and than principally these technological and external, typological similarities such as common features in the production of faces: narrow nasal bridge, a continuous line, which show eyebrows and nasal bridge, etc.

It should be noted that the dating of this painting is still very questionable (Lifshits 2004a. pp 70-86: Ettingof 2005. pp 411-416. 496-498). Moreover, this Novgorodian scene is a unique example of a monumental painting whose technology has no parallels among all the murals on plaster that we know today from Byzantium and Rus'. Russian researchers have noted that the technology with limewash fetched from plants in the Novgorodian painting has been chosen in connection with the preliminary decoration of the chapel (Lifshits 2004a. p 84). Furthermore, we can through this example clearly observe how the artist, who had to respect the wall surface, despite all technical barriers, neutralized the surface by the light, soft light blue shadows and the small gradations of tone without using any strong contrasts in

coloring (Especially about the composition technique and style see Lifshits 2004a. pp 70-86: Lifshits 2004b. pp 240-255).

Paintings such as 'Constantine and Helena', or the illumination from the Miljatino Gospel are unlike painting on wood based on concrete Byzantine and Kievan models. At the imitation of these models the Rus' artists simplified and schematized the shape due to e. g. technology features or lack of adequate professional knowledge, but they always aspired to show the inner world of the figure.

On the other hand, precisely this type of artwork, as Gotlandic wood paintings and the illumination from the Miljatino Gospel, were transformed into the artistic tendencies which existed in the cultures where eastern and western areas bordered on each other. In the Novgorod region a process of simplification of Byzantine patterns was going on. On Gotland was 'borrowed' design, shape and manufacturing methods from Byzantine art. The traits that were 'fetched' to the other countries were added, however, to the country's own cultural traditions and 'flavors', which were very different from those that existed in Byzantium and the Byzantine world, and even from Rus'. Probably arose in those borderlands a synthesis, a variety of cultures, where certain periods were dominated by 'certain' traditions. Similarities between the paintings in the Rus' Empire and Gotlandic painting on wood suggests that the island's artists had knowledge of the traditions of the Rus'-Byzantine art. But may you equate 'having knowledge' and "belonging to a tradition"? The stylistic differences that we observed here compel us to seek analogies in other artistic directions. In the search for parallels to the Gotlandic paintings, it is logical that we turn to the West-European art. Just the 1100s - the era of the Crusades - took also the most active contacts between East and West place (Kitzinger 1966th pp 27-48).

In these relationships Byzantium was mainly the



productive side, from which some trends were retrieved. One of the examples of Byzantine influence in the Western European art is the murals in Berze-la-Ville in France (first third of the 1100s) (Koehler 1941. pp 63-87). When reasoning about the roots to the style of wood painting special attention must also be given to the German illuminations. There one finds the development of a new style - a curious blend of traditions from Ottonian art and Italo-Byzantine influence (Grabar & Nordenfalk 1958: Messerer 1959. pp 32-60: Swarzenski 1901). Characteristic examples can be fetched from the Rhine. Among the closest stylistic parallels to the Gotlandic wood paintings include the illuminations in the Pommersfelden bible from about 1125-1130 (MS 333. f 2 Gräflisch-Schönborn Schlossbibliothek Pommersfelden: see Dodwell 1993. figure 282), and paintings in a Gospel dated to ca. 1130-1140 (MS lat. 17325th f 8 Bibliothèque Nationale Paris: see Dodwell 1993. figure 279).

There are no direct analogies to the Gotlandic painting on wood. However, it is here the general but in principle most important features of Gotlandic painting on boards, those which we could not see in the Rus'-Byzantine paintings, find its counterpart: the ornamental contemplation of figures, the leading role played by the contrasts between color fields at the construction of the colouring.

One can not deny that in the Gotlandic paintings the Byzantine features are more evident than in the just mentioned examples. This depends certainly on the level of art development a country is on and to which then the Byzantine influences are added. In France and Germany had the 1100s art many stages of development behind it. The countries had long since formed their own artistic schools, where masters could gain knowledge (Bloch & Schnitzler 1970).

The Gotlandic paintings on wood, by contrast, are certainly the oldest monumental church paintings on the island. Given this, it is not surprising that

the Byzantine tendencies that were so popular in the artistic world in the 1100s are clearly seen in the Gotlandic paintings. Further more worked in proper Byzantium Romanesque, West European masters. E.g. during the era of the Crusades, had in the Holy Land been produced such artworks as the paintings on the columns of the Nativity in Bethlehem. Queen Melisendas Psalmbook from about 1135 (Ms. Egerton 1139. British Library., London), Missale from the skriptorium of the Holy Sepulchre, dated to about 1135-1140 (Ms. lat. 12056. Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris. See Folda 1995. pp 91-97. pp 137-163). Here we undoubtedly see an imitation of Byzantine art works. But on closer examination we understand, however, that these paintings have their roots in the Romanesque art. Precisely these pieces of artwork can, in my opinion, be regarded as analogues to the Gotlandic paintings on wood, both timewise and parallels to this phenomenon. With this in mind, it is no coincidence that Fuglesang writes that it is possible that the Gotlandic painting discern both Rus'-style moves and Western European tendencies (Fuglesang 1996. p 146).

#### Who were the masters?

**In the Gotlandic painting on wood are intertwined traces of Romanesque and Byzantine art in such a 'solid' way (they have no direct analogues neither in Byzantium or in Western Europe), that it is hardly possible to attribute them either to Rus' or Romanesque masters. This fact gives us good grounds for believing that the Gotlandic wood paintings were performed by local, Gotlandic masters.**

**Additionally, the three groups of painted boards show a different degree of Byzantine influence (see Vasilyeva 2009), which in turn leads us to the answer to another question, that of the paintings' tradition. This has certainly existed and evolved on the island thanks to the**

### resident artists.

A (probable) conclusion we can draw thanks to our argument is that the clients rather were representatives, not for a trading Emporium of foreign merchants, but simply for the local Gotlandic parish community. They probably had a good knowledge of both the Romanesque and Byzantine artwork. Even the simplistic and primitive forms are characteristic of a certain stage of development of the art at the turn of the century 1000-1100, a development that can be linked to the fact that the social circle of clients became larger.

Thus, we can conclude that the Gotlandic paintings on boards are not performed by Rus' or Greek masters, although there are hints that the artists had knowledge of the Rus'-Byzantine tradition. It is not by chance Ernst Kitzinger, in one of his articles, wrote that at the beginning of and during the first part of the 1100s coincides development trends in the Byzantine and Western art (Kitzinger 1966. p. 38).

The painting fragments on the boards from Gotland clearly suggest that during the first third of the 1100s, thanks to its geographical location, was designed on the island, one very special artistic environment that had been reached by impulses from both Western and Eastern European countries.

The monumental murals on Gotland from the middle and second half of the 1100s show that interest in Byzantine art was not lessened, but rather increased significantly. The murals in the Gotlandic churches Garde and Källunge are a testimony to this (on these see e.g. Piltz 1981, pp. 359-406; Vasilyeva 2005, pp 27-36; Vasilyeva 2007, pp 186-228; Vasilyeva 2008, pp 217-233)."

### Note 36 (page 209)

In the *Canterbury Tales*, which is England's most famous contribution to world literature in the 1300s, written by Geoffrey Chaucer about 1387

we find the following stanzas:

There was a SAILOR, living far out west;  
For all I know, he was of Dartmouth town.  
He sadly rode a carthorse, in a gown,  
Of thick woolen cloth that reached unto the knee.  
A dagger hanging on a cord had he  
About his neck, under his arm, and down.  
The hot summer had burned his face all brown;  
And certainly he was a person fine.  
Very often he took a draught of wine,  
Of Bordeaux vintage, while the trader slept.  
Nice conscience was a thing he never kept.  
And if he fought and got the upper hand,  
By water he sent them home to every land  
But as for craft, to calculate his tides,  
His currents and the dangerous watersides  
His harbours, and his moon, his pilotage,  
There was none such from Hull to far Carthage.  
Hardy and wise in all things undertaken,  
By many tempests had his beard been shaken.  
He knew well all the havens, how they were,  
From Gotland to the Cape of Finisterre,  
And every creek in Brittany and Spain;  
His vessel had been called the Madeleine

### Note 37 (page 211)

The role of the Guild organizations.

The medieval guild organizations were originally conceived as a necessary protection agency in a primitive society, which had no police and prosecutors. Originally the dynasty was the only protection against acts of violence, as it exercised blood revenge, and other legal actions. A stranger was in such a constructed society without rights and without protection, because he had no affiliation with a group that could take up the battle with the attacker. In the sworn fraternity they found a replacement

for the family. That is why blood revenge is so salient in the oldest statutes.

The Canute Guild, however, had not only a judicial function. There was also an association for mutual economic and social assistance. When one of the brothers lost his ships, the other brothers were obliged to intervene and if any brother was sold into slavery in foreign lands were the brothers' obligation to redeem him.

The guild was also a religious fraternity with St. Canute as patron. The worship of St. Canute took an important place in the brothers' existence. In the church they assembled to private devotion often in front of a special St. Canute altar, and by the large guild festivities they were always gathered to common mass. At a brother's death they were also obliged to follow him to the grave and read mass for him.

Canute IV, later known as Canute the Holy or Canute the Saint (Danish: Knud IV den Hellige or Sankt Knud c.1042 – July 10, 1086) was King of Denmark from 1080 until 1086. Canute was an ambitious king who sought to strengthen the Danish monarchy, devotedly supported the Roman Catholic Church, and had designs on the English throne. Slain by rebels in 1086, he was the first Dane to be canonized. He was recognized by the Roman Catholic Church as patron saint of Denmark in 1101, under the name of San Canuto.

## Note 38 (page 229)

### **The Cistercians' monastery farms in Gotland.**

Excerpts from Barbro Idoffs article in *Gotländska studier* (Gotlandic studies) 2 p. 39: "Roma monastery is located in the most fertile part of Gotland. The Cisterciensian monasteries were rural monasteries,

which were engaged in farming on a large scale and owned large land areas. So did the Roma monastery, who owned many farms on Gotland and also large areas in Estonia where the monks missionized.

One of the monastery farms on Gotland was Möllbos in Halla parish a few km SW of the monastery. The inclusion in the land book from 1653 says "Closter farmstead in Sione firkin, Halle parish." Möllbos is the only monastic estate which still retains a medieval stone house.

You can follow the history of Möllbos farm back to late 1500s. In general, Gotlandic farms are lacking almost entirely medieval documents, but when it comes to Möllbos we know that the farm was a convent and homestead that belonged to Roma monastery during the Middle Ages. At the secularization all the monastery's papers were destroyed, which otherwise would have clarified many obscure points concerning when and how this and other monastic estates would have come in the monastery's possession.

Guta Lagh puts obstacles in the way for a too generous giving away and disposal of farms. As for Möllbos the farm may have been land reclamation, an outlying farm to the monastery simply.

The medieval stone house is located about 50 m from the existing farmhouse. A river flows past the farm, where since medieval times has been a water mill, which is probably the farm's name. The house bears traces of having been severely demolished and with available material built up again, perhaps to serve purposes other than the original. It has so long, one now can remember, been used as a warehouse and is commonly known as the Monk Hall at Möllbos. It is built of limestone with 110 cm thick walls and sharp corner chains in finely carved limestone ashlar. Parts of the original light opening, which is visible in the wall, has smooth oblique chamfered coverage. The house is almost square

and consists of ground floor, floor between floor and lofts, which are separated by wooden roofs, resting on strong beams, and covered with shingles. In order to determine the approximate construction period the plaster had to be knocked off, so that the oldest elements of the building was found and freed. This work was done after the directive of the antiquarian.

The house is without ornaments, which otherwise is a great help in dating. The best help, however, gave the cutting technique which after the plaster was cleared away was clearly visible in the oldest building elements. Stone cutting technology development is following a clear line, as all over Europe, which means that you most certainly can date the house in Möllbos to the first half of the 1200s. Also mortar suggest the same with relatively thin joints and stones of varying sizes in fairly regular shifts. The art historical position of the monk house is quite clear. The powerful, precision cut corner chains and the solid wall suggest Cistercian influence, as well as the care, accuracy and the perfect execution of the original architectural details. Even house type suggests Cistercian origin. The monk house is unique for this type of building on Gotland. Such a house was not part of the medieval merchant farmer's normal buildings.

To manage the farm closest to the monastery they had, except the monks themselves, so-called 'familiares' or farm workers, who were attached to the monastery, but lived outside the monastery walls. The other farms were managed by the so-called 'colony' or 'munkelandbor', who leased the land and paid an annual rent to the monastery. This was paid normally in kind, products of rye, barley, oats, hay, and butter.

It remains uncertain how these Gotlandic farms ended up in the monastery's possession. On the Swedish mainland, it was common to donate farms

and land to the monasteries for ones soul's salvation or to be buried in the monastery cemetery. In Estonia where Roma monastery at the most had 14 large farms, we think we know how they were acquired: "We have been told that Guthnalia's (Roma monastery) monks acquired the Estonian property by:

- a) donation by the Danish Duke Canute who was made Duke of Reval (Tallinn) in 1219
- b) own purchases
- c) gift from King Erik Ploughpenny, who would have purchased the properties and donated to the monks."

On Gotland, however, the Guta Lagh forbade to give the farms to the monastery. There it is regulated about monks land possessions as follows:

“§ 1 If a man gives himself childless to the monastery, he disposes himself over his land, and he may not sell or divide the land while he is alive. If he dies, then stays one third in the monastery, but two-thirds go back to the relatives. If he has children, then they decide over their share of the property.

§ 2 If a worldly man would give land to the monastery or the church, than he gives a tenth of his landed property, and no more, except in the event that the relatives agree.

It was common in medieval times that donations were made to churches and monasteries. That these statutes had been added was obviously warranted. They were, however only valid for land. About money we know nothing.

Guta Lagh, it is true, was written down at the beginning of the 1200s, when Roma monastery probably just had been completed, and any subsequent additions of significance was probably never made. One must of course assume that even Roma monastery received donations. Only the strict inheritance rules in Guta Lagh, however, could have been enough to slow down a too freely giving away of lands. The Gotlandic farms were very family tied. There

were strict rules of succession far out on the family branches, and they maintained their rights.

In addition, Guta Lagh had detailed regulations on land purchases. It was not allowed to sell land, unless you were in trouble and was obliged to sell. And then you had to sell to the nearest relative or "If the (nearest) relative was not able to purchase the land from the one who needed to sell, it is more distant relatives with the same trial that is said above. But the land can not be purchased outside the family." (Guta Lagh 28:3)

How could it be possible that twelve entire farms belonged to the monastery? Maybe they could all be new land clearings? If we stick to likely reasons we wonder where the monks in this case preferably would have put their farms. Well, at the rivers and lakes in order to get access to water power to the mills and fisheries which were their main source of food along with vegetables. It is known that the Cistercian monks were diligent workers. They built houses, cultivated land, dried the waterlogged meadows and bogs, and laid out roads and built mills. It would also have been quite easy for monks to acquire the swamps, waterlogged land adjacent to the open moors, because such land was not owned by farmers. It was common and was not worth anything.

Gotland had in the Middle Ages plenty of bogs and its topography was thus quite different from today. The earliest maps we have access to here, are precisely the tax orientation maps from the beginning of the 1700s. They nowadays drained marshes are marked on these maps and one can see that Gotland had large bogs, which probably were even larger during the early Middle Ages. If you follow the level lines on a modern map, this can be confirmed. The marshes had open water and were more like lakes. All monastery farms lie in a belt across the middle of Gotland with Roma monastery in the

center and most farms concentrated around the monastery. The most interesting is that all are located next to a swamp or a river with one exception, Magnuse in Gothem.

Around Stormyr was Möllbos, Lilla Björke, Änggård and Stenstu. Between Stormyr and Roma bog, it was probably open water at Högbro. The monastery farmland was stretching along the Roma bog down even to Högbro. Kulstäde and Uppenbys lay on either side of a bog, the land directly bordering the marsh. Kulstäde requires a more thorough research. The name appears in Guta Saga as the place where Botair of Akebäck built the first Christian church on Gotland. The Gutna Althingi let burn it down and the place where the church had been therefore got the name Kulstäde, i.e. the coal place. This would have occurred prior to the 1000s, long before the Cistercians came to Gotland. When and why the ground was going to the convent is uncertain. Could perhaps the area have gone to the monastery already at its foundation, because it had the same legal status as the monastery area in Roma? The current farm Kulstäde is built in the 1700s and there are no medieval track, but there are foundations in a couple of meadows nearby, e.g. in the so-called Byänget, which has traces of several foundations and also has a spring.

Three farms were called Munkebo, which puts them in direct relation to the monastery to the name, as well as Munksarve. They lay also all near water, Munkebo at Roma bog, one at Gothemsån and one at a small marsh with no name between Lina bog and Norrlanda kyrkmyr. Munksarve was close to Hejde swamp and Lina at the edge of Lina bog. Perhaps the monks at Roma monastery mostly bought the land, which they cultivated and erected buildings on. Of the two possibilities that the monastery had to acquire farms, namely, through gifts and purchases and cultivation, the latter is the



most feasible alternative. Why else would the farms be consistently located and adjacent to marshes, as well as concentrated around the monastery? This suggests a deliberate planning that fitted exactly the monks 'intentions'.

### Note 39 (page 232)

According to Professor Herman Schück, *Gotland och biskoparna i Linköping* (Gotland and the bishops in Linköping), GA 1961 p 45: "The four-century-old relationship between Linköping and Gotland was no idyll. It was concluded with certain reservations from the Gotlandic side, and had later the nature of the Church's efforts to break down these. The relation was characterized by mutual distrust and accusations. Gotland and Visby's individuality was too strong and could not suffer the profound influence of Linköping Cathedral that other parts of the diocese would. The impulses from the Swedish mainland was also less significant than those from the Baltic Sea south and east shores and from more distant regions. Gotland stood at the end of the Middle Ages strangely untouched by the powerful spiritual and organizational development, which in past centuries had otherwise meant for those country parts which were subject to Linköping.

What did Gotland mean to Linköping? Very many annoyances and little income, but also undeniable advantages. With its extensive links and its more continental civilization could Gotland and Visby provide input, as the other Swedish dioceses were without. And on several occasions it appeared to be a strength for the Linköping bishop that his diocese went outside the Swedish king's effective power range. For neither party can, however, the connection be considered to have been of decisive nature for their individuality and destiny."

### Note 40 (page 247)

Some historical sources, in which the wall is mentioned and where we are told what happened in 1288 follows:

1. Letter of August 9, 1288 from Visby citizens to the Swedish King in which they give their side of the war. They offer the King 2000 mark in clean and tested silver Gotlandic weight in addition to 500 mark silver in current coin in return for having built the wall and started the war in violation with the treaty between the King and the Gotlandic Merchant Farmers' Republic. The fine may be seen as a way to appease the King of Sweden to keep their trading privileges in Sweden. Moreover Magnus mediates in the dispute to Visby's favor.

2. Peter de Dacia: Letter to Christina of Stommeln 1288.

"..... here has been a great war in our country this year between the proper country and the city"

3. Chronicle of an unknown Swedish author.

"1288. A war has been fought between the Gotlanders and the Visby burghers"

4. The preface to Visby stadslag.

"After a great dispute arose between town and country, they sent messengers to King Magnus of Sweden. He endorsed our right and freedom."

5. Visby Grey friars' death book, Visby Chronicle.

"In the year of the Lord 1288. Mr. Valdemar, King Magnus's brother, was caught and put in Nyköping Castle. The same year it was a great war on Gotland between Visby burghers and the country's peasants, and they fought against each other in April, third saturday after Easter, and the burghers triumphed. To the memory there from draws a procession with the Blessed Virgin's image through the city. They finally compromised with King Magnus, and it was admitted that the citizens were allowed to have the wall around the city."

6. Visby Grey friars' death book, scattered notes.

"In the year of the Lord 1288, battle outside Visby on the third saturday after Easter between the burghers and peasants on the day of the holy martyr Aniceti."

7. Swedish Yearbook 266-1430

"1288. Valdemar, once the king of Sweden, was captured by his brother Magnus, the King of Sweden. The same year it was war in Visby between citizens and rural farmers. And they fought against each other in the month of April, and that year they were conciliated by Magnus, the King of Sweden, in August."

8. The Swedish Grey friars' annals from 880-1430

"1287. It was war on Gotland between Germans and Gotlanders. Many of the Gotlanders died and the town of Visby got walls."

9. Hans Nielsson Strelow: *Den Guthilandiske Cronica* 1633.

"After this time there was great discord between city and country. Year 1288 much disagreement occurred between Visby burghers and the country dwellers, for Visby wanted to put duty on them and new charges. After lengthy legal proceedings and negotiations, it was great exasperation and it came to open war.

Visby had the cities on its side. The country looks around for help and get vassals from Courland and Estonia on its side. They draw to Visby, because it was open and did through theft and looting much damage. Their leaders were Oluf Rangvald in Tofta, Peder Harding in Vall, Michel Tagsten in Lärbro, Oluf Gartarve in Gammelgarn, Tomas Bilder in Lau, Hegleff Quindegård in Havdhem: these have gathered the whole country. When the leaders in Visby experience that they were on their way they go to meet them with their troops. The armies met at Högbro, where there was a hard struggle until the evening. Then, however, the peasants were beaten and had to run into the woods, and many were

caught up and captured in Sjonhem ..... There has been (in Viklau) found several old swords, armor, and old robes some time ago. The peasants gathered again and went to Visby, but the burghers came to meet them in Roma, where many were slain on both sides.

The priests in Visby have greatly made an effort to make peace between the parties ... (The story tells about long fruitless negotiations in Visby nunnery. Strelow tells about a sealed letter from the country's governors, who did not come themselves. A few days later it was promised that the vassals and knights from Estonia should come and make peace for themselves and others.)

King Magnus has recently consiliated them, so that rural residents in each district, for the damage they have inflicted Visby, would build a tower or round tower in the wall that surrounds the city. Straight away the burghers started to fortify their city with slopes and walls in 1289. For they did not believe the peasants about something good. Then Visby was in her veil and maximum flowering surrounded by three ramparts and walls, which are still visible. In 1299 became the wall finished that it now stands."

## Note 41 (page 249)

According to Professor Adolf Schück, STF:s årsskrift (Year-book) 1940 p 80: "In the famous national law code with which King Magnus Eriksson in the 1340s prepared to replace the various provincial laws, is mentioned in particular that the" kingdom, called Sweden has seven dioceses and nine law courts". If one examines the listed dioceses and law courts, one can make an interesting observation. Gotland can certainly be accommodated within the circuit of the Swedish dioceses - just as the Norwegian Jämtland - but on the other hand it is not regarded as belonging to a Swedish judge kingdom."

Alexander Ganse, *Gotländskt Arkiv* 1990, p. 72:

"Valdemar Atterdag called himself from the conquest of Gotland in 1361, the king of the Danes, Wends and Goths. That title he wore as a result of conquest law. King Valdemar had taken over sovereignty over Gotland from the defeated Gotlanders, not from the Swedish king. The Danish policy acknowledged no Swedish sovereignty claim over Gotland before 1361".

Page 74: "The Gotlandic farmers accordingly counted their birth position and their social class socially higher than the burghers and peasants of other nations. The difference can obviously be explained that they were aware that there was a higher form of freedom, namely to be free from land lord and liability to taxation.

Guta Lagh is aware of only one hereditary position on Gotland, apart from the serfs, whose parentage is unclear. Guta Lagh is not aware, aside from the clergy of any specific professional positions. Gotland's society can be characterized as a non-class divided society."

"The Land assembly on Gotland was non-feudal and up to 1361 non-class divided and independent. From 1361 (1398) was the country congregation subject to foreign masters but retained in the internal affairs its autonomy until 1595 (1618). There is no exact date that certainly can substantiate the Gotlandic society's transition from a non-class divided society, as it was at the creation of the Guta Lagh, to a population divided into a taxpayer and a tax-free part."

"In the case of Gotland, one should also distinguish between the spiritual congregation and the secular. Foregoing applies mainly to the secular congregation. The spiritual congregation, consisting of Gotland's clergy under the leadership of the island's three provosts, represented Gotland in relation to the Bishop in Linköping and the Pope. The spiritual congregation was generally in agreement with

the secular congregation. The city of Visby withdrew in 1288 from the secular congregation, but remained nevertheless an element of the spiritual country congregation".

## Note 42 (page 257)

According to Professor Adolf Schück, *Gotlands politiska historia* (Gotland's political history) p 199: "Even in Gotland's history, one can see traces of the Falköping Battle. Margaret stood indeed with the palms of victory in her hands, but she did not manage to take possession of the Swedish strongholds, Stockholm and Kalmar, which were held by Albrecht of Mecklenburg's garrisons. They sought help at home to free the captive king and restore his shattered empire. In the Mecklenburg harbours war fleets were equipped, which could partly relieve the besieged towns in Sweden, and paralyze any peaceful commerce in the Nordic kingdoms' waters. These pirates, which since 1391 made the Baltic Sea unsafe, became known as the Victual brothers. Already this year they launched their campaign to, among other things, run riot and ravage Gotland. In the absence of a strong Nordic battle fleet Margareta was long powerless against the troublesome pirates. Among other things, the daring pirate chief Albrecht Peckatel managed in 1394 to occupy Gotland, where the Victual brothers acquired new points of support in Visby and Västergarn. Margaret had little success in her attempts to expel the invaders. The one of her detached war-force appears to have occupied much of the countryside but could not take Visby. In the summer of the next year, by Hanseatic brokerage, a general peace between Margaret and King Albrecht's supporters was achieved. What Gotland concerns, however, this 'peace' was only an armistice. The Mecklenburgians were allowed to stay in Visby and on the part of the countryside they mas-

tered. Further more, until the autumn of 1398, no hostilities had to take place between them and the Danish troops on the island. It was a strange situation. Gotland was during three years to be occupied between the two powers!

This makeshift was obviously the worst possible solution of the complex Gotlandic problem. Already in 1396 the Victual brothers resumed their piracy and to their harbours on Gotland were brought hijacked ships and cargoes. They performed more and more as an international pirate band, that did not recognize any powers - hardly even King Albrecht. The worst thing was that Margaret's own captain on Gotland, Sven Sture, took lesson from his former enemies. He began to capture the Hanseatic trading ships on the grounds that they were bound to that of Mecklenburg dominated Visby. Suspicions arose quickly that the stance of the captain towards the Victual brothers was somewhat ambiguous. Both were busy with the same immoral occupation and had no reason to offend each other. However, Sven Sture seems to have been involved with plans to take possession of Visby and for that reason he asked for help from the mainland. Admittedly, this was incompatible with the recently agreed peace provisions, but he protected himself by claiming that the flotilla, which was equipped for this purpose in Kalmar, had the task of combating the Victual brothers' pirate ships. The Kalmar flotilla met, however, a tragic fate. At Hoburgen it was attacked, not by the Victual brothers, but a Hanseatic fleet, which had been sent to fight the pirates. Two with Kalmar burghers manned ships were captured, and at the Visby roadstead the crews were brutally thrown overboard and perished miserably in the waves. The tragic incident created a strong irritant in the relationship between Margaret and the Hanseatic cities. The political situation was further complicated by the now freed King Albrecht who

shortly afterwards dispatched a fleet from Mecklenburg to Visby to strengthen its position on the disputed island. Commander was his son Erik, once Sweden's successor. He associated himself immediately with the Victual brothers' pirate guild and managed to quickly bring the entire Gotland in his father's hands.

Erik took fearless fight against the Danish troops on Gotland and built i.a. the fort 'Landeskron' (Klinteholm) at Klinte. Sven Sture soon found the time had come to change sides. He openly went over to the duke's service and gave him the entire area of the countryside over which he was Margaret's captain. The entire Gotland had now fallen into the hands of the Mecklenburgian dynasty and turned into a dangerous military base for its never given up attempts to recapture Sweden. Erik occupied, among other things, two towers of the city wall to ensure that the burghers would respond loyally. The city's so extensive self-government was thus in danger. In the summer of 1397 he could from Visby deploy a highly significant battle fleet (including some 40 ships) to the Stockholm archipelago. One of the two commanders was Sven Sture.

The Mecklenburgians' ambitious plans, however, were soon cut short. Their navy never managed to reach Stockholm, which was held by Hanseatic troops. A second heavy blow hit King Albrecht according to Visby monks' annals: "The Lord's year 1397 on July 26 death of Duke Erik, Albrecht's son, on Gotland in Klinte, in his castle, which he had built, called Landeskron and is buried in Visby, at the Holy Virgin." At the St Mary Church cemetery stood for a long time Duke Erik's tomb, which among other things, was decorated with the Mecklenburg weapon picture, a crowned bull's head. The remains of Gotland's only prince's sarcophagus is now in the St Mary's Church in Visby.

The late duke's wife Sofia, took now the reign of

Gotland. However, she was young and inexperienced, why the power went to the wily military adventurer Sven Sture. The latter, which now fully had joined the Victual brothers gangsters, had more interest in his pirate activities than the fatalities of the Mecklenburg dynasty. Then suddenly appeared on the stage a personality who long with intense interest had followed the long-standing power struggle between Margaret and Albrecht. It was the Teutonic Order's Grand Master Konrad von Jungingen.

Since some months, King Albrecht's nephew, Duke Johan held the supreme command on Gotland. Neither he nor Sven Sture could make any resistance to the Order army, which even was equipped with cannons. It was one for Scandinavia at that time relatively unknown weapon. The whole countryside was given up without resistance. As defense of Visby was considered futile, not least with regard to the burghers unreliability, both the Duke as Sven Sture found it best to bargain.

The Teutonic Order knights' seizure of Gotland had thus led finally to the removal of the hated Victual brothers from Gotland, which certainly was greeted with joy by both Visby burghers as the country people. According to the Treaty of Västergarn the Victual brothers' both pirate strongholds were razed, one was Landeskron, the second was at Slite.

Whilst the Mecklenburg Duke and his people sailed to their homeland, Sven Sture and the Victual brothers went to the Norrland coastal areas where they managed to hold on until the following year.

For Queen Margaret it was obviously a big disappointment that the island her father once subdued, had fallen into the hands of the Teutonic Order. Her newly established Nordic Union kingdom had not yet reached the strength that it dared an armed conflict with the Teutonic Order. Instead, Margaret decided to await more favorable times and made a

friendship treaty with the Teutonic Order. During ten for the city and the Gotlandic Merchant Farmers' Republic peaceful and happy years Gotland is a part of the Order state.

King Albrecht understood, however, to capitalize on his never given up claim on the island. In the spring of 1399 he agreed with Konrad von Jungingen that Gotland for a total of 10 000 English nobles should be pledged to the Teutonic Order. In the event of any other power, in this case meant the Nordic Union country, would make claims on the island, King Albrecht and his heirs undertook to take over all responsibility for the pledge transaction.

Margaret did, however, not be duped. She had previously mastered more difficult political problems than this. Her immediate counter-move was to refuse to ratify the recently concluded friendship treaty with the Teutonic Order and thus felt herself at liberty to with force of arms assert her demands on Gotland, which she now also directly conveyed to Konrad von Jungingen.

The Grand Master tried to wriggle by referring to Margaret to make the matter up with Albrecht. He did not deny that the Queen's claim on Gotland was justified. He began, however, soon to come to realize that the acquisition of Gotland was hardly a profitable business. The military expedition had cost more than money. The ransom for Albrecht had been significant and now he had to count on Margaret with military means to demand his rights. The revenue from the now impoverished island could certainly not provide any return on these expenses. Although the Orden State garrison on Gotland now consisted of only 85 squires, even these were very costly. Gotland's population did not allocate more than 500 silver marks for their maintenance and this sum was only enough for 20 squires. In 1403 the garrison had further been cut because



of Gotland's demands for tax relief. At that time, however, Margaret had lost patience. A fleet under the Supreme Command of Abraham Brodersson was sent out in November from Kalmar to Gotland. Among its officers it is noticed two former Victual brothers chiefs, Otto von Peckatel and Sven Sture, who now had gone in Margaret's service. Again the Gotlandic countryside fell quickly and without resistance in the landed army's hands. But the attack on Visby failed due to its pro-German burghers who stood in solidarity with the Orden. A trial assault against the city wall was bloodily repulsed, and one in midwinter 1404 siege must after a month be given up. However, Margaret's troops had built three forts in the countryside, where they retreated until Konrad von Jungingen would send new troops to the island.

The Grand Master also sent a significant army force under the command of his brother Ulrich von Jungingen. On May 16, 1404 in the field camp at Slite a short-lived truce was negotiated. One of the conditions was that the Swedish-Danish crew evacuated the 'house' in Slite, that should be burnt down. Under Hanseatic mediation a one-year truce was concluded on July 1<sup>st</sup> in Visby. Thereafter the Swedish-Danish army evacuated Gotland, after an exchange of prisoners took place. The Grand Master continued through his bailiff John von Tethwitz to control Gotland. Soon he consolidated further his position by among other things to build a stronghold in Visby. This fortress, which came to dominate the city inside its walls, was a precursor to the later so famous Visborg.

By an agreement in Helsingborg the Teutonic Order undertook, however, to cede Gotland to Margaret for a consideration of 9000 English nobles. At a meeting in Kalmar in September 1408 Gotland was thus ceded to the young King Erik after the compensation sum was paid. The Grand Master could

only grant that the Visby burghers were allowed to keep their former privileges. The decade-long domination by the Orden State over Gotland was completed. Its results for the Orden State was reasonably lean. The 9000 nobles did not in any way cover the war spending!"

### **Note 43** (page 258)

According to Professor Adolf Schück, *Gotlands politiska historia* (Gotland's political history) p 206: "Quite rightly had Visby burghers a premonition that the construction of the royal castle would threaten their old self-government. The Gotlandic chronicler Strelow said that they vigorously opposed the castle construction. King Erik had already before his departure in the fall made a solemn undertaking that the castle would not be of any detriment to the citizens or the foreign merchants who came to the city. Violators sued by the city would not be able to escape consequences by escaping to the castle. No such formal assurances, however, could obscure the fact that Visby after the advent of the strong Visborg never could become a self-governing city again, but obediently must abide by the castle lord's dispositions.

What regards the Gotlandic countryside the association with the Union Empire was of course a welcome relaxation after all the hardships under different occupations. Its liability to the King was established in 1412 by an agreement between King Erik and the judges to 9000 mark penningar, which amount would be charged by the island's 2300 propertied farmers. Moreover, the country population had to deliver to the King fixed quantities of cattle, lamb, poultry, fish, cereals, butter, hay and firewood, and undertake to make eight day-works per man on the building of Visborg castle. The City of Visby's tax had previously been set at 150 English nobles.

The war of liberation that Engelbrekt started against the Danish bailiff Empire in Sweden was certainly never to touch Gotland, but its consequences came to set deep scars in its history. A few months after the death of the freedom hero in 1436, Swedish and Danish statesmen met at a meeting in Kalmar, where the hated Union king was compelled to yield to opposition demands for radical revision of the Swedish government. For King Erik the Kalmar meeting concessions were a bankruptcy declaration for all his former Nordic Union policies. 'From this moment he is,' says a famous Danish historian, 'as a skipper who lost the landfall, and without a compass thrown hither and thither by the shifting currents and winds.' From Kalmar Erik sailed in September 1436 to Gotland. It was his intention only to stay there a month or so. In October he would again meet with his troublesome Swedish subjects at a meeting in Söderköping. He never came there because on the journey to the Östergötland islets his fleet became wind-driven, and he had to return to Visby.

No less than thirteen years (1437-1449) came the wrecked Union Regent to be sitting on Visborg. All of his many political plans were wrecked and after he in the years 1439-1440 formally was set aside as king of Sweden, Denmark and Norway, only Gotland remained of the vast realm given in his hands by Queen Margaret. Maybe Eric had himself had a premonition of his future fate. In 1435, he had given the old centurion of Visborg Trud Hase a silver spoon. It was decorated with the royal monogram, Gotland's weapon, some ship pictures and the inscription: *In Gothlandia et mari spes mea* ("To Gotland and the sea is my hope").

The sea and Visborg's solid walls protected the exiled monarch from his enemies' attacks. And from his island in the Baltic Sea he could maintain relations with his remaining supporters in Sweden

and Denmark as well as running negotiations with the Orden State knights in Prussia and the North German Hanseatic cities. The taxes and charges that he could extort from Visby and the Gotlandic countryside was insufficient for him, but as long as possible he clings to the hope that he would regain his lost kingdoms. In 1440, he wanted to buy the support of the Teutonic Order by pledging to them the whole island. The now highly attenuated Orden State declined to once again embark on such a risky business. Eric now had to set his hopes on what the sea could give him. After the Victual brothers' role model, he began conducting the most ruthless piracy in the Baltic Sea. Privateer captains and adventurers went in his service and brought to Visby procured commercial ships. Soon King Eric went as far as he solemnly declared his former kingdoms in blockade by warning foreign skippers to visit their harbours and waters. Here and there they made descents upon the coast in the Swedish coastal districts from which King Erik's people returned with captured cattle and food. The Swedish foreign trade was suffering no small setback. This was also felt for the German Hanseatic cities. From Swedish side they still insisted on their claim on Gotland, especially since it once again had fallen into the hands of robbers. When the Nordic three-states union in 1441 again was put together by Eric's nephew, Christopher of Bavaria, being elected the Swedish king, he must in his royal declaration undertake to with all his might make sure that Gotland would "come right freely to Sweden's kingdom again." This promise could Christopher never meet, which caused a not inconsiderable displeasure in Sweden. What Christopher was waiting for was that his aged uncle would soon pass away, so he did not have to afford a costly expedition. Instead the fate let King Erik survive his nephew with eleven years! After many years of fruitless negotiations a Swedish ex-

pedition was launched in early summer of 1446 to Gotland. The Expedition Force, which reportedly consisted of 500 men, landed on Gotland and was able to make Erik to agree to begin negotiations. A few months later Christopher himself arrived to Västergarn with a far greater military strength. In an open field at this harbour took now a regular peace conference place between the two kings. Each one was accompanied by a bodyguard of crossbowmen, as providently were placed on a gunshot distance behind the respective monarch. The outcome of the negotiations, however, became negative. The talks, which initially occurred in the presence of kings and counselors, went finally to a private meeting between the monarchs. The result was a one-year truce, which could possibly be extended.

One of the Swedish nobles who was in Christopher's entourage, was Marshal Karl Knutsson, who presented himself with a band of warriors from Visborg. Later he has vigorously sought to assert that he was opposed to the disappointing results of the 1446 Gotlandic campaign. Naturally, he was soon to be aware that the 'Gotlandic question' was the most intractable conflict in the fragmented Nordic countries.

After Karl Knutsson become king he sailed another Swedish fleet with 2000 soldiers to Gotland. They landed at Kappelshamn Bay, and were able without opposition to occupy the Gotlandic countryside. In front of Visby and Visborg walls it was, however, stop. A truce was concluded and they tried to get King Eric to surrender, but this failed.

In the meantime, arrived in Visby roadstead a small Danish squadron under the command of the Scanian magnate Olof Axelsson. He belonged to a powerful Danish nobleman line that later became known as Tott, who then during thirty years would play a dominant role in the history of Gotland. King Erik now instead agreed with the newly elect-

ed King Christian of Denmark to surrender Visborg to him.

The news of the unexpected regime change at Visborg reached soon Karl Knutsson. Despite new troop concentrations on both sides and minor clashes was a new cease-fire reached and the Swedish army pledged to pull away from Gotland. This also took place. A few weeks later Karl Knutsson confirmed the humiliating treaty that several of his own Privy Council thus had concluded.

After having borrowed Christian a larger sum of money, Olof Axelsson took Gotland as pawnbroker and installed himself as the King's 'sheriff' on Visborg. Until his death in 1464 Olof Axelsson was Gotland's mighty ruler and as such he carried out his own foreign policy. He interfered in the internal conflicts and contradictions, which prevailed in the weakening of the Teutonic Order state. But above all he was concerned that to his advantage enjoy all the privileges, such as Gotland and Visby during their bygone glory days had acquired in the northern Russian commercial metropolis of Novgorod. Here the Gotlandic Merchant Farmers' Republic held the remains of the ancient trading Emporium Gutagård, now Germinized to 'Gotenhof'. At this time it was visited no more by the Gotlandic Merchant Farmers. Instead it was leased to the cities in the Hanseatic League, who devoted themselves to the lucrative Russian trade. Olof Axelsson now wanted to raise the rental fee for Gotenhof and let make this requirement through the Gotlandic country judge. However, since the old trading Emporium after a fire was in a deplorable state, the Livonian Hanseatic cities explained at a meeting that there was no question of paying a higher rent, but wished to dispose of Gotenhof for another ten years. Since it was impossible to agree on the rental fee, this was for the time to come annually deposited with the City of Tallinn. Even Visby's old privilege, that al-

ternated with Lübeck to post a priest at St. Peter's Cathedral in Novgorod, Olof Axelsson tried to use in his controversies with the Hanseatic cities!

After Olaf's death eventually his brother Ivar Axelsson took over Gotland. After several attempts had been made to remove this pirate, he concluded an agreement with King Hans of Denmark and left Gotland in 1487. Ivar Axelsson was a feudal lord of continental dimensions. Fortunately has his collection and account book for the years 1485-1487 been preserved for posterity. It is one of the most remarkable sources of Gotland's late medieval history. We get important information about the chief monetary taxes: summer tax, winter tax and property taxes. In addition, ordered Mr. Ivar the peasantry to do both day-work obligation (*hoveri*) as in kind. Only from the three major monetary taxes, Ivar Axelsson received about 3500 Lübeckian Mark. His total income from his country has been estimated at over 4000 Lübeckian Mark. To get some idea of the real value of the latter sum of money one can from the same source in writing state the following information. Mr. Ivars knights on Visborg had on average an annual salary of 14 Mark, which however should be noted that he kept them with food and accommodation. A stone mason's day pay was 1/4 mark and generally a day's work was paid with 1/8 Mark. An ox was valued at tax collection to 4 Mark, a load of hay or a barrel of butter (= 320 pounds) to 4-5 Mark.

As successor to Ivar Axelsson, King Hans appointed Jens Holgersson, who stayed until 1509. He was least of all beloved by the people. After four years of governance the dissatisfaction with his ruthless taxation of the peasantry resulted in that they lodged complaints at the highest level. By tax extortion in his Gotlandic Country Jens became a rich man.

In 1514 the Gotlandic deserted farms were estimat-

ed to 250. It is uncertain whether this large number of vacant homesteads were a consequence of the Black Death ravages of the past or of late medieval troubled political conditions."

## Note 44 (page 267)

About the peace treaty at Brömsebro 1645

Academic treatise, as authorized by the Faculty of Philosophy in Lund to public scrutiny produced by August Hammarström Lund 1873 p. 41: "The instruction, which the Swedish commissioners entailed was of the following content: they would first require and try to force through, that all Swedish subjects and people under Swedish protection might now enjoy a free and unencumbered passage through the Straits, inasmuch as such freedom was based on international law, in accordance with which they therefore ought to refute that the king of Denmark claimed sovereignty;"

It is clear from the instructions to the negotiating Commission that Sweden did not impose any requirements on getting Gotland. Only after three months of negotiations one may due to the circumstances think of compromises and on May 2, 1645 the queen wrote to the negotiating Commission: "But would a continued insistence on this condition threaten to lead the resolution of the Congress, so could the commissioners, although the Queen only with extreme difficulty could admit it, because it does not include any security, such as Sweden's laid down five million guilders in war expenses by 50-year term, and mortgage pursuant above mentioned degrees. For reduction of the total sum demand Gotland, Saaremaa, Jemtland and Herjedalen as perpetual property. These concessions would be made just in case, that the fleet could not accomplish anything."

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## Figures

**Fig 1.** (page 7) Historical maps often show that Gotland is located outside the sailing routes and shipping, when Gotland instead was the center for shipping in the Baltic Sea region. We know that until the mid-1300s the traffic from Germany to Riga went over Gotland. Even Snorri Sturluson says that already in the 1020s the way from Norway to Novgorod went on the coast up to Öland and then over to Gotland.

During the summer, anyone can sail to Gotland. It is just to navigate by the clouds above Gotland, which in the blue summer sky, in the distance, show its exact location. Almost everywhere the water is deep into the beach. You just have to watch out for the ‘shelf’ near the beach. On the other hand, to sail in to the Swedish coast is a different matter. The archipelago’s islands merge until one is up close to them. Then, however, one is already far in among the surf, which in the day breeze rolls towards the shore and is almost invisible from the sea.

An interesting observation, that Erik Olsson has made in his book ‘Gotland mitt i Östersjön’, is that far down in the southern Baltic Sea, Gotland can be seen through the high clouds over land.

**Fig 2.** (page 13) Front page of Guta Saga. Photo Royal Library

**Fig 3.** (page 15) The first fire on Gotland. Painting by Erik Olsson.

**Fig 4.** (page 17) Winter Evening in the hall. The house was reconstructed after the foundations of houses known as ‘kämpgravar’. It seems to have been a common building form in the beginning of our era. Such houses were still in use in the Viking Age. The origin of these huge halls is considered to be the Roman art of building and especially the Roman basilicas, which during the earlier part of the Empire, even when they were quite appropriate

buildings, rather had the character of a low building with the entrance on the gable. With its double in the length direction of the hall arranged rows of columns or pillars they can be seen as excellent role models. The Gotlandic trading voyages took them far and wide. When they returned home again and all hardships were forgotten, then came the stories and tales presented by the firelight, the good heat and the food.

**Fig 5.** (page 19) Gotlands ‘Sättingar’ and ‘kastaler’ after Steffen. Source: Gotländskt Arkiv 1981

**Fig 6.** (page 22) Late Baltic Ice Lake around 8,300 BCE, with a channel near Mount Billingen through what is now central Sweden.

**Fig 7.** (page 23) Ancyclus Lake around 6700 BCE. The relic of a Scandinavian Glacier in white. The river Svea älv formed an outlet to the Atlantic Sea.

**Fig 8.** (page 24) “Well, we live centrally, in the middle of the Baltic Sea.” Photo the Royal Library

**Fig 9.** (page 26) Stora förvar

**Fig 10.** (page 30) The depot from Hogrån with sixteen elegant flint axes is an expression of relations between Gotland and southern Scandinavia during the middle Neolithic period. State Historical Museum, Stockholm. Photo Ivar Anderson

**Fig 11.** (page 31) Sun orb of carved limestone at Högbro in Halla, one metre high and one and a half metre in diameter. Photo K. E. Gannholm

**Fig 12.** (page 32) Grooves, the one at left at the edge of another one, Rone

**Fig 13.** (page 33) Grooves in a fan-shaped pattern and with one crossing, Hörsne

**Fig 14.** (page 34) The northernmost and oldest part of the large series with 32 grinding grooves at Hügrefs in Gammelgarn. The north direction is to the right of the image. Photo G. Henriksson

**Fig 15.** (page 37) Part of the depository find from Eskelhem’s rectory. Top bit to bridle with cheek bars. In the middle pierced disc with rattle sheets,

bottom right round rein or nation.

Photo Ivar Andersson

**Fig 16.** (page 38) The large, high-arched cairns from the Bronze Age group up with predilection along Gotland's shores. Close to them lie stone ships from the Late Bronze Age and the oldest Iron Age. It is the most magnificent tomb form from prehistoric time that Gotland has to offer. The map prepared on the basis of the National Heritage Board antiquarian stocktaking on Gotland 1938-40

Source: Det forntida Gotland

**Fig 17.** (page 40) Magnificent jewelry of the Late Bronze Age Gotland. - Photo Sören Hallgren.

**Fig 18.** (page 41) Uggarde råir

**Fig 19.** (page 42) The photo shows a large burial mound in Hörsne parish which was investigated in 1957. The construction, which over the centuries gradually has been expanded, consisted of five concentric stone rings and outside the outer circle a pair of small, round secondary graves. From an original central tomb, whose coffin has been spoiled, has the construction grown out as new burials occurred. The first tomb was probably built at the beginning of the Bronze Age, and the cairn was then used with some interruptions for more than thousand years. The area should also have been used as a place for worship. A large number of animal bones that were scattered over the area suggest offerings to the dead. It may be that even human sacrifices occurred. From Bronze Age has three inhumation graves and nine cremations been dated. In addition there are a large number of stray finds, which probably originate from other funerals. The secondary graves, the small rounds in the mound periphery, show that the facility after an intermission again came into use during the Iron Age.

Photo Erik Nylén and Bengt Schönbeck.

**Fig 20.** (page 43) Hanging vessel Period V and house urns from Rute.

Drawings by Sven Österholm

**Fig 21.** (page 44) 'Godsbacken' at Stavgard in Burs  
**2300-1800 BCE**

The three metre long rock coffin and the four inner stone circles with coldwall constructions are built and operated in open condition. No fewer than 22 individuals have been like sardines in a tin piled on each other at different times.

**1800-1200 BCE**

The outer edge chain is added. Burial and cult acts are still done and the internal structures are open and visible.

**About 1200 BCE**

A core cairn is added over the grave's central part. If the peat mound has been built directly at this occasion, or if it came in connection with the burial during the Late Bronze Age, can not be determined.

**900-700 BCE**

Urn graves with burnt corpses are placed on the mound's south side.

(Burenhult, Speglingar av det förflutna , p 344)

**Fig 22.** (page 45) Stone ship at Djupvik in Eksta. Painting by Erik Olsson

**Fig 23.** (page 46) Among Gotland's over 350 stone ships one of the most powerful with its impressive length of 45.5 metres is at Gnisvård fishing village in Tofta parish. It is now hidden by a dense and relatively young spruce forest, but formerly the stone ship sailed out over the sandy meadows, visible at long distances.

**Fig 24.** (page 47) Stone ship at Gannarve in Fröjel. Photo K.E.Gannholm

**Fig 25. and Fig 26.** (page 48) Mari region with old Achmulova grave field. The republic is located in the eastern part of the East European Plain of Russia, along the Volga River.

**Fig 27.** (page 49) Famous is also the stone ship at Tjelders in Boge parish, the so called 'Tjelvars grave'. According to one tradition, the one in Guta Saga



mentioned, Thjelvar should be entombed here.

**Fig 28.** (page 50) Stone circles at Trullhalsar in Anga. The stone circle is located in the northwest corner of Trullhalsar old burial ground. It has large burial mounds on three sides and should therefore be older than the cairns. It consists of nine circuit blocks and two center stones. The blocks of stone are large and weigh several tons each, why they have probably not been disturbed by any living trees. The northeastern middle stone (10) exhibit burst damage (by fire?). Were the centre stones a place of sacrifice? Drawing by K. E. Gannholm

**Fig 29.** (page 52) Map of Gotland from 1646 that shows the perception of the island at that time and its easily trafficable lakes system around which the villages seem to be concentrated maybe with traditions back to the beginning of prehistoric settlements.

Prepared by J. Mejer, Kungl. National Landsurveying archives. Nr. H4.

**Fig 30.** (page 54) Capuan bronze bowl from Sojvide, Sjonhem. Photo ATA.

**Fig 31.** (page 55) Snakehead armring of gold, type B from a treasure find at Burs in Källunge. Gotlands Museum.

**Fig 32.** (page 57) Provincial Roman wine ladle with strainer, pottery and bronze fittings for two drinking horns from woman's grave from the early Roman Iron Age at Skällhorns, Källunge parish. Photo ATA.

**Fig 33.** (page 57) Back Button Buckle of silver with garnet cloisonné of gold from a tomb at Trullhalsar, Anga. Buckle length is 5.9 cm.

**Fig 34.** (page 58) Drinking Horn Fittings of bronze. These seizures sat on the horn end of the clip. The use of horns as drinking vessels were a Germanic custom. In the Roman workshops they made even drinking horns of glass for sale to the Germanics. The Roman profile rings on the rod ends alter the

course of the Roman Iron Age, and one can therefore use these in chronological typology. Many of these seizures are in the ground from the Roman Empire, but some may also have been made on Gotland, where seizures are widely distributed.

**Fig 35.** (page 59) The prehistoric foundations of the houses, traditionally called 'Kämpgravar' are on Gotland known in great numbers, about 1400. They have at scientific investigations generally been dated to the Roman Iron Age and Migration Period and are located in uncultivated areas, which have been well suited for cattle breeding. It has been established that this type of settlement ceased during the 500s CE. Foundations for the houses, often in groups of 4-5, appear in the terrain as low ridges. They are often elongated, hall-like buildings which have obtained its character from the high, Saw-sedge covered saddle roof, resting on low stone walls. The largest known hall is in Burs, measuring 67x11 m. The picture shows a house foundation at Lojsta, now reconstructed.

**Fig 36.** (page 62) Map

**Fig 37.** (page 64) Gamla hamn (old harbour) at Lauters on Fårö was during the Viking Age a lagoon harbor. In the bay, which had a length of 90 metres, traces have been found of ballast stones from the Baltics and bricks and other remains from ancient seafaring. The harbor was probably already in ancient times an important port. Here has been found a bronze head from a Roman ship from Roman Imperial time. The bronze head is now in Gotland's Museum in Visby. Nowadays, the old harbour is completely silted and a large gravel bank has cut it off from the sea. This may have occurred in the early 1300s, when heavy storms raged in the Baltic Sea and North Sea, and large parts of Helgoland and Rügen were washed away in storm tides. Near the bay are the remains of foundation walls to a small chapel and several graves. The chapel was called St.

Olaf's chapel, and is probably from the 1000s, when Olaf the Saint from Norway was on Gotland. It was probably built from wood. Painting by Erik Olsson  
**Fig 38.** (page 65) Bronze head from a Roman ship found in Gamla hamn at Lauters on Fårö. The dating is about the birth of Christ. A Roman ship which reached the Baltic Sea, but never returned? Source: professor Erik Nylén.

**Fig 39.** (page 69) The Havor treasure. The Havor set is a classic example of an Early Roman drinking set with a situla for carrying the wine, strainer for filtering it and ladle for pouring out both the wine and the water into a saucepan (or other vessel), from which the wine was then served out into drinking beakers of silver or glass. Wine ladles and buckets from Capua in Italy, in whose handle sometimes is a fabrication stamp with the wording 'PI POLYBI', indicate that it comes from the Capuan bronze caster P Cippius Polybius workshop, whose family made most of the bronze vessels found in Pompeii and Herculaneum. Three such buckets were included in the Havor treasure of which one carries a Polybius stamp. Such buckets are considered to be mainly from the period 50-100 CE.

**Fig 40.** (page 72) Torsburgen in Kråkingbo Parish, the largest ancient castlefort in Scandinavia, clearly indicate the Gotlanders' need for effective defense installations during the Iron Age. It has a nearly two km long limestone wall. This vast plateau within one of Gotlands large forest areas has semi-natural defenses by the steep slopes. 'Situation map over Torsburgen' prepared by F. Ljungberg. The Antiquarian-Topographical Archives, Stockholm.

**Fig 41.** (page 73) Wine ladle from Roes in Rone. The Roman wine ladle formed on Nordic soil a much coveted article of commerce, which can hardly be interpreted otherwise than that they from the South found their way here.

**Fig 42.** (page 76) The fourth silver treasure on

Stavar's farm was taken as preparation to be dug out under laboratory conditions. The 205 silver coins were packed together in five rolls, as they once were transported in the 900s, maybe all the way from the Orient.

**Fig 43.** (page 77) The third silver treasure. Three massive, heavy silver bracelets with stamped ornamental art, so typical for many of the Gotlandic silver treasures. But this also contained something that made its connection to Stavar's treasure even more significant: a finger ring of exactly the same type as that one found in the first treasure 1975. Just with the difference that this was completely undamaged. Can the rings have been the farm's signature, the owners' clan tag? In any case, here we are finding yet another proof of the farm's wealth, and an important part in our knowledge of the function of the silver treasures in the Viking Age society.

**Fig 44.** (page 82) Rowing ships round Hoburgen. Such ships are mentioned by Tacitus. The axe formed image stones have stylized ships with high stems and a tent-like house in the middle of the ship with shields on the sides. They have paddles but no sails, seven pairs of oars as the picture stone from Sanda, which was found during the restoration of the church in 1956. The stone lay on the floor at the door to the sacristan. Its upper part was found in the churchyard wall at the beginning of the 1900s. Painting by Erik Olsson

**Fig 45.** (page 83) Clay vessel. Sojvide, Gotland.

**Fig 46.** (page 84) Wine ladle from Capua in Italy, in whose handle sometimes is a fabrication stamp with the wording 'PI POLYBI', which indicates that it comes from the Capuan bronze caster P Cippius Polybius workshop, whose family made most of the bronze vessels found in Pompeii and Herculaneum.. Such buckets are considered to be mainly from the period 50-100 CE. The size of the wine ladles that have been found varies sharply. The entire length

of the object can be 20-30 cm, the diameter of the ladle 11-17 cm and a height of 6-10 cm.

**Fig 47.** (page 85) Clasps, belt rings and strap end fitting. Gotland.

**Fig 48.** (page 86) A beautiful summer evening in 1954 a farmer in Fole found on his newly gravelled forest road five rare noble gold jewelry, a necklace and four richly decorated bangles, total weight of 800 g. The treasure had come from a gravel pit in Burs in Källunge and probably been buried in the 200s AD. The Gotlanders used during troubled times their gravel slopes as safes and happy coincidences have meant that many of these treasures in our day have again come into the light.

**Fig 49.** (page 86) Snake head ring of gold. Vestrings, Gotland.

**Fig 50.** (page 88) Popular movements in Europe in the 300s and 400s, The Huns incident

**Fig 51.** (page 89) Goldbracteats from Ringome in Alva and goldrings from Gudings in Alva

**Fig 52.** (page 90) The spearhead from Moos, Stenkyrka, Gotland. On the blade are five runic characters 'gaois' inlaid with silver. Drawing. Max Roosman.

**Fig 53.** (page 90) Gothic runic alphabet with 24 runes

**Fig 54.** (page 91) The Kylver stone

**Fig 55.** (page 92) North Germanic warrior in full armor from the time about mid 300s. The rider is dressed in chain mail, helmet with protective plates for the forehead, cheeks and chin, and, moreover spears and swords. The Vadenienses, are an old Ibero-Celtic people of fighters and horsemen who to every horse had two warriors, one to ride and the other to fight on foot to help protect the horse and knight. They lived on the Asturian plateau and in the mountains and further on in northern Italy, Austria and Bohemia. They were a travelling people. They might have met the people from Gotland in the Bohemian area.

In their homeland they had picture stones, and

might have inspired the Gotlandic picture stones.

**Fig 56.** (page 94) Picture stone from Bro church

**Fig 57.** (page 95) Spoke grave at Barshalder in Grötlingbo. Aerial Peter Manneke.

**Fig 58.** (page 95) Picture stone from Austre 1 Hangvar. The great 'worm' is, according to Göran Henriksson a perception of Enckes comet that was visible this close to the sun because it was a total eclipse in 292 CE.

**Fig 59.** (page 96) Picture stone found on Väskinda cemetery, now in Gotland's Museum. It dates back to the 400s CE. The picture stones are elegant variations of Gotlandic memorial stones and a singularity for the island. These well cut memorials are always decorated on one side in a finely lined relief. The stones have been colored, but traces of it are now missing. The oldest stones have a straight shape and stylized decoration. In the younger stones (600s up to 1000s) the image area talks with a rich fantasy of travel and war, about stories and legends, historically important image documents where the literary sources have been lost.

The sun wheel is an ancient religious symbol, here surrounded by horned animals. For the earlier stones already prepared flat surfaces next to Stone Age grinding grooves were used. However, sometimes part of a grinding groove happened to be included in the cut slab.

**Fig 60.** (page 97) Picture stone Sanda church

**Fig 61.** (page 98) This picture stone from Tängelgårda in Lärbro parish could depict a Gotlandic sailor, his last battle and final entry into Valhalla.

Another interpretation is that it shows the Greeks' departure as they left the famous Trojan horse behind them, and the welcome the Trojans gave the horse. It dates back to the 700s CE and is now housed in the National Historical Museum, Stockholm.

**Fig 62.** (page 99) Also this picture stone from Tängel-

gårdar in Lärbro parish could depict a Gotlandic sailor, his last battle and the final entry into Valhalla.

The interpretation should be the same as the previous picture stone as they are from the same place and are dated to same time back to the 700s CE. It is now housed in the National Historical Museum, Stockholm.

**Fig 63.** (page 100) Picture stone from Havor Hablingbo

**Fig 64.** (page 101) Picture stone from Smiss in När from the 600s.

**Fig 65.** (page 103) Our ancestors played board games. Both dice games and board games were popular especially among the Romans. From the Roman Empire the games spread to the Germanics. The Romans called the game *Ludus Latrunculorum* - the name means the soldiers' game - a precursor to draughts. The components of such games from about 400 have been found in grave finds from Ihre in Hellvi and Sojvide in Sjonhem. They consist of small chips of bone or glass and dice.

**Fig 66.** (page 105) Beowulf sails from Gotland to Stevns klint in Sjaelland

**Fig 67.** (page 112) Gold treasure consisting of spiral ring and 47 Roman solidi from Helgö, Ekerö Uppland

**Fig 68.** (page 113) Shield from late Iron Age. The mountings are from one of the boat graves at Vendel in Uppland, and after them, the circular wooden shield has been reconstructed.

**Fig 69.** (page 115) Clasp of a purse

**Fig 70.** (page 120) Avair Strabains' homecoming.

Around 1220 the Guta Saga was recorded as the preface to the Guta Lagh and shows at the time how the Gotlanders saw their history. Avair Strabain is the first Gotlander who emerges from the fairy tale mysteries. Painting by Erik Olsson

**Fig 71.** (page 124) Map over Lettland showing the place for the Gotlandic trading Emporium at Gro-

bina

**Fig 72.** (page 129) Map of important locations and routes during the Viking Age

**Fig 73.** (page 130) Harbours and loading places around the Gotlandic coasts

**Fig 74.** (page 131) The free trade on the Gotlandic coast. In the time of the Sagas when the Gotlanders were a free people, the Gotlandic Merchant Farmers sailed and traded with whomever they wished. At that time the Gotlanders decided that the island's trade would be free for all mariners. It was the free trade that made us rich! Painting by Erik Olsson

**Fig 75.** (page 133) Paviken i Västergarn

**Fig 76.** (page 135) Map over Västergarn and the Paviken area

**Fig 77.** (page 138) Cist stone from Ire Hellvi. Dated after 600.

**Fig 78.** (page 138) Grave Orb is the name for a petrosphere that was put on the tomb of a deceased. Grave Orbs were made throughout Scandinavia from the Pre-Roman Iron Age until the Vendel era. Some grave orbs are engraved with ornaments, such as the orb at Inglinge hög or barrow of Inglinge near Ingelstad in Småland. The barrow was in 1869 donated to Svenska Fornminnesföreningen. Hög is from the Old Norse word *haugr* meaning mound or barrow.

**Fig 79.** (page 140) Neman river

**Fig 80.** (page 140) Image from the Skylitzes illuminated manuscript in Madrid, showing Greek fire in use against an enemy fleet.

**Fig 81.** (page 141) The Russian rivers

**Fig 82.** (page 142) One of the major Gotlandic Varangian trade routes in the 700s–1000s was the Volga trade route which ended in Atil and was the major commercial outpost from which trade extended into the far reaches of 'Deep Asia'.

**Fig 83.** (page 146) The Khazar Khaganate, between 650 and 850. The period when the Khazars had

their greatest power corresponded with the European Dark Ages, and took place at a very important time for the creation of capitalism. Its strategic importance between China on one side and the Middle East and Europe on the other, temporarily gave all of Eurasia incredible riches.

**Fig 84.** (page 147) Constantinople and the Byzantine Empire has left its mark in the form of religious items, jewelry, and not least in coins. The trade treaty signed in 911 by a Gotlandic Varangian delegation and the Byzantine Emperor Leo VI testifies that the Varangians were settled in the quarter of Saint Mamas. The Treasure from Ocksarve in Hemse contains 123 Byzantine coins, representing Constantine VII 913-959, Basileios II 976-1025, Romanus III 1028-1034 and Constantine IX 1042-1055 Photo Gotland's Museum

**Fig 85.** (page 149) The Kievan Rus' at the beginning of Sviatoslav's reign, showing his sphere of influence to 972. Sviatoslav was the grandfather to Yaroslav the Wise.

**Fig 86.** (page 153) Silver arm rings from the Spillings treasure

**Fig 87.** (page 154) The find from Hammar in Fårö parish is Gotland's oldest Viking silver hoard. It dates back to 804/805 and was in 1863 found in a field. The treasure consists of six Arabic and a Persian coin, a spiral and seven smaller pieces of silver.

**Fig 88.** (page 155) The unique coin from the Spillings Hoard with the inscription 'Moses is the prophet of God'. Photo: Kungl. Myntkabinettet

**Fig 89.** (page 157) The Silver treasure from Stumle in Alva parish was found almost intact in a field 1989. The treasure includes 1310 coins, which were kept in a bronze box with a lid. The plow had just lifted the lid and spread out a few coins, before the silver treasure was discovered. It dates back to after 1053. Photo Ulf Abramsson.

**Fig 90.** (page 161) The 'Snäck' harbor Snäckhusvik in

Vamlingbo. There may have been an activity similar to that in Paviken. Painting by Erik Olsson

**Fig 91.** (page 164) Tool chest from Mästermyr. Through its series of tools, hammers, drills, saws, files and cleaning it provides a unique insight into a high-gear culture and a high degree of craftsmanship. Photo author (SHM).

**Fig 92.** (page 166) Among Gotland's approximately 525 silver treasures from the Viking Age the treasure from Föllhagen in Björke takes prominence. The photo shows a portion of this treasure with arm bends, beads, and different kinds of hanging ornaments, all of fine silver FILIGREE WORK. The treasure has been deposited in the soil around the year 1000 CE.

Photo Ivar Anderson.

**Fig 93.** (page 167) Silver Treasure from Sälle in Fröjel parish found the 1987. It contains more Swedish and Scandinavian coins, 118 pieces, than any other Viking Age silver treasure on Gotland. Several of the Swedish coins are minted on square pieces and can probably be traced to Olof Skötkonungs coinage in Sigtuna, which began around 995. The Sälle treasure thus represents an important addition to research on the first Swedish coins. It weighs just over three kg. It includes more than 1000 coins which can be dated to after 1016 and has been kept in an earthen clay pot.

Photo Ulf Abramsson.

**Fig 94.** (page 169) First Gotlandic coin

**Fig 95.** (page 170) Pax Porta Nova

**Fig 96** (page 172) The Pilgårds rune stone inside Bogeviken, that in the Viking Age was a bay, was found in 1871 in a cairn on Pilgårds' land. The stone was full with runes in lines running from bottom to top. The text reads as, interpreted by Wolfgang Krause: "glaring painted Hegbjarn and his brothers Rodvisl, Oystain and Emund raised this stone, who have raised stones in memory of Ravn south of Rufstain.



They came a long way in Aifur. Vivil gave the mission”.

**Fig 97.** (page 173) One of the Sjonhem stones, erected in memory of Rodfos who was killed in treachery by Valackians

**Fig 98.** (page 174) Timans in Roma inscription mentions two male and four geographical names that have been inscribed: Ormica, Ulvat, Greece, Jerusalem, Iceland, Serkland

**Fig 99.** (page 177) Model of Skuldelev III 1:50 scale. Photo and model building Henry Hallroth.

The ship is consistent with the description of the Gotlandic ‘knarr’ according to the Guta Lagh

**Fig 100.** (page 180) The map shows the trade routes in Europe during the Viking Age according to Bolin. Snorri Sturluson says that as early as the 1020s the way from Norway to Novgorod went along the coast up to Öland and then over to Gotland.

Olav the Saint’s story tells of Gudleik Gårdske who by King Olav was asked to buy costly treasures that were difficult to get in the country. Gudleik replied that the King would get what he wanted, and then let the king give him the money as much as he wanted. In the summer Gudleik sailed to the East, and they were some time on Gotland.

**Fig 101.** (page 181) 18 ‘snäckor’ sailing out of Bogevisken. Strelow writes in his chronicle: “Gjerre in Sjonhem on Gerite farm, his brother Bogke and Hangvar brother sailed from Bogevisken with 18 ‘snäckor’ in the Viking Age.” They sailed to the east and on the painting goes in a track grey geese to the north in the spring time. The Gotlanders, the free men, who rarely saw the meadow flower, were then on their way to Miklagarðr (Constantinople) and England. They sailed out of Bogevisken, where now seven streams are located. The Gotlandic ships were according to the picture stones and the Guta Lagh not as large as those of the Norwegians, which sailed to Iceland and Greenland. They could be

drawn at rivers and in shallow water. The Gotlandic coast has always needed a special kind of shallow draft boats. Painting by Erik Olsson

**Fig 102.** (page 183) Resurrection egg. It is a small ceramics egg with yellowish white tiger striping. Only five such eggs have been found in present-day Sweden, two in Sigtuna area and three on Gotland in Alva, Rone and Fröjel. The eggs are believed to originate from Kiev, where dozens have come to light during excavations. They are considered to symbolize a sealed tomb with a promised resurrection after death.

**Fig 103.** (page 185) Baltic tribes

**Fig 104.** (page 185) Yard cross at Lauks in Lokrume. Photo K. E. Gannholm

**Fig. 105.** (page 185) Cross hinges, Byzantain type, Gotlandic graves. After J. Staecker (se also note 28)

**Fig 106.** (page 186) Kievan Rus’ (also Kyivan Rus’) was a medieval polity in Europe, from the late 9th to the mid 13<sup>th</sup> century, when it disintegrated under the pressure of the Mongol invasion of 1237–1240.

The early phase of the state is sometimes known as the ‘Rus’ Khaganate’, while the history of Rus’ proper begins in 882, when the capital was moved from Novgorod to Kiev, after Gotlandic Varangians, who were called al-Rus’, liberated this Slavic city from the Khazars’ tribute. The state reached its zenith in the mid 1000s, when it encompassed territories stretching south to the Black Sea, east to the Volga, and west to the Kingdom of Poland and to the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. The reigns of Vladimir the Great (980–1015) and his son Yaroslav I the Wise (1019–1054) constituted the “Golden Age” of Kiev, which saw the official adoption of Christianity in 988 and the creation of the first East Slavic written legal code, the Russkaya Pravda (Justice of Rus’).

**Fig 107.** (page 189) Bulverket in Tingstäde lake, the largest known timber construction from prehistor-

ic times. It measures about 170x170 m. BuIverket, of which major parts are still under water, has with C<sup>14</sup>-method been dated back to the 900s. The plant consists of a quadrilateral bridge building on which the buildings in a chequered way have been placed. Around this lakefort there was a wooden palisade. Reconstruction by Harald Faith Ell after Arvid Zetterling's measurement

**Fig 108.** (page 190) Olaf II of Norway, later called the Saint, lands in Aker garn in 1030. He became here, after his death, patron saint. A sculpture of him with the broad ax in his hand took its place in most of Gotland's churches, on the right side of the altar. Aker garn is known since then as St. Olofsholm. Snorri tells us that, when Olaf fled from Norway in 1028, Hakon Jarl took possession of his ships. One of these was Visunden, that he left to an Icelander named Jökull Bardarson to captain. Much later he happened to run into King Olaf's men on Gotland and was taken prisoner. He was to be beheaded and after the first blow, which struck him in the head and was a very large wound, he wrote a verse, which Snorri quotes. Painting by Erik Olsson

**Fig 109.** (page 190) Ring clasp from Karls in Tingstäde mid 1000s

**Fig 110.** (page 193) Burs church. The church consists of a large chancel, a long nave, a tower on the west side with galleries and a vestry on the north side of the chancel. The oldest part of the building is the nave, built in the first half of the 1200s. This is followed by the tower from the mid 1200s. The mighty chancel, represent the first stage of a major construction campaign from the second quarter of the 1300s. The church belongs as regards the composition to the so-called pack-saddle churches.

**Fig 111.** (page 194) Burs church crucifix. Beginning 1300s

**Fig 112.** (page 195) Hegwaldr's font in Halla church. Sandstone

**Fig 113.** (page 196) Byzantios' font Garde church, sandstone

**Fig 114.** (page 197) Sighraf's font Grötlingbo, sandstone

**Fig 115.** (page 198) Majestatis' font Lokrume, sandstone

**Fig 116.** (page 198) Viklau madonna 1100s

**Fig 117.** (page 200) Garde. Reconstruction of the Byzantine paintings in the nave after surviving fragments. Both the north and south wall paintings are divided into more records than the western wall. According to Olsson's reconstruction, there are five departments. In the top department there is a saint facing frontal in arches. Elisabeth Piltz has convincingly proven that here are produced the 40 martyrs of Sebastia. Sketch by Erik Olsson 1968

**Fig 118.** (page 205) Visby harbor in Almedalen. Eight Estonian ships had anchored in the roadstead outside Visby in 1203. The Visby citizens did not want to fight with them, but German pilgrims, who were then in Visby, asked Bishop Albert of Riga to bless them before they went off to kill the pagan crews. The Germans killed 60 Estonians, of whom 22 were brought down by a big German with a two-handed sword, before he himself succumbed. Painting by Erik Olsson

**Fig 119.** (page 208) Visby harbour in Almedalen. Entrance to the harbor was at Turris fluvialis by which was meant the river tower at the southern entrance. Painting by Erik Olsson.

**Fig 120.** (page 211) Model of the Fide ship (scale 1:20). The first known image of the bow rudder. Photo and model building Henry Hallroth Visby.

**Fig 121.** (page 212) Lübeck's seal, 1280

**Fig 122.** (page 216) On Visby roadstead. Visby was an early base, and its harbour had a key position for the German crusades against the non-Christians in the Baltic States. In this city Bishop Albert of Riga came to play a central role. When in the summer

1199, he for the first time passed Visby on the journey east, he preached in the city and ‘up to 500 men took the cross’, a startling figure if it is correct. In any case, this is testimony of Visby’s great importance at this early stage. For Albert, Visby became a central point for all the upcoming crusades. The one that tells about this is a priest named Henry, called Henry Letten, who had been the bishop’s companion and eyewitness to the events.

Painting by Erik Olsson.

**Fig 123.** (page 220) Medieval Livonia

**Fig 124.** (page 222) Fårösund in 1210. Henry Letten talks about a battle in 1210 between the Crusaders and the Curonians in Fårösund. Tradition says that when the bishop after having left his vassals with some pilgrims in Livonia, he was with pilgrims on the return journey to Germany. Curonians unexpectedly arrived, enemies of the name of Christ, in the strait at the seashore with eight warships. The Courland ships were within the reef at Hau grönu. After a few of the pilgrims had been killed by the enemy’s lances, some drowned and some have been wounded, the others returned to the cogs and escaped. The Curonians then gathered the dead corpses, stripped them and divided the clothes and the rest of the booty among themselves. The burghers of Gotland, however, afterwards collected the bodies and buried them in prayer. But it was almost 30 knights and others who were killed.

Painting by Eric Olsson

**Fig 125.** (page 235) Stånga church.

**Fig 126.** (page 237) Rone church. Calvary group: Christ on the cross flanked by the Virgin and St John, end of 1300s.

Carved and gilded tablet on lower end of rood, with the symbol of St Matthew, a winged man.

**Fig 127.** (page 237) Stånga church. Only in Gotland will you find a well-dressed maid accompanying the Holy family to Egypt.

**Fig 128.** (page 237) Martebo church. Same motive as on Stånga church

**Fig 129.** (page 240) Weathervane in runestone style, early 1000s. Källunge church.

**Fig 130.** (page 241) The seven ‘Ledungs’ ships. Since the Gotlanders acquired bishop and priests, and completely embraced Christianity, they also had to join the crusades and follow the Swedish king in raids with seven ships against non-Christian countries, but not against Christians.

Painting by Erik Olsson.

**Fig 131.** (page 244) Visby - Regina Maris, the Queen of the Sea . Painting by Erik Olsson.

The oldest tower in the wall is the Lambets tower at the north end of the medieval harbour, current Almedalen, now called Kruttornet with the small harbor exit. Lambets tower was in Latin called *Turris lambitus*, which means that of the water licked Tower, beach tower. Here the ships left the harbour. Into the harbor they came at *Turris fluviatilis* which means the river tower at the southern entrance. This information comes from a ship sailing instruction from the 1400s in *Hanseatische Archiv* in Lübeck.

**Fig 132.** (page 246) Regina Maris. Visby city wall - East side moat with the Dalman’s Gate. The wall around Visby was built in two phases. The first low wall, which was crenelated, equipped with port-holes, and without the great towers, was built in the 1230s until the mid-century. Visby’s power grew and the relationship became strained between the merchants in the city and the Gotlandic Merchant Farmers, which led to strife in 1288. Up to the year 1299 they built on the wall, so it became higher, and now came even the towers. Visby was in the 1200s the Baltic Sea region’s largest and richest city.

Painting by Erik Olsson

**Fig 133.** (page 249) ‘Kraup fram din rackare!’ (Come out you rascal!). The Swedish king Birger Magnusson needed money and he wanted to raise the tribute

of 60 marks silver which the Gotlanders willingly had paid for several hundred years for free trade in Sweden and protection and assistance. When the Gotlanders refused to pay the increased tribute, the Swedish King came in 1313 to Gotland with his fleet and landed in Slite, to chastise the stubborn Gotlanders. A battle took place on Röcklinge backe in Lärbro. The Northern Gotlanders were led by their chiefs from Duss in Bro and Angelbos in Lärbro. The Swedish army was beaten. King Birger hid under a hazel bush, but was found and the butcher from Vallstena shouted: 'Kraup fram din rackare!' Painting by Erik Olsson

**Fig 134.** (page 252) The night between 24 and 25 February (the evangelist Matthew's night) in 1302 broke such a storm out that the ships in Västergarn were washed up on the shore and destroyed.

Gamle hamn on Fårö may have sludged up at this time. It is said also that the island of Rügen was submerged at the same time. Erik Olsson has drawn the two churches and Västerhuse Castle that probably was demolished in the 1490s by the feudal lord Jens Holgersson Ulvstand and used in the construction of Glimmingehus in Skåne. It is interesting to note that the carved stones of Glimmingehus keeps the Gotlandic measurement, 55.3 to 55.4 cm, which is considerably shorter than the Danish, which was 66.77 cm and after which the house was built.

Painting by Erik Olsson

**Fig 135.** (page 254) Gotland has more than 100 medieval churches. From the early stone churches, which were of fine masonry, there remain only fragments. These were replaced during the Young Gothic time by the larger churches. Lau church that is one of Gotland's largest country churches is built as a three naves church hall in the 1270s and was scheduled for a major tower. When the times changed they had to put all plans on the shelf.

Photo K. E. Gannholm

**Fig 136.** (page 255) Valdemar Atterdag. When the Gotlanders were beaten, the city burghers opened the gates, and out came a negotiating team consisting of twelve men in just their shirts with a rope round their necks and carrying the city's keys, the complete submission according to medieval custom. Painting by Erik Olsson

**Fig 137.** (page 257) When the Danish King Valdemar Atterdag had beaten the Gotlanders and entered Visby without a fight, according to legend, and by the Visby burghers been payed stipulated ransom, the Danish army was let loose on the Gotlandic countryside in order to rob and plunder. In Fide church is a very telling evidence of what happened to the Gotlanders after the defeat outside Visby walls. Painting by Erik Olsson

**Fig 138.** (page 258) The Teutonic knights disembark in Västergarn in snowfall 21<sup>st</sup> of March 1398 with 80 ships, 5000 men, 400 horses, 50 knights, catapults and cannons. They took Visby without a fight, and burned the mounts of the Vitalian brothers. The pirates who did not fall in battle were slain. Painting by Erik Olsson

**Fig 139.** (page 260) Visborg castle. When Erik XIII of Pomerania in September 1408, at a meeting in Helsingborg, took over Gotland from the Teutonic Order he had paid a total of 9000 English gold nobles for it. In 1411 King Erik came with an army over to Gotland. He landed on 29 July and on 1 August laid the first stone to Visborg castle. Gotland's governor, Trugot Hase, was entrusted with the continued building of the castle and to the majority it was completed in 25 years. Hase died 1437 and left a large fortune gathered by plundering ships and stranding business. In the spring of 1437 came King Erik to Gotland and settled on Visborg castle bringing his wealth and his mistress, the beautiful Cecilia. From here he practised piracy in near twelve years. Visborg castle was then the strongest

fortress in the Baltic Sea. Painting by Eric Olsson.

**Fig 140.** (page 261) When Erik XIII for a time had been on Visborg's castle, he was to sail to Söderköping. He came in distress at Karlsö. He succeeded, however, with his flagship Rosenkrantz to save himself under the lee of Stora Karlsö, where he put himself on land. The storm increased and Rosenkrantz and another ship were wrecked, and about 120 men died in the waves. Painting by Eric Olsson.

**Fig 141.** (page 262) in 1449 Olof Axelsson Tott received Gotland in fief and pledge from King Christian and his position was more independent than a typical feudal lord. Olof Axelsson Tott strengthened the castle further. Severin Norby was the last fief-holder, and when he left Gotland in 1525 it became a tributary state under the Danish king. Danish lords then ruled over the castle on the behalf of the Danish king until the peace in Brömsebro 1645 when Gotland and the castle came in Swedish hands for the first time. The Danes took it back in 1676, but at the peace between Sweden and Denmark in Lund, October 7, 1679 Admiral Juel had orders to blow up the strong towers and tear down all the houses before the Danes left Gotland to Sweden. Painting by Eric Olsson.

**Fig 142.** (page 263) In 1446 was the name of the Swedish King Christopher of Bavaria. The severe crop failure in the country gave him the name 'Bark King'. He was the nephew of Erik of Pomerania, who then sat on Visborg castle and whose pirates captured ships with goods to Sweden. Christopher must put an end to this for the people starved, so he came with his fleet to Västergarn in August 1446 to seek a settlement with his uncle. They quarreled for two days on arrows distance. The agreement was that peace would be kept for a year and Kristoffer had to pay well for it. On his way from there the Bark King was shipwrecked and came close to losing his life in the waves. He died two years later

and it is written about him: 'Most every night past midnight, he was drinking, loose living and fornication was his thing.' Painting by Eric Olsson.

**Fig 143.** (page 264) Erik of Pomerania had 500 pirates on Gotland and awaited another 1000 from Pomerania. Then Christopher of Bavaria died and Karl Knutsson Bonde, was elected to Swedish king. He had attended the two kings meeting in 1446. The first thing he did was to send an army over to Gotland. With 2000 soldiers he occupied Visby, but he could not get at Erik of Pomerania, who sat on Visborg castle, the strongest fortress in Scandinavia. He intended to take Gotland and as soon as he was present on the fleet he sailed to Gotland. In July he anchored at Västergarn with 150 sails, which means ships and an army of 6,000 men. There a meeting took place between the Swedish Supreme Commander Green, fleet commander Junker Gerhard, and Olof Axelsson Tott, now Lord of Visborg. A truce was reached on July 15 applicable until St. Hans or midsummer of the following year. Meanwhile Erik delayed the negotiations with the Swedes and sold Gotland to the Danes and King Christian. Then the Danish army went ashore in Västergarn and so was Gotland again Danish. But first must the Landsdomare on Gotland with the Gotlandic seal confirm this and it was done in Västernärke church. Painting by Eric Olsson.

**Fig 144.** (page 265) Visby is burning after Lübeck's looting year 1525. The city now sunk into poverty and oblivion. Painting by Eric Olsson.

**Fig 145.** (page 266) The destruction of the Danish-Lübeckian fleet. After the fierce naval battle at Öland, July 26<sup>th</sup> 1566 the Danish-Lübeckian fleet came in calm weather to Visby to bury their dead noblemen in consecrated ground. But after the people with the dead had come ashore there was a horrible northwesterly gale. Some ships managed to cut their cables and get out to sea, but most were



broken in the surf. 15 Danish and 3 Lübeckian ships sank and it is said that upwards of 5000 men died in the waves. Among them was the Lübeckian Admiral and Mayor Bartholomew Tinnapfel on the Lübeckian ship Admiral. This was a hard blow to the Danish fleet and the event counts as one of the worst maritime disasters in the Baltic Sea history. Painting by Erik Olsson

**Fig 146.** (page 267) Admiral Jakob Bagge searched battle with the Danes at Bornholm on May 30<sup>th</sup> 1563 with 19 vessels. The flagship was the Elephant. On June 20<sup>th</sup> the fleet returned to the Stockholm archipelago. A Danish fleet under the command of Peder Skram ravaged the coast of Småland and Öland. The Danes had their naval base at Stora Karlsö. On the 28<sup>th</sup> of August, Bagge left the anchorage at Älvsnabben, and on the 30<sup>th</sup> he was at Karlsö, and burned all the empty beer barrels, which the Danes had left ashore for filling. Painting by Erik Olsson

**Fig 147.** (page 270) When Gotland in 1645 came under Swedish rule, the island was impoverished and had hardly any own shipping. Queen Christina, who after her abdication in 1654 obtained Gotland as her 'skattelän', moved to Rome and rented out Gotland to Jacob Momma Reenstierna. He was a Dutchman who started a shipyard in Slite. The shipyard was below Länna lime kiln. Painting by Erik Olsson

**Fig 148.** (page 271) Sångholmen in Sanda.

On April 28<sup>th</sup>, 1676 the Danish fleet under command of Admiral Nils Juel came with 40 ships to Klintehamn and captured Gotland. Under cannon cover from four smaller vessels, 500 men went ashore on Sångholmen in Sanda in the early morning on 29<sup>th</sup> of April. The Swedish governor named Oxenstierna tried with two small guns to defend Gotland, but must run away to Visby. The fleet went later to Visby and took Visborg Castle on May 1<sup>st</sup>. Painting by Erik Olsson

**Fig 149.** (page 272) The fleet consisted of 11 line-

ships and frigates, 2 burners, 2 kreyter, 1 sno and 2 Galeotes. The CROWN PRINCE with 76 guns was the Admiral vessel. KRISTINUS QUARTUS with 56 guns was commanded by Vice Admiral Christian Bielke and GYLLENLÖVE with 56 guns by Rear Admiral Peter Morsing. Also participated NELLEBLADET and KRISTIANIA with 54 cannons. LINDORMEN and DELMENHOLST with 48 guns and four small frigates, SVENSKA FALK, HAVMANNEN, HUMMERN and SPRENGENDE FALK. In addition, there were approximately 1,500 land troops under the command of Colonel Mårten Barthelsen. Painting by Erik Olsson

**Fig 150.** (page 273) Visborg castle falls. When the war between Denmark and Sweden broke out in 1675 Gotland's position was very vulnerable. The Danish fleet under Admiral Niels Juel with 40 vessels landed 500 men on April 28<sup>th</sup>, 1676 at Sångholmen in Sanda. Then the fleet sailed to Visby. On the morning of May 1<sup>st</sup> in calm weather were the major warships rowed and warped in under the walls of Visborg castle, so close that the guns of the castle could not be used. From there they bombed and shot down the castle, whose defenders surrendered on the afternoon of that day. When the Danes left Gotland in 1679 they blew up all the towers and the Swedish government built a lime kiln and lime was burned with the whole castle. Therefore, it is so little preserved of it today. Painting by Erik Olsson.

**Fig 151.** (page 313) Inscription upon a chess piece unearthed at Timerevo.

**Fig 152.** (page 320) 'The al-Rus' under the walls of Tsargrad (Constantinople). Detail from a medieval Russian icon.

**Fig 153.** (page 321) Image from an illuminated manuscript, the Skylitzes manuscript in Madrid, showing Greek fire in use against an enemy fleet.

**Fig 154.** (page 322) Varangian Guardsmen, an illumination from the Skylitzis Chronicle

## Glossary

**Aldeigjuborg**, Staraya Ladoga

**al-Rus’/Rhos**, Arabic for Gotlandic merchant

**Fv**, Fornvännen

**GA**, Gotländskt arkiv

**Garðaríki**, Kievan Rus’, the land of the forts

**Holmgarðr**, Novgorod

**Memel**, Neman, Nyoman, Niemen

**Miklagarðr**, Old Norse for Constantinople

**Old Norse roðr**, expedition of rowing ships

**Perun**, god of thunder and lightning (Gotlandic Thor)

**John (Johnny) Roosval** (1879 –1965) Swedish art historian. Roosval is known in particular for his studies of the medieval ecclesiastical art of Gotland, which he described in his *Die Kirchen Gotlands: ein Beitrag zur mittelalterlichen Kunstgeschichte Schwedens* (Stockholm: Norstedt, 1911) and *Die Steinmeister Gotlands* (Stockholm: Fritze, 1918). (page 195).

**Rootsi**, Estonian for Svear

**Ruotsi**, Finnish for Svear

**Rurik** (Riurik, Hrodric) Old East Norse: Rør-ik, meaning “famous ruler”; ca 830 – ca 879) was according to tradition a Varangian chieftain who gained control of Ladoga in 862, built the Holmgard settlement near Novgorod.

**Tsarigrad**, Old East Slavic for Constantinople

**var**, union through promise

**Varangians**, Gotlandic merchants that appear East of the river Elbe

**Viking**, raiding warriors and explorers that appear to the west of the river Elbe.

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## The Gotlandic history by year

**10,500 BCE.** The withdrawn ice line had reached Gotland.

**7000 BCE.** The first known people on Gotland after the withdrawal of the ice.

**3200 BCE.** Oldest historical monuments, the astronomical calendars, known as grinding grooves.

**1000 BCE to 1300 CE.** The Gotlanders dominate trade in the Baltic Sea region and appear at times to have a monopoly on this. From the Late Bronze Age, period IV, visible stone ships are built in large numbers on Gotland. Gotland is centre for the Baltic Sea region culture.

**1000 BCE to 500 BCE.** Gotlandic bronze finds suggest that Gotland was at the height of her ability within the artistic bronze smith-work, and had close connections in different directions, particularly east and southeast. In addition to over 350 stone ships on Gotland there are Gotlandic stone ship formation tombs on the west coast of the Gulf of Riga in Courland as well as in the Västervik area in Sweden. Gotlandic ships reached the Russian rivers two thousand years before the Viking Age. The Daugava link is considered to be the main trade route between Gotland and the East. In the Volga region we have from the late Bronze Age and early Iron Age the old Achmulova grave field, where there are more than 1000 graves of Gotlandic type dating back to 800-500 BCE.

**200s BCE.**

Against the geologists previous assumptions, we have seen some instances of bog ore. In addition, we now also know of several Gotlandic furnaces

for iron production from the centuries immediately preceding zero. Here they used the East Celtic 'shaft furnace' type which is known mainly from Poland. From habitat surveys there is iron slag that indicate that forging has occurred. There are also occasional slag finds in graves from the early Iron Age.

**50 BCE.** Gotland is quite alone in the Nordic region with an artistic boom of La Tène influenced objects. The contact with the Celts is here apparent.

**+0.** The Gotlanders were, from what we can read from the archaeological material, present with their Merchant Emporiums where the Gothic federation was formed, and we have the same name for Gotlanders and Goths, Gutar and Gutans, Guthiuda.

**98 CE.** The Roman author Tacitus wrote about the powerful people on the island in the Baltic Sea 'Suionum Civitate'. The Gotlanders have at that time extensive commercial contacts with the Romans and are well known by them. Among other things, our oldest picture stones derive from that time and are carved with Roman tools. Even the basilicas (kämpgravar) are Roman influenced. The Gotlanders probably also controlled the northern end of the Amber Road from which they became enormously rich.

**300s CE.** The Gothic missionary Wulfila translates the Bible into Gothic (Gotlandic) while creating a Gothic script.

**512 CE.** The Herulian Royal family immigrates, according to the Roman author Procopius, to the Lake Mälaren area and takes control over the area today known as Svear.

**500s CE.** According to Guta Saga and the Beow-

ulf epos the Gotlanders fight battles against many kings, especially the Suiarikis cunungr (Svear) who at that time had immigrated to the Lake Mälär area. But the Gotlanders retain, as Guta Saga tells us, always the victory and their right. The ewe is the Gotlandic national symbol.

**550s.** Avair Strabain concludes a trade agreement with the Suiarikis cunungr, which is beneficial to both sides. Gotland is a much older country than that of the Svear and seems from that time to have been a republic. Beowulf, who probably lived at that time may have been the same person as Avair Strabain. According to Guta Saga the Gutna Althingi existed already then and would thus be one of the oldest known Althings.

**600s.** The Gotlanders have again trading colonies in the Baltic Sea Region e.g. in Grobina (650-850) and Truso. Grobina in Latvia has been partly excavated with estimated more than 1000 Gotlandic graves.

**740.** It is a highly controversial question whether the Khazars did convert to Judaism in the 700s or 800s? The earliest possible date is Yehuda HaLevi's estimate of 740. Abd-al-Jabbar al-Hamdani and other Middle Eastern writers claim the conversion happened during the reign of the Abbasids. Al-Masudi would have us believe that the conversion took place sometime between 786 and 809.

According to professors Bozena Werbart and Jonathan Shepard, the Tengri "sun-amulets" disappeared after the 830s from Khazarian graves, as did other shamanistic possessions, indicating a dramatic shift in religion in the Khazar kaganate.

The decline in the Byzantine-Khazar relationship is tied directly to the time of the Khazar conversion to Judaism, and may be dated as occurring some-

time during or after the 830s. A conversion date in the mid-to-late 830s is supported by the Moses coin which dates from 837-838, whereas just a few years earlier (around 834) the Khazars and Byzantines were cooperating on building Sarkel.

The descendants of the Khazars are today known as the 13<sup>th</sup> tribe or the Ashkenazi.

References to Ashkenaz in Yosippon and Hasdai ibn Shaprut's letter to the king of the Khazars would date the term as far back as the 900s.

#### **Goths ruled by the Khazarians:**

N.P. Lambin wrote, "The region of Dory, inhabited by the Tetraxite Goths, the ancient kinsmen of the Varangian al-Rus' of Oleg." In another article by the same author we read, "The Tetraxite Goths who inhabited the eastern region of the Tauris, the ancestors of the famous Goths of the Black Sea".

**End 700s to 2nd half 800s.** The Gotlandic Varangians control the trade on the Russian rivers all the way to the Volga and the Kazarian Empire. The area the Gotlanders controlled is known as the Rus' Khagante. They became enormously rich which can be seen today in all the silver treasures found in the Rus' Khagante and the Gotlandic soil.

**800s and 900s.** The majority of the Scandinavian islamic silver treasures from this period are found on Gotland, indicating a high Gotlandic trading activity with the Islamic empire over the Russian rivers all the way to the river Volga and Khazaria. E.g. writes Adam of Bremen in his history that Birka, which flourished between about 800-975, was a Gotlandic town located in the middle of the Svea area.

**838.** First mention of the al-Rus' near the Byzantine Empire comes from Life of St. George of Amastris, a hagiographic work. Annales Bertiniani

for the year 839 says that the Greek ambassadors from the Byzantine emperor Theophilos (829-842) who arrived in Ingelheim had with them men who said they were called Rhos. A coin with Theophilos has been found in the Spilling treasure.

**860.** June 18, at sunset, a fleet of about 200 al-Rus' vessels sailed into the Bosphorus and started pillaging the suburbs of Constantinople (Old Norse: Miklagarðr). The attackers were setting homes on fire, drowning and stabbing the residents.

**882.** The Gotlandic Varangians seized Kiev. Under Varangian rule, Kiev became a capital of Kievan Rus'.

**897.** Visby is according to Strelow founded.

**902.** Varangians are mentioned as fighting as mercenaries for the Byzantines.

**907.** Miklagarðr was attacked by the Kievan Rus' under Oleg, who was seeking favourable trading rights with the empire. The Emperor Leo VI paid them off, and they left.

**911.** The al-Rus'–Byzantine Treaty is the most comprehensive and detailed treaty concluded between the Byzantine Emperor Leo VI and the Gotlandic Varangians in the 900s. The treaty opens with a lengthy enumeration of the Rus' envoys, whose names are exclusively Norse: Karl, Ingjald, Farulf, Vermund, Hrollaf, Gunnar, Harold, Kami, Frithleif, Hroarr, Angantyr, Throand, Leithulf, Fast, and Steinvith.

**912.** Al-Marwazi, reports that the al-Rus' (the Gotlandic merchants) abandoned their wild pagan ways and raids, settling into Christianity.

**920s.** The painted board from Eke church is after a dendrochronological analysis carried out in 2005 dated to after 920.

**988.** Emperor Basil II forms an elite Gotlandic Varangian guard. They were to some extent replaced by Western Europeans late in next century.

**990.** Olaf Tryggvason is ravaging the coasts of Gotland.

**1000.** Erik Jarl on rampage in the Baltic Sea. Stavar the great from Stavgard in Burs is defeated and slain at Sandesrum in Grötlingbo.

**1007.** Olaf Haraldsson (later Christianized and called Olaf the saint) haunts Gotland and spend the winter of 1007-1008 on the island. Bulverket in Tingstäde lake originates from that time.

**1030.** Olaf Haraldson, now convinced Christian, visit Gotland on route from Novgorod to Stiklestad where he meets his fate. It is probably this journey that alludes to in the Guta Saga.

**1103.** The Danish King Erik Ejegod, on his pilgrimage to Jerusalem with his queen and a splendid retinue of knights and attendants, pass Gotland. He consecrates at least one church, the S:t Olof church in Visby.

**The 1100s.** The Gotlanders seem completely to master the trade in the Baltic Sea. The richness is reflected for instance in massive church building constructions.

**1140s.** The Gotlanders start their own coin production. The Gotlandic coins obviously had a good reputation and are found throughout the Nordic

area.

Probably the visitors were forced to exchange their own currency in order to purchase and acquire stores in the city. Everybody was offered a berth during the late 1100s, as long as they respected the Gotlandic harbour peace and used the Gotlandic coins. Coins with 'Pax porta Nova'.

**1159.** Lübeck is founded and prospers in the 1400s .

**1161.** The Artlenburg Treaty between Henry the Lion, and Liknatte from Stenkyrka.

The Gotlanders, after bloody battles, may continue to trade in Germany (Saxony) as before. Now the Germans were allowed access to the Gotlandic coast and allowed to settle in Visby.

**1164.** Sancta Maria de Guthnalia, the Cistercian monastery in Roma is founded.

The Gotlanders make a deal with the Bishop in Linköping to use his services on their own conditions.

The Gotlanders did not accept that any church could indirectly gain power over them through religious blackmail and other such means. The Gutna Althingi was therefore the highest authority over the Gotlandic Church. Not the Pope.

**1250s.** Gotlandic merchants help the Swedish ruler Birger Jarl to build a new marketplace that will be named Stockholm.

**1288.** Civil war between the now German-dominated Visby and the Gotlandic Merchant Farmers' Republic where Visby break away and forms its own city republic.

**1313.** The Swedish King Birger tried to interfere in the Gotlandic Farmers' Republic's internal affairs

by an attack on the country, apparently attracted by Gotland's riches. He was captured on Röcklinge backar in Lärbro after loosing the battle. The legend says that the Swedish king hid in a hazel bush, which was later called 'the King's hazel'. He was soon discovered and pulled out of his hiding place. The farmers wanted immediately to kill him, but a man from Hejnum averted them from doing so and said that the king's powerful friends surely would cruelly avenge his death. This was Birger's rescue.

**1350.** The Black Death.

In the middle of the 1300s the then known world was hit by a terrible plague. From Asia came a plague disease with ships and caravans to the Mediterranean. From there it spread over Europe and visited country after country. To Gotland came the Black Death or 'Digerdöden' as it was known in Scandinavia in 1350. According to Strelow over 8000 people died in Visby.

**1358.** The Hanseatic League is formed. The power in the Baltic Sea moves from Gotland to the new founded German Hanseatic League with seat in Lübeck. Visby preferred not to join the Hanse and is accordingly not a Hanseatic City. The Hanse flourishes in the 1400s. The Gotlandic free trade is replaced by the Hanseatic monopolistic trade.

**1361.** Valdemar Atterdag invades Gotland. He spares Visby and confirms its trading rights in Denmark but plunders wildly on southern Gotland.

**1391.** Pirates establish themselves on Gotland and the 1400s is a troubled time.

**1398.** The Teutonic knights conquered Gotland and stay for ten years.



**1407.** The Teutonic knights sell Gotland to Denmark for 9000 English golden nobles.

**1411.** Erik XIII of Pomerania arrives in Gotland with an army to take over the island. He landed on 29 July and on 1 August laid the first stone to Visborg castle.

**1437.** Erik of Pomerania takes up residence on Visborg castle bringing great wealth and his mistress, the beautiful Cecilia. From here he carries on piracy for near twelve years. Visborg castle was at that time the strongest fortress in the Baltic Sea.

**1517.** The Danish Admiral Severin Norby obtains Gotland as loan against a pledge from Christian II.

**1524.** The new Swedish king Gustav Vasa sends a joint Swedish-Lübeckian military force commanded by Berndt van Mehlen and begins to besiege Visby, but did not manage to take either the city or castle.

**1525.** The Hanseatic Lübeckians are undertaking a lightning attack on Visby with public plunder. Much of the city was devastated and burned.

**1526.** Severin Norby transmits Visborg castle to the King of Denmark and Gotland becomes a Danish tributary state. Despite this control, the Gotlanders largely rule themselves until 1618, when the Gotlandic Merchant Farmers' Republic through an illegal Danish decree formally is abolished.

**1527.** Hans Brask, the last Catholic bishop in Linköping, inspects Gotland. He drives out the Lutherans from St. Hans church, but they regained it after the bishop's departure.

**1530 to 1645.** Gotland is a tributary state under the

Danish king, and is no longer a political bone of contention and a storm centre in the North.

**1554.** Ogier Ghislain de Busbecq (1522-1592) came to Constantinople as ambassador of Emperor Ferdinand I at the Ottoman Porte. This Flemish noble was more than a diplomat; he was a widely educated man. He met two Crimeans in Constantinople who asserted that in the Crimea there were still at that time many people who used the Germanic (Gothic) tongue; and they gave Busbecq a list of vocables supposed to be Germanic. Busbecq mentions two principal cities in Crimean Gothia, Mankup and Sciuarin (now the village Suiren).

Another German theologian and humanist of that epoch, Johannes Cochleus (1479- 1552), in this *Vita Theodorici regis Ostrogothorum et Italiae*, asserts that a very dependable and well-known man, Nicholas Spatharius, a Moldo-Wallachian, who as an interpreter, spent many years in Constantinople at the Ottoman court, stated that in the Crimea there were about three hundred villages with a population of Gothic origin; these people used a peculiar Teutonic language and were Christians. They had a Gothic bishop whose residence was in Caffa or Theodosiopolis (Theodosia); and they called their language Gothic.

**1566.** One in the Visby roadstead anchored Danish-Lübeckian fleet is surprised by a furious storm. The ships are hurled against the beach and crushed. Thousands of people lose their lives.

**1570.** The Gotlandic Church had relied on passing bishops and kings to inaugurate churches. After the Artlenburg Treaty they concluded, probably in 1164, an agreement with the bishop in Linköping that he against a fee should take care of the administrative functions in the Gotlandic Church as required by

the Pope Catholic Church, 'since he resided closest to them.' The agreement stated that he at a fixed payment should perform the functions required from a bishop.

This connection lasted until 1570, thus also into the Danish period. The Linköping bishop was to visit Gotland only every three years, when he went around and consecrated churches and inspected congregations. Gotland had in this way an exceptional situation, which came to be reflected in the ecclesiastical life. Gotland had its own church, and was open to the larger world through its bustling trade and passing pilgrimage.

**1572.** The Dean of Visby Maurice Kristensen Glad is appointed Gotland's first superintendent. He thus became the first diocese shepherd on Gotland and had the difficult task of bringing order in the island's ecclesiastical conditions.

**1645.** By a compromise in Brömsebro, the Swedes had Gotland on the neck. Since then, the Swedish Government considers Gotland and the Gotlanders as a burden. During the occupation 1645 - 1676, which it regarded as temporary, they treated the Gotlanders as badly as the colony of New Sweden. Gotland was apparently only intended as medium of exchange at future peace negotiations.

**1652.** The Swedish hereditary prince Karl Gustav obtains Gotland as a fiefdom and wants to abandon Visby in favour for Slite.

**1654.** When Kristina hands over the Government to Karl Gustav, she among other things obtains Gotland in maintenance. She lived mostly in Rome and leased the island to a tradesman in Stockholm, Jacob Momma, against an annual sum of 84 000 kr.

**1676.** The Danish fleet under Admiral Niels Juel with 40 vessels and 500 men landed on April 28, 1676 at Sångholmen in Sanda. The Danish fleet was greeted as liberators.

**1679.** After the Swedish annexation, attempts were made to make us Gotlanders good Swedes, but we did not understand the Swedish mentality and would not let us be Swedionized.

**1806.** Because it was difficult to control Gotland from Stockholm and the island was merely a nuisance, the Swedish government twice tried to get rid of Gotland. The first time was in 1806 when the Swedish government donated the island to the Knights of Malta, but they declined.

**1808.** The Swedes had so clearly shown that they wanted to get rid of Gotland that the Russians understood it to be free to invade the island. Because of the distance they could not keep Gotland for more than three weeks.

**1830s.** The Swedish Parliament approved the Gotlandic desire to return to be a free-trade area, but king Carl XIV Johan stopped those plans.

**1878.** The first railway on Gotland is inaugurated.

**1932.** The second time the Swedes wanted to divest itself of Gotland was at the beginning of the 1930s. The prevailing perception in some Swedish circles was that Gotland was such a burden that it was better to 'deport' all Gotlanders to Sweden and give Gotland to the power that wanted it. There was however an outcry on Gotland and the plans must be shelved.

## What inspired this work?

It is interesting to see how a book comes into being. This book was a mammoth task. I had gathered a lot of research material and published a new edition of the Gotlandic history in the Swedish language in 1994.

In 1996 I published a book with additional material in the German language.

I continued to read everything I could find about Gotland and surrounding areas. I scanned everything that was interesting and saved these sources in pdf on my computer.

It never struck me that there was such an enormous amount of unsorted material on the history of Gotland that I had on my computer until PhD Svetlana Vasilyeva at the State Institute of Art Studies of the Russian ministry of Culture, who I earlier had given my books, contacted me on Skype. Svetlana had just defended her doctor's thesis on Byzantine paintings in Gotlandic churches.

We started chatting and I sent her various sources from my research library that might be of use to her. We chatted for more than two years. It resulted in 64 A4 pages with chat.

At the same time, I began to read through these sources and many other sources that I had on my computer.

A new picture of the Gotlandic history was created in my brain and I started to write it down. Soon I had a brand new book in English, albeit with all the old material but also with the added material. A book twice the size of the old one in the Swedish language.

I worked two years to structure all this material and write the new book. Had not Svetlana made contact with me and started chatting, I probably would never have been inspired and got started with all this material.

Moreover, Svetlana came with brand new angles on the Gotlandic art school when she made probable that the Byzantine paintings in the Gotlandic churches were painted by Gotlandic artists. This spurred me to look for more sources about the Gotlandic merchants' involvement in trade on the Russian rivers in the 800s and their relationship with the Byzantine empire.

There I found really interesting sources. I found the al-Rus'-Byzantine Treaty from the year 911 which is the most comprehensive and detailed treaty conducted between the Byzantine Emperor Leo VI and the Gotlandic Varangians in the 900s. The treaty opens with a lengthy enumeration of the al-Rus' envoys, whose names are exclusively Norse: Karl, Ingjald, Farulf, Vermund, Hrollaf, Gunnar, Harold, Kami, Frithleif, Hroarr, Angantyr, Throand, Leithulf, Fast, and Steinvith. The Gotlandic merchants in Miklagarðr (Constantinople) according to Al-Marwazi in 912 had abandoned their wild pagan ways and raids, settling into Christianity.

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