Searching for the Unknown

Gotland's churchyards from a Gender and Missionary perspective

BY JÖRN STAECKER

Abstract

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Several graves with grave-goods have been found in Gotland's churchyards. There is no doubt that these graves are Christian and that they are connected with the timber churches on these sites. The men were buried in the southern half of the churchyards, the women in the northern half. The grave-goods are reduced to a kind of "Sunday-best dress" and there are no finds of animal bones, weapons or vessels, which are typical for the pagan period. This contrast with the funeral rites of the Christian church was always explained as a "syncretism", but surprisingly there are only two parallels in Scandinavia, the other churchyard finds coming from Eastern Europe. The article adresses to two major questions. What were the reasons for this sexual segregation? Is the "transition period thesis" sufficient to explain the presence of grave-goods, or could there be other reasons such as the influence of an undocumented Russian/Byzantine mission?

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During the end of the 19th, and up to the middle of the 20th centuries, several Viking Age graves were discovered when ditches were dug for modern burials in churchyards on the island of Gotland. In those cases which are documented, the dead were found in an E-W position with the head to the west, and were housed in wooden coffins. The graves were mainly furnished with elements of dress, such as brooches, pins and belts, but also beads, pendants and knives (Westholm 1926, p. 104). G. Trotzig (1969, p. 21) first noted that tools, weapons, vessels and even animal offerings were missing from the graves. There is some controversy regarding the dating of these burials, though there is a consensus of opinion that they began in the early 11th century, but ended - and here the discussion is ongoing - either in the early 12th (Carlsson 1990) or even in the early 13th centuries (Thunmark-Nylén 1988; 1990-91). Gender-determination based on the grave-goods shows that women were always placed to the north of the church and men to the south (first stated by Trotzig 1970, p. 16; most recently by Thunmark-Nylén 1995, pp. 161 f.). To begin with there was uncertainty as to whether these graves belonged to the pagan period, in which case they would have belonged to a gravefield later occupied by a church, or whether these graves were part of the Christian churchyard. O. Almgren (1904, p. 320) was the first to refer to finds from these churchyards, of which he listed three. E. Ekhoff (1912, p. 155) increased the number to five, and A. Westholm (1926, p. 104) collated all the finds from a total of seven churchyards. While Ekhoff (1912, pp. 153 ff.) was already convinced that the graves were part of a Christian burial place, Westholm (1926, p. 104) was more reserved, but stated

correctly that "neither charcoal nor burnt bones" were found in these churchyards. However, in 1968 Lagerlöf and Stolt (1968, p. 122) were still convinced that "the finds in the churchyard indicated a place, which had also served in prehistoric times as a place for cult practices and burial". Finally it was G. Trotzig (1969, p. 24) who showed that the Viking Age graves belonged to the oldest horizon of the Christian cemetery and that they are definitely part of the churchyard. Trotzig`s thesis (1970) was confirmed by the excavations in Garde, where no Viking Age graves were discovered in the church or under its foundations. On the contrary it was shown that there was a clear relationship between the building of the church and the general E-W orientation of the graves. Even after this clear archaeological evidence there were still researchers who stated that in isolated incidences the churchyard was built on top of a pagan gravefield, as argued by O. Kyhlberg (1991, p. 167) regarding the finds from Stånga. Most recently, L. Thunmark-Nylén (1995, p. 161) has again emphasized that the Viking Age churchyard graves have no pagan predecessors.

We can therefore presume that the furnished graves were placed in consecrated earth. Earth that has been consecrated (*benedictio coemeterii*) and given the funeral rights (*ius funerandi*), is a requirement for the burial of Christians. It is a curious fact that furnished graves in consecrated earth - which is in clear violation of the rules of the Latin Church - has never excited more attention; on the contrary, they have been regarded as a clear sign of the transition from paganism to Christianity. Recent research compares this phenomenon with the village graveyards of the 13th-17th centuries in the Baltic countries (Valk 1992, pp. 222 f.). According to this, the graves reflect a long transitional period, in which pagan elements in funeral rites lingered on in a Christian context, until finally absorbed.

If we look at our example Gotland, we could find this thesis supported by the fact that during the 11th century pagan gravefields and Christian churchyards are mutually exclusive to particular parishes (Fig. 1). L. Thunmark-Nylén (1989, p.

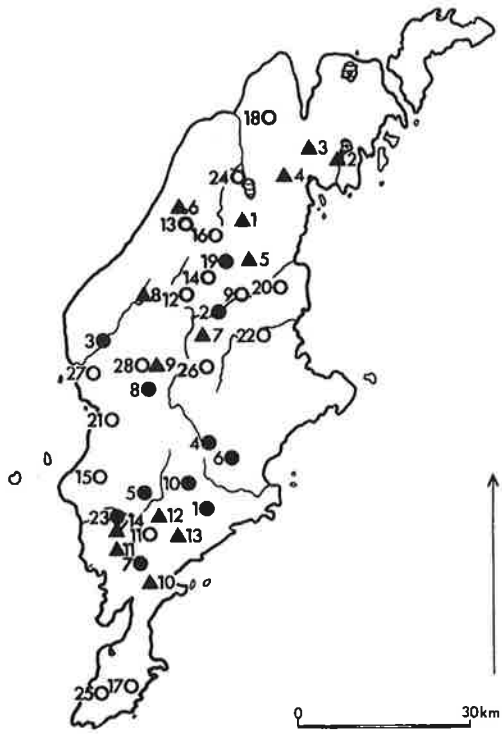

Fig. 1. Distribution of the Gotlandic churchyard finds and pagan burial places (after Nordanskog 1995, Fig. 11 tab. 3).
A. Definitive evidence of Viking Age graves in churchyards
1. Burs; 2. Dalhem; 3. Eskelhem; 4. Etelhem; 5. Fardhem; 6. Garda; 7. Havdhem; 8. Hejde; 9. Källunge; 10. Stånga.
B. Viking Age stray finds in churchyards
11. Alva; 12. Barlingbo; 13. Bro; 14. Ekeby; 15. Eksta; 16. Fole; 17. Hamra; 18. Hangvar; 19. Hörsne; 20. Gothem; 21. Klinte; 22. Norrlanda; 23. Silte; 24. Tingstäde; 25. Vamlingbo; 26. Vänge; 27. Västergarn; 28. Väte.
C. Pagan burial places from the late Viking Age
1. Bjärs, Hejnum parish; 2. Ire, Hellvi parish; 3. Lekarehed, Lärbro parish; 4. Slite Torg, Othem parish; 5. Uppgarde, Vallstena parish; 6. Gällungs, Väskinde parish; 7. Broa, Halla parish; 8. Gottskalks, Träkumla parish; 9. Mölner, Väte parish; 10. Barshaldershed, Grötlingbo parish; 11. Havor, Hablingbo parish; 12. Hemse Annexhemman, Hemse parish; 13. Burge, Rone parish; 14. Stora Hallvards, Silte parish

223) interprets this phenomenon by suggesting that "the Christian and pagan societies lived side by side for a long period". A. Carlsson (1990, pp. 8 f.) is strongly opposed to this thesis. He thinks that the reason for the mutual exclusion of pagan and Christian places of burial is purely chronological, so that with the building of churches and establishing of churchyards the pagan gravefields were deserted, and that this happened at different times in individual parishes. Carlsson (ibid.) therefore regards the churchyard finds as evidence in support of his thesis, because they appear only in parishes with chronologicaly older gravefields, but not in parishes with more recent gravefields. According to Carlsson (ibid., p. 13), the reason for this is the "socio-political background", by which the individual estate burials were replaced by "central-place sites of burial" in the form of churchyards.

From a chronological perspective Carlsson's thesis appears reasonable, but there is one problem: the furnished graves in consecrated earth are not as widespread in Viking Age Scandinavia as might be expected. In Sweden there is only one parallel from Leksand in Dalarna (Serning 1982). L. Ersgård (1993-94, p. 84) thinks that the furnished graves, which were found under the porch at this site are associated with an earlier phase of the church[1]. Another exception could be the burial site of Grødby on Bornholm (Wagnkilde 1996), where several graves accompanied by knives, coins and even pottery (both fragmented and complete vessels) were found.

The normal nature of Scandinavian churchyard graves is burials without any gravegoods, as known from urban communities such as Lund (Mårtensson 1963 a-b; Mårtensson 1976; Mårtensson 1980, pp. 47 ff.) and Sigtuna (Hillbom 1987), but also from rural areas (Vretemark 1992, pp. 120 ff.). In some graves there was a dress brooch or pin, which possibly served to secure the shroud (Ekhoff 1912, p. 139 fig. 108), and in exceptional cases even a sherd, like in Lund (Mårtensson 1963 a, pp. 64 f.), which might have had a similar symbolic meaning as the obolus/Charons coin[2]. However, in general the transition from pagan gravefields to Christian churchyards was a relatively fast process in Scandinavia which triggered off dramatic changes.

For the first time the place of burial was limited in its extent, meaning that there was only a limited area which was supposed to be used for burials. It was no longer possible - as with the pagan gravefields - to simply extend. This limitation in space had serious consequenses for the juridical aspect of the funeral rites. It was no longer possible to continue the ancestral-cult, because the area on the gravefield most likely to be regulated - namely the visible grave mound - disappeared, and this personal cult was replaced by a more anonymous one, aimed principally at the blessing of souls. Only in the case of a few persons, such as church-founders or people buried close to the church foundations, did the older type of cult continue (Ariès 1978). It is no longer ascertainable whether the churchyard was with or without monuments, but people were buried closer together and the church adopted the rôle of providing homage to ancestors.

The second innovation was the segregation of the sexes in the churchyard. From the pagan gravefields no example of segregation where women are positioned to the north and men to the south is known[3]. There is, moreover, no archaeological evidence that women were buried in a special area of the gravefield. Here too there must have been considerable changes in the juridical status of the sexes. Further investigation is needed to find out whether the social status of women changed in a positive or negative way, but at least we can state that the female sex got exactly one half of God's acre.

The third step was the abolition of furnishing graves. The introduction of graves without burial objects was a radical departure from the germanic burial rite, and a new juridical regulation of personal possesions. Objects like weapons, tools, items of jewellery etc., which were no longer

Fig. 2. The three cross- and crucifixpendants from Garde, Havdhem and Stånga (after Staecker 1995, fig. 66; 70; 75).

deposited in graves, now became the property of the church.

In the following pages I would like to have a closer look at these three aspects - the layout of the churchyard; its spatial and sexual segregation and the furnishing of graves. Based upon the example of three Gotlandic churchyards an attempt will be made to explain the appearance of these phenomena.

Examples

On Gotland there are Viking Age finds from a total of 28 churchyards, which could provide information about grave assemblages (see list by Kyhlberg 1991, p. 166 fig. 26; updated by Thunmark-Nylén 1995, p. 161 fig. 1). Of these 28 churchyards only 10 (Burs, Dalhem, Eskelhem, Etelhem, Fardhem, Garda, Havdhem, Hejde, Källunge and Stånga)[4] provide definitive evidence of Viking Age graves based on dress and skeletal remains. The other 18 churchyards (Alva, Barlingbo, Bro, Ekeby, Eksta, Fole, Hamra, Hangvar, Hörsne, Gothem, Klinte, Norrlanda, Silte, Tingstäde, Vamlingbo, Vänge, Västergarn, Väte)[5] are of uncertain association, because only stray objects were recovered from these (list by Thunmark-Nylén 1995, p. 161 fig. 1 with a catalogue on pp. 189 ff.). I would like to concentrate on three of the definite Viking Age examples, namely: Garde, Havdhem and Stånga (Fig. 1). A common characteristic of these three churchyards is that each has a grave from which a cross or crucifix pendant has been recovered (Fig. 2). O. Almgren (1904, p. 320) observed this fact, and regarded it as support for his thesis that these are definitely Christian graves[6] .

The above mentioned three churchyards are situated in the southern half of the island, where there is a general concentration of this category of find. The reason for this might be that the northern half of Gotland was Christianized somewhat earlier then the southern half. The abondonment of the pagan gravefields, which took place in the northern half during the early 11th century[7] and in the southern half during the late 11th and early 12th centuries[8], can be taken as evidence for this.

On the other hand, there are two important written sources, which might contradict the theory of an early (southern) and late (northern) Christianization. In 1585 D. Bilefeld wrote an inventory and taxation list, in which the tax quota of the church was listed. Some years later, c. 1622, an addition was made, in which the dates of the foundation of the churches were given (Lundmark 1925, pp. 164 ff.). The second and more important source is H.N. Strelow's

chronicle of the island of Gotland, completed in 1633. In the first part of the chronicle Strelow makes extravagant claims about the prehistory of the island[9] , but in the second part he provides exact dates for the foundation of the churches. It is not known where Strelow got his information from, but he might have had access to sources no longer extant today. Remarkable for Strelow's dates are the enormous number of churches founded in the 11th century. If this is correct, then we have to regard the 11th and early 12th centuries as a phase of missionary expansion, when parish-boundaries were presumably also being made. Strelow's dates were, of course, strongly criticized by art-historians (first Brunius 1864, pp. 6 f.) and historians (last Wase 1995). In support of Strelow's work was the historian E. Lundmark (1925, p. 172), the art-historian J. Roosval (1933), and finally the archaeologists L. Thunmark-Nylén (1980) and O. Kyhlberg (1991), who believe that the second part of Strelow's chronicle has a high probability of being accurate. It is likely that Strelow's chronicle and Bilefeld's taxation list were compiled separately (Lundmark 1925, pp. 174 f.), therefore making deviating dates of great interest. According to Lundmark (1925, p. 179) and Thunmark-Nylén (1980, pp. 19 f.) the different dates within these two sources might have resulted from reference being made to different building phases of the churches, such as the official foundation, rebuilding or extension.

A contribution to this discussion has been provided by the recently published dendrochronological dates of the Gotlandic churches by Bråthen (1995). If we compare the absolute dates of the taxation-list, the chronicle and the dendrochronological dates with the archaeological evidence (timber-churches and churchyards), combined with art-historical datings of baptismal fonts, crucifixes etc., we find an astonishing convergence with the "questionable" dates of Strelow. In the southern half of Gotland we find an amazing correspondence between the archaeological and historical sources. Despite the mission`s initial success in the northern half of the island, the archaeological evidence is less clear. This gap might be explained by 11th century timber churches and churchyards, having been absorbed within later buildings. Nevertheless there are explanations to bridge this gap. G. Nordanskog (1995, p. 42 fig. 27) has recently demonstrated, how the economic outlay required for the building of churches during the 11th and early 12th centuries was provided by the production of a surplus, seen in the hoard finds. Nordanskog (ibid.) stated that there is a clear correspondence of the hoards on one hand, and Strelow and the art-historical datings on the other. The distribution of hoards and churches is almost identical for the 11th and early 12th centuries in the southern half of the island. In the northern half the distribution is denser and fits better with Strelow`s "fantastic" data. This does not mean that every hoard find represents a church, but it indicates how many potential interpretations are left unconsidered (ibid., p. 44).

Garde church

The Garde church was published by Lagerlöf (1972) from an art-historical and architectural perspective. Lagerlöf (1972, pp. 258 ff.; fig. 328) dates the Romanesque construction features - like the nave and lower parts of the tower - to the middle of the 12th century, making this one of the oldest stone buildings on the island. During the 13th and 14th centuries the church was rebuilt in its present form. J. Roosval (1950, pp. 116 f.), however, dates the Romanesque features to the late 11th century. The art-historical dating of the Romanesque building must be renewed in the light of the recently published dendrochronological results (Bråthen 1995, p. 86). According to these dates, the nave was already built by around 1116. In the nave, a beam felled in 1056 was discovered. Bråthen (1995, p. 88) does not exclude the possibilty that this beam belonged to an earlier timber church.

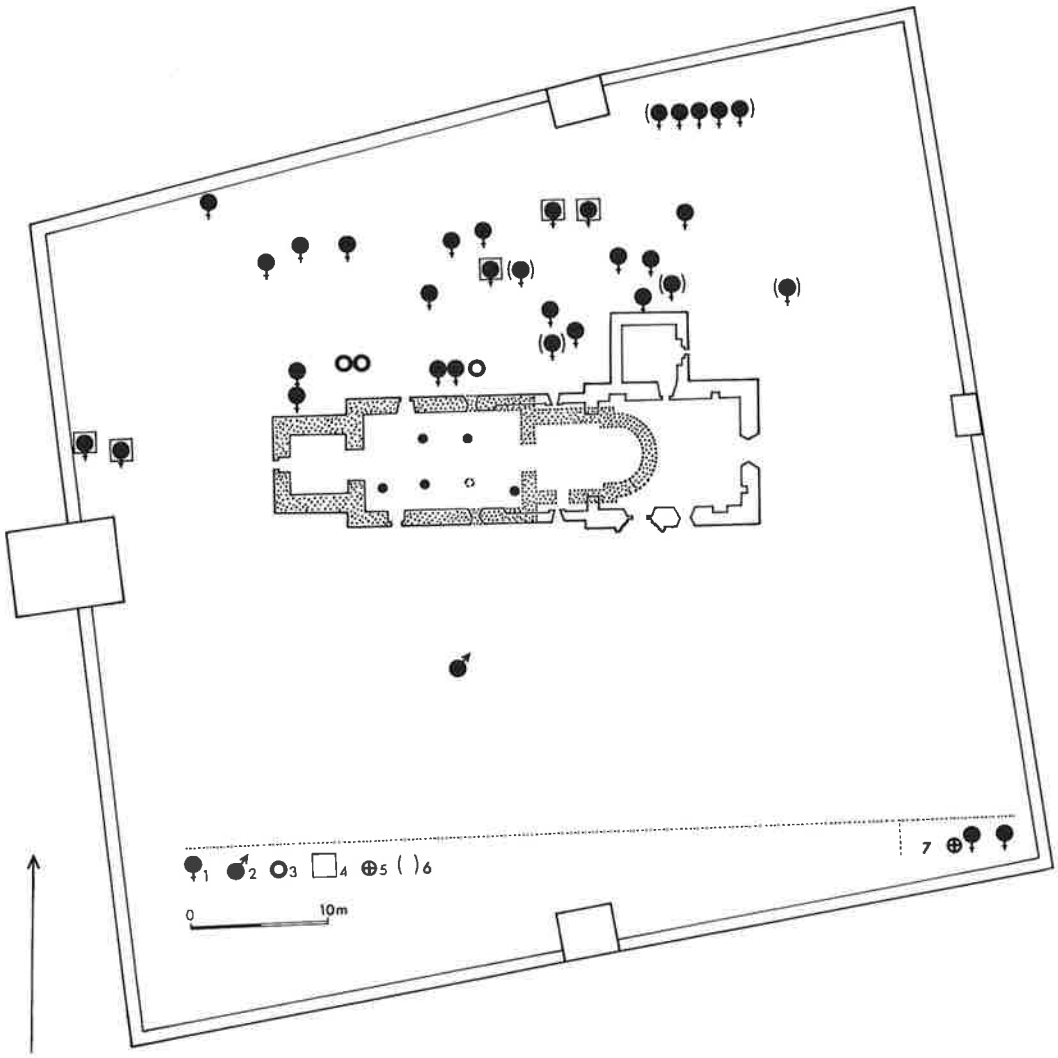

Fig. 3. Plan of Garda church and churchyard with the registered Viking Age graves. The postholes of the wooden church and the foundations of the Romanesque predecessor are marked. 1. Furnished female grave; 2. Furnished male grave; 3. Non-furnished grave; 4. Coffin; 5. Crosspendant; 6. Uncertain localization; 7. Unknown localization (after Staecker 1995, map 54).

G. Trotzig's (1970) results correspond with this thesis. During interior restoration work in the area of the nave he discovered postholes of an earlier timber church, which according to the C14 dates, can be approximately dated to the 11th century.

An absolute dating is given by Strelow (1633, p. 140) who noted that the church was built in 1086. Bråthen (1995, p. 88) thinks that Strelow's statement is questionable, but he does not take into account the possibility that Strelow's date could relate to a possible rebuilding.

Within the church the partially preserved frescoes are most striking, reflecting Russian-Byzantine influence and dating from around the year 1200 (Lagerlöf 1972, pp. 292 ff. fig. 329-342; Svahnström 1993, pp. 158 ff.). The Gothic nave has a simple northern portal and a richly decorated southern portal. Because of the different appearances of these two portals, Roosval (1950, p. 116) thought that the northern portal had the primary function as a door to the choir,

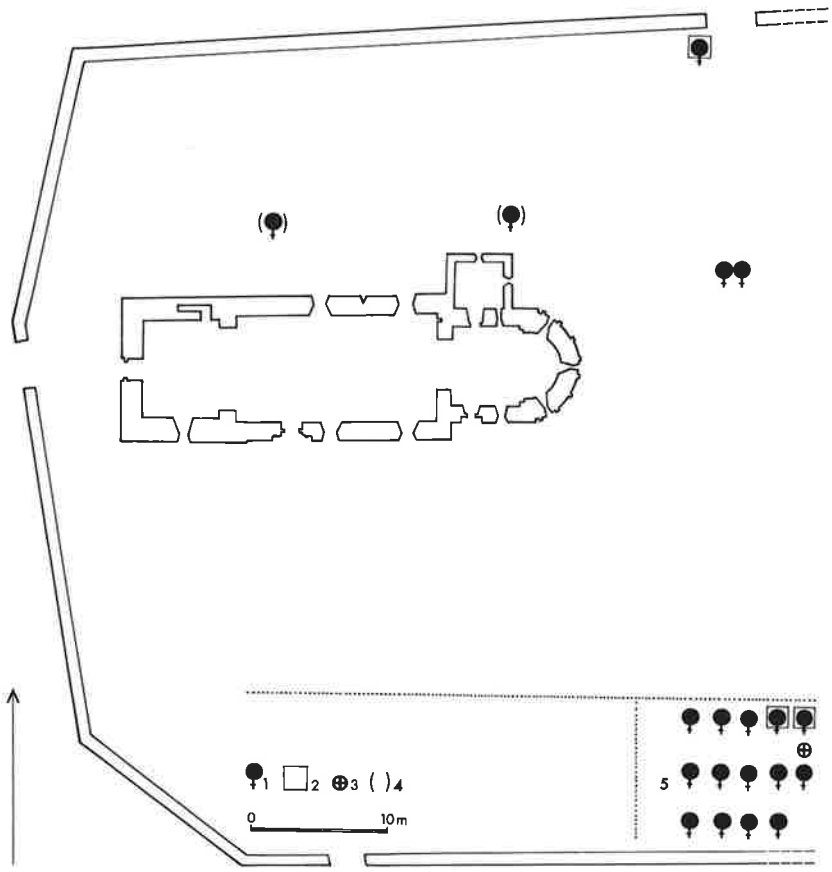

Fig. 4. Plan of Havdhem church and churchyard with the registered Viking Age graves. 1. Furnished female grave; 2. Coffin; 3. Crucifixpendant; 4. Uncertain localization; 5. Unknown localization (after Staecker 1995, map 55).

built into the nave after the Romanesque choir had been torn down in the 14th century. This was confirmed by an architectural survey when it was discovered that the northern portal was secondary to the Romanesque wall (Lagerlöf 1972, pp. 262 f.).

The churchyard is obliquely positioned relative to the central-axis of the church and has an enclosing wall with four entrances (Lagerlöf 1972, pp. 253 ff.). According to Lagerlöf this complex of church, churchyard and enclosure is one of the best preserved sites in Sweden. Several Viking Age graves were discovered mainly to the north of the church, probably standing in close association with its timber predecessor (Fig. 3). All the burials to the north and west of the church are female with only one male grave having been recorded *in situ* to the south of the church. The possibilty that the church was erected on top of a pagan gravefield can be excluded by the fact that there were no graves between or under the postholes, and the church and churchyard stand in direct relationship to one another. Three graves with coins give a chronological indication as to the occupation of the churchyard with furnished graves. They have a terminus post quem 997, 1035, and 1111. Therefore we can postulate that the churchyard was established in the early 11th century. The change to non-furnished graves was probably established in the first half of the 12th century.

For Garde church we can state that there

must have been a timber church together with associated churchyard consecrated during the early 11th century at the latest. The dendrochronological investigations and the written sources by Strelow confirm this dating. In the early 12th century this church was replaced by a stone building. Segregation within the graveyard on the basis of gender with women to the north and men to the south, was strictly followed. This division was perhaps continued in the church, where the two portals in the nave could have been gender specific.

Havdhems church

Havdhems church is still not published in the series "Sveriges kyrkor". According to Roosval (1950, pp. 126 ff.) the choir is dated to the 11th century, the nave to the second half of the 12th century and the tower to the 13th century. But in Lagerlöf & Svahnström's (1984, pp. 170 f.) opinion the church was not founded until the first half of the 12th century. Excavations within the church have not been carried out. The nave has only a single portal facing south. An archaeological survey, which would either confirm or weaken the thesis that there was only one portal from the beginning has not been implemented. Strelow (1633, p. 140) suggests a foundation date of 1040 for the Havdhem church. In contrast to Garde, the Havdhem churchyard is aligned with the church and has an enclosing wall with two entrances. Like Garde, the female graves of the Viking Age were discovered in the northern part of the churchyard (Fig. 4). Unfortunately only a few graves in Havdhem that have been excavated were *in situ*, leading to uncertainty regarding their original positions. With regard to the finds, elements of male dress have been recovered, but nothing is known about the position of these graves. Graves with coins were not recorded.

Stånga church

Stånga church was published by Lagerlöf & Stolt (1968) in the series "Sveriges kyrkor". The church is Gothic in its appearence. The lower part of the tower was erected in the middle of the 13th century, the nave and upper part of the tower in the middle of the 14th century. The choir and apse, which date from the middle of the 13th century, were torn down in 1864 and rebuilt. Hints of an earlier building are given by the baptismal-font, which Lagerlöf & Stolt (ibid., pp. 138 ff. fig. 151-161) date to the late 12th century. They also date the foundation of the Romanesque church to the first half of the 13th century (ibid., pp. 122 f. fig. 136). This building phase was observed during restoration work. The Romanesque church, which comprised a tower, nave, apse and choir, had only a southern portal in the choir. Portals in the nave were not observed because the upper parts of the foundations have not been preserved. The Gothic successor had a big, richly ornamented southern portal in the nave, which Lagerlöf & Stolt refer to as one of "the biggest and strangest on Gotland" (ibid., pp. 92 ff. fig. 100-109). Of special note is the unique relief frieze flanking the southern portal (ibid., pp. 98 ff. fig. 110-115). There are no recorded traces of a bricked up northern portal, there being only two niches in the northern wall (ibid., p. 122). Strelow (1633, p. 142) states the church was founded in 1160.

The churchyard is aligned with the church and has an enclosing wall with three entrances. Several furnished female graves were recorded in the northern half of the churchyard and there were also two male graves in front of the western portal (Fig. 5). The only systematic investigations were carried out in 1903 by H. Hansson. He observed four graves in a single context, of which two were furnished. This shows that not all the graves of this period were necessarily furnished or not. But the dating of these non-furnished graves is not possible without relating them to a context, unless the remains of coffins are preserved, which show a tendency to be narrower in the Viking Age than in other periods. The Viking

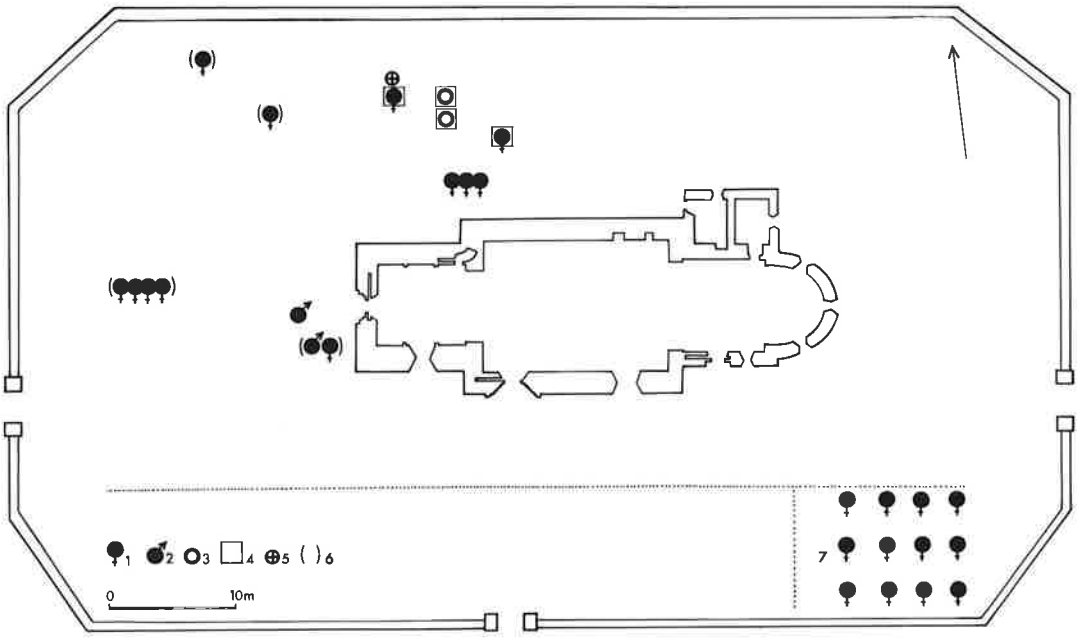

Fig. 5. Plan of Stånga church and churchyard with the registered Viking Age graves. 1. Furnished female grave; 2. Furnished male grave; 3. Non-furnished grave; 4. Coffin; 5. Crosspendant; 6. Uncertain localization; 7. Unknown localization (after Staecker 1995, map 56).

Age graves might belong to the 11th or early 12th centuries, as suggested by coin finds, but their find circumstances are uncertain. One coin dates from the 11th century, another one has a terminus post quem of 1086.

Spatial organisation

With the introduction of the churchyard there is a completely new component in Scandinavian burial grounds. The available space is limited and clearly structured. With the church standing in the middle of the churchyard a new cult centre is created, not only for this life but for the hereafter. The preferred place for burial within the church was - sometimes - reserved for the founders and high ranking ecclesiastical or secular dignitaries. This applied to the zone around the church, where rainwater consecrated by contact with the church's roof dripped down, the graves being situated *sub stillicidio*[10]. But even the churchyard was not within reach of all members of society and the graves there were not distributed in a random way. In the Norwegian Borgartingslaw (Nilsson 1989, pp. 134 ff.) the churchyard was divided into quaters among five social classes (the upper two classes counted as one). Non-Christians, unbaptized individuals, criminals, etc. were excluded from the consecrated ground altogether (Binski 1996, p. 56). According to Nilsson (1989, p. 137) there was a clear hierarchy within the churchyard: the most sought after places of burial being around the choir and to the east of the church. Around these graves there might have been concentric semi-circles or rectangles, which represented the different classes. The western part of the churchyard was the lowest ranking quarter (Fig. 6). This social stratification does not, however, appear to have applied everywhere, and probably only reflected the ideals of this law. It is difficult to follow Nilsson's thesis in the light of the evidence from Gotland, which in spite of the postulated "farmer republic", certainly had no egalitarian

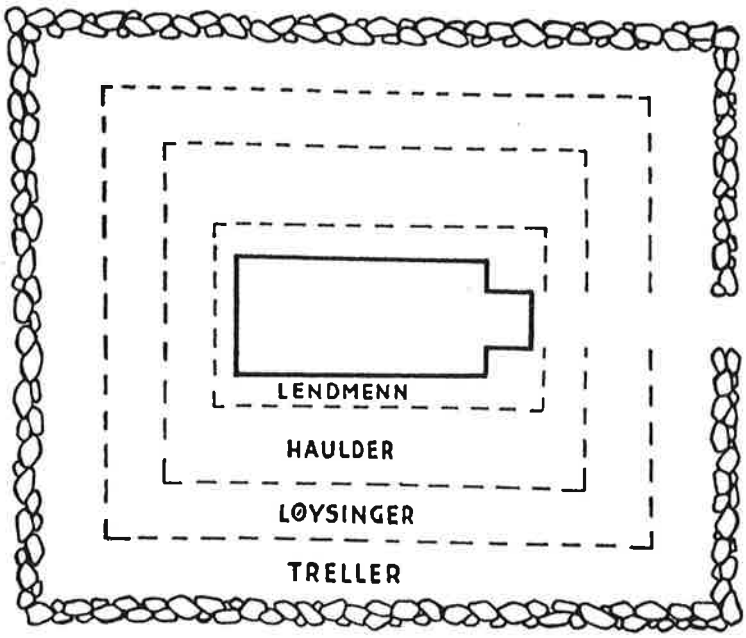

Fig. 6. The ideal churchyard-division according to the Borgartings Law. The illustration was designed by the norwegian historian E. Bull (1948, p. 55). Lendmenn - chiefs; Haulder - free peasants; Løysinger - released; Treller - slaves.

structures (see discussion below). The furnished graves are distributed regularly throughout the churchyards, with no apparent concentrations within the above-named examples. This does not, however, exclude the possibility that the division into quarters was first introduced at a later time.

A boundary was drawn around the churchyard to mark the juridical zone, inside which baptized members of the community were worshipped and were buried. In the beginning it was a ditch or hedge and later a wall, which could have a fortified character (Boehlke & Belgrader 1983, p. 649). By studying Danish and Swedish churchyards Engberg & Kieffer-Olsen (1992, pp. 176 f.) and Johansson (1993, pp. 12 ff.) concluded that it was not until the 11th-12th centuries that a ditch was dug or a wooden fence installed[11] and stone walls were not introduced before the 13th-14th centuries (Johansson 1993, pp. 17 ff.). Here is a clear difference from the pagan gravefields, where ditches or fences never enclosed the whole area of burial.

B. Nilsson states that the minimum size of the churchyard seems to have been influenced by the right of asylum (1989, pp. 122 f.). At the 12th council of Toledo (681) it was decided that the asylum zone should be 30 steps (1 ecclesiastical step = 1,5 m) around the church, that means at least 45 meters (Boehlke & Belgrader 1983, p. 648; Nilsson 1989, p. 123). However, there were no regulations regarding the shape of the churchyard - whether round or rectangular (ibid., p. 124). The churchyard enclosures with walls, fences or ditches reflect the idea of protection and asylum (ibid., p. 126; Boehlke & Belgrader 1983, p. 649). In the Norwegian Borgartings law it is even prescribed that there should be a *garðr* (enclosure) around every church (Nilsson 1989, pp. 126 f.). However, the enclosure of medieval churches should not be connected with whether they had the right to hold funeral services or not (ibid., p. 129).

Emancipation

The division of the churchyard into southern (male) and northern (female) halves, which only overlapped to the east and west of the church, could be seen in all the three examples. Gender segregation in churchyards is not unknown in Scandinavia. The phenomenon was registered for the first time by J. Steffensen (1943, p. 229), who excavated the churchyard of Skeljastaðir Þjórsáðalur on Island. He stated that sexual segregation only occurred during a certain period, then it was abandoned. In Sweden, N.-G. Gejvall (1960, pp. 122 ff. tab. 6) registered segregation by gender at the churchyard of Västerhus, Frösön sn., Jämtland. Gejvall (ibid., p. 121) looked through the ancient laws and found a passage in the old Norwegian Eidsivatings law, which probably dates from the 12th century (Kieffer-Olsen 1993, p. 103 note 194). Here it was said that men should lie to the south and women to the north of the church: "*karlmenn skulu liggia firi sunnan kirkiu en konor firi nordan*". In addition to the examples from Gotland, which have unfortunately not been anthropologically examined (see Trotzig 1970, p. 16 note 13), there are other examples known from the Swedish mainland, like Försäter, Österlövsta sn., Uppland (Broberg 1981, p. 30; Vretemark 1992, pp. 121 f.), Karleby, Leksbergs sn., Västergötland (Vretemark 1992, pp. 122 f.) and Nödinge, Nödinge sn., Västergötland (Vretemark 1992, pp. 123 f.)[12]. Gender segregation in a more or less distinct form is also known from some places in medieval Denmark, including Gl. Grenå (Kieffer-Olsen 1993, p. 106), Tirup (ibid., pp. 106 ff.), Tygelsjö (ibid., p. 110), Refshale (ibid., pp. 110 ff.), Torup (ibid., pp. 112 f.), Risby (ibid., p. 114), Rathausmarkt in Schleswig (ibid., pp. 116 ff.), Grødby on Bornholm (Wagnkilde 1996, pp. 8 f.) and Löddeköpinge (Cinthio & Boldsen 1983-84, pp. 121 ff.). However, it should be noted that it is difficult to make clear interpretations, because of the repeated occupation and use of churchyards, particularly the southern parts (Kieffer-Olsen 1993, pp. 118 ff.). Even in northern Germany, in the St. Gertrud churchyard, Kiel, such segregation has been recorded (ibid., p. 120 note 215).

In spite of the law text there are only a few examples known from Norway, as shown from excavations at Bø, Telemark and Stange, Hedmark (Harby 1994, pp. 91 ff.)[13]. Such segregation of burials in Norwegian churches was already noted by N. Nicolaysen (1870, p. 17)[14] , with "the women lying by the northern wall and the men by the southern wall", and Nicolaysen added that the men in the churchyard were also buried to the south of the church. In addition to the Icelandic, Swedish, Danish, Norwegian and North German examples there is one findplace known from Greenland, namely Tjodhild`s church in Brattahlið (Krogh 1967, pp. 29 f.). All these churchyards, as pointed out by Kieffer-Olsen (1993, p. 120), are situated in the North, there are no parallels known from other regions (Fig. 7).

We find gender differentiation on other levels too. In the field of monastic and church research R. Gilchrist (1994, pp. 128 ff.) has recently shown that a third of all English nunneries had the monastic building to the north of the church, diverging from the usual southern location. Gilchrist (ibid., p. 134) identifies burial places in Britain, such as Raunds, Northamptonshire (Boddington 1987, p. 420), where segregation was already abandoned in the 10th or 11th centuries[15]. According to Gilchrist saints-reliquaries are divided in some English parish churches into male saints to the south and female saints to the north.

B. Nilsson (1989, p. 141) observed that sexually determined segregation was concentrated in the zone around the choir and nave. This separation must have its origins in the spatial division of the church, where already in the apostolic constitution women were allocated the northern side of the church and men the southern

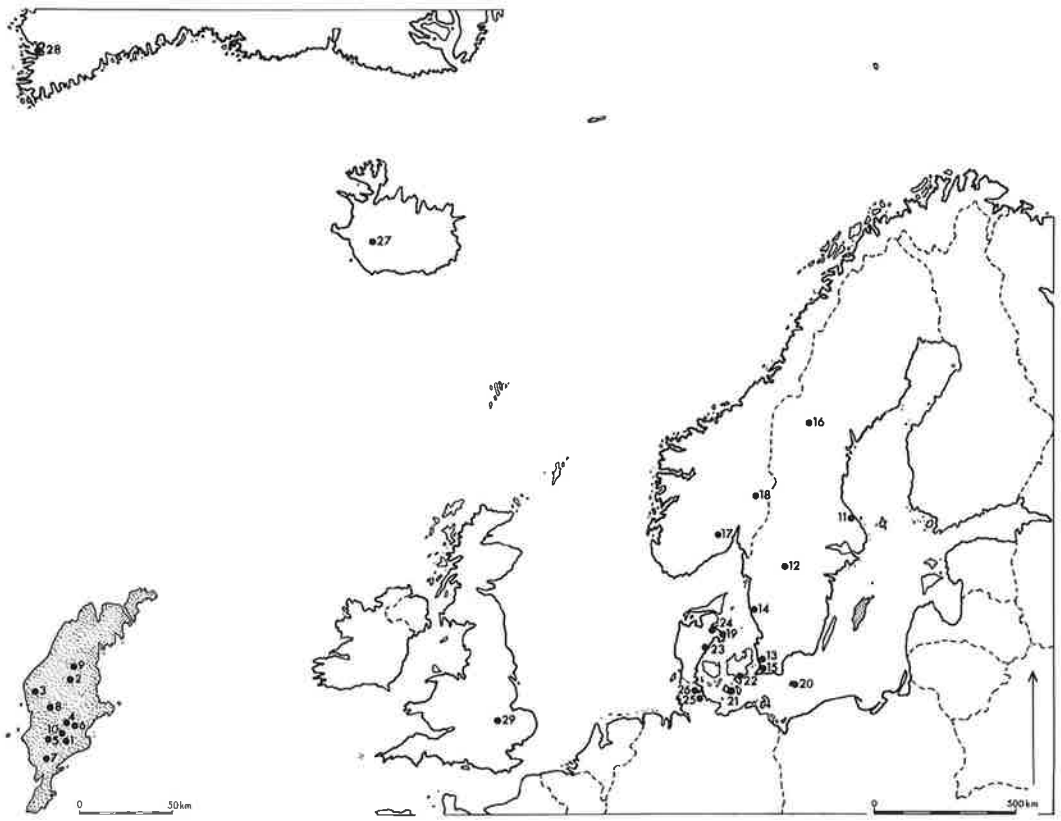

Fig. 7. Distribution of the medieval churchyards with sex-segregation. *Sweden:* 1. Burs; 2. Dalhem; 3. Eskelhem; 4. Etelhem; 5. Fardhem; 6. Garda; 7. Havdhem; 8. Hejde; 9. Källunge; 10. Stånga (all Gotland);11. Försäter, Österlövsta Parish, Uppland;12. Karleby, Leksbergs Parish, Västergötland; 13. Löddeköpinge, Skåne; 14. Nödinge, Nödinge parish, Västergötland; 15. Tygelsjö, Skåne;16. Västerhus, Frösön Parish, Jämtland. *Norway:* 17. Bø, Telemark; 18. Stange, Hedmark. *Denmark:* 19. Gl. Grenå, Grenå parish, Djurs Nørre District; 20. Grødby, Rønne Parish, Bornholms Vester District; 21. Refshale, Maribo Landparish, Musse District, 22. Risby, Baarse Parish, Baarse District, 23. Tirup, Horsens Parish, Nim District; 24. Torup, Dronningborg Parish, Støvring Distric. *Germany:* 25. Kiel, Land Schleswig-Holstein; 26. Schleswig, Land Schleswig-Holstein. *Iceland:* 27. Skeljastaœir, Þjórsáðalur; Arness Sýsla. *Greenland:* 28. Tjodhild's church, Brattahlið, Østerbygd. *England*: 29. Raunds, Northamptonshire.

side (Selhorst 1931, pp. 21 ff.). According to Nilsson this sexual segregation had its roots in Jewish law, where there was not only a division between north and south but also right and left and front and back. Sexual segregation had no negative connotations; on the contrary it instilled a kind of balance[16] . Nilsson (1989, pp. 141 f.; Nilsson 1994, p. 89) is certain that the segregation of the churchyard is a conscious copy of the arrangement inside the church and was therefore initiated by the church and should not be seen as the survival of a pre-Christian practice[17]. In moreexposed to the temptations of the world, and it was therefore more appropriate for them to be in the north of the church (ibid., p. 32). In addition, Amalarius reported that the deacon should read from the gospels facing south to the congregation of intellectual novices, whilst behind his back (that means to the north), the less educated women should be taught by male

scholars (ibid., p. 33). Amalarius supplied another justification for this arragement, by declaring that in order to maintain chasteness within the church, especially during the eucharist, the kiss of peace should be restricted to members of the same sex (ibid., pp. 33 f.). From the middle of the 12th century onwards the writings of Honorius Augustodunensis show a change in which the northern "female" half of the church is associated with negative characteristics (ibid., pp. 36 f.). Woman is now regarded as the flesh and temptation of the devil, the vehicle by way original sin came down to earth. On Judgement Day women should therefore be guided to the left, the side of punishment.

In Scandinavia it seems as if the division of the sexes within churchyards appeared in the late 10th or early 11th centuries and that it disappeared in Jutland around 1200. However, it was not abandoned until the 13th and 14th centuries in other parts of Scandinavia (Kieffer-Olsen 1993, p. 121; Gilchrist 1994, p. 134).

The introduction of this custom is clearly connected with the arrival of Christianity. We are looking in vain at the pagan gravefields for this segregation, as has been noted for Gotland (Thunmark-Nylén 1989, p. 214)[18]. The origin of the custom is still difficult to trace. In her review of N.-G. Gejvall's publication on Västerhus (1960), Gisela Asmus (1962, 194) pointed out that the segregation shows an early influence from the Eastern Orthodox Church. She stressed the custom might have come to Scandinavia through the contacts of the Varangians with Byzantium. This thesis might even get support from Sharon Gerstel's (forthcoming) work about the frescoes in Byzantine churches. According to Gerstel there is an absolute correlation in the use of interior church space between woman in the north and men in the south in late Byzantine churches.

The reason for the segregation, according to Gilchrist (1994, p. 148), is the numerous dualities underlying the concept of pairs: north/south, woman/man, moon/sun, Old Testament/New Testament. This duality resulted in the practice that women stood or sat in the northern half of the church, where they also received the eucharist. Gilchrist showed that when women entered the church they were directed to the left side, but if the church is regarded as a symbol of Christ's body then they were being referred to the right side. This corresponds with the iconographical depictions of Mary, who always stands in the crucifixion at Christ's right side; John stands to his left side.

The fact that the northern half of the churchyard was not used later on, should not mislead us to believe that women held a lower status than men from the beginning and were therefore offered a less worthy place, as pointed out by Nilsson (1989, p. 144). By way of contrast, Gejvall's (1960, pp. 119 ff.) study of medieval legal texts shows that there was nothing negative about the northern half.

A.-S. Gräslund (1983-85, p. 300), M. Lindgren (1991, p. 233 note 5) and M. Vretemark (1992, pp. 125 ff.) believe that the division in the churchyard continued in the church, with a northern portal for women and a southern portal for men, with each sex taking a seat in their respective areas. Each sex had a special altar to pray to their respective saints, the Marian-altar for the women and the St. Olaf- or St. Michael-altar for the men. Vretemark pointed out the Marian altars in the northern part of the nave were often facing towards the choir. The positions of the altars led Vretemark to the conclusion that both the northern and southern portals were used by women and men respectively. However, it must be remembered that she is referring here to Romanesque and Gothic churches.

As the timber predecessors of the three churches I have mentioned earlier have not survived, it is difficult to follow this thesis. If we look at the portals of the preserved or reconstructed stave churches on Gotland, then it seems as if the first churches only had a portal in the western part of the nave. This is definitely the case with Hemse, where there was a treshold cut only into the

western sill beam (Ekhoff 1914-16, pp. 80 ff. fig. 32-35; Lagerlöf & Stolt 1969, pp. 181 ff. fig. 197; fig. 206). This might even be the case with Eke, where Lagerlöf & Stolt (1974, pp. 458 ff.) are non-commital as to whether the portal was placed in the west or south of the nave[19]. Stave church reconstructions - such as Eke, must in general be studied with a critical eye, because the material was sometimes reused in a secondary context, as floorboards, and may well be incomplete. The fact that only one portal was recovered does not mean that there was only one originally. A portal in the west was also suspected by G. Trotzig (1972, p. 79; Trotzig 1981, p. 288) when excavating in Stilte church, but archaeological evidence for a portal in the north side was missing (1981, p. 288 fig. 10). These examples from Gotland show that it is problematic to equate the division of the churchyard with the spatial division inside the church. It seems as if an architectural division in the churches of Gotland came later, probably only in the late Romanesque or early Gothic periods, if we dare to draw general conclusions from stave church reconstructions and Romanesque stone buildings[20].

Surprisingly, the picture which we get from Lund is completely the opposite from the one in Gotland. During excavations in Kattesund and Thuletomten a stave church was found, which clearly had a portal in the north (Mårtensson 1976, p. 122 fig. 94). Unfortunately the area where one could expect a portal to the south was disturbed in 1883 and it was impossible for R. Blomqvist to observe a portal here (1963, pp. 20 ff. fig. 9). However, it is remarkable that in the related churchyard no segregation by sex had taken place (Mårtensson 1976, p. 115). Excavations of St. Stefan and St. Mårten presented the same picture (Mårtensson 1980, p. 54; Carelli & Lenntorp 1994, pp. 84 f.). It seems as if the conclusions of M. Vretemark (1992, pp. 126 f.) are legitimate; that segregation by sex was only a rural and not an urban phenomenon[21].

Timeless Phenomenon?

Furnished graves within consecrated ground were no novelty to the Viking Age. We know about this custom from the Merovingian burials inside churches, the so-called donator or founder graves[22]. The most famous examples are the graves under the cathedral in Cologne and the church of Saint Denis (Werner 1964; Last 1973). The position of these graves inside the church provides a clear indication as to the social status of the buried, which is mirrored by the grave furnishings[23] . The dead were buried in their dress together with pottery, weapons, equipment etc. Scholars are divided over whether we can identify these objects with the "Heergewäte" of the men and "Gerade" of the women in the Lex Thuringorum (2, 27-28), which were the individual property of the deceased and which might originally have been part of the dowry of the women (Ogris 1995; Drüppel 1989 a; 1989 b; opposed by Steuer 1982, pp. 74 ff.; Steuer 1995). Furthermore, it must be left open whether the buried persons were the actual "founders" of these churches. The furnished graves inside the church indicate no syncretistic beliefs, according to Genrich (1971, p. 202), but "contain only the social status symbols of the dead". If we turn away from the church graves and look at the churchyard, we can state that there are no furnished graves. Instead furnished graves are found in the Merovingian "Reihengräberfelder", which were established in pagan times. In several cases, like in München Aubing, Staubing by Weltenburg, Marktoberdorf/Schwaben and Köln-Junkersdorf a simple timber building was discovered at the edge of these gravefields, which was probably a church or a chapel (Dannheimer 1966; Christlein 1971; Dannheimer 1975, pp. 229 ff.; Fehring 1979, pp. 556 ff.). In these cases the church was not at the centre of the burial ground, and with it the death-cult; it was a secondary addition to make Christian funerals possible. Excluding the nobility there was no great social distinction between burials within

the church and in the "Reihengräberfelder" (Christlein 1974, pp. 587 f.).

Towards the end of the Merovingian period furnished graves disappear. During the Carolingian period this custom no longer existed in the centre of the Empire, but instead survived on the periphery, for example in Croatia (Werner 1978-79). The subjugated Saxons were soon forbidden to cremate their dead, but the archaeological evidence shows (Ahrens 1978) that the transition from pagan to Christian burial grounds took longer than is to be believed by reading the laws of 782 in the Capitulatio de partibus Saxoniae (1, 7) (Lammers 1983). In all places, where the burial ground was moved to the churchyard, furnished graves ceased to exist.

When the Gotlandic churchyard graves of the Viking Age are studied it is obvious that a comparison with the Merovingian founder graves is inappropriate. On the one hand during the Merovingian period the dead were buried in consecrated ground, with grave-goods that did not differ from the pagan graves (if we exclude horse graves in the "Reihengräberfelder"). On the other hand, these graves are inside the church and never outside. The reason lies in the social status of the buried. On Gotland there are no furnished graves inside churches, instead they are all outside, and these belong not to the upper class, but only to the "middle class". Searching for parallels to our named examples in Sweden and Denmark, we must first turn to Finland. In the churchyards of Ristinpelto and Myllymäki, 12th-century furnished graves have been discovered. The burials from Ristinpelto were, according to Cleve (1952, p. 167) apparently poorly furnished, and the unpublished material from Myllymäki is difficult to comment on (Kivikoski 1969, p. 35). However, these are not the only examples of furnished graves from the Early- and High Medieval periods. The same phenomenon is found in South-East Europe, as for example the hillfort of Mikulčice in Slovakia, where a church was surrounded by several furnished graves from the 9th and 10th centuries (Poulík 1963, p. 33 fig. 14). It is clear that the buried must have belonged to the retinue of the lord of the castle, and that several members of the ruling upper class and warrior-class were buried outside the church. Poulík (1975, pp. 198 f.) observed that the Christian graves of the castle's nobility stand in direct contrast to the contemporary grave mounds of the pagan rural population. In addition, Klanica (1986, pp. 120 ff.) refers to several churchyards in the territory of former Czechoslovakia, which have richly furnished graves. According to him, the 9th century graves are furnished with weapons and riding-equipment, whilst the 10th century burials are usually restricted to elements of clothing. This differs from the usual practice of the Carolingian period, as normally found in the west. The question of who the driving force behind the mission in Slovakia was, is not easy to answer. The 9th century Carolingian mission had its origin in Salzburg and was finally successful, but the Byzantine mission should also be considered, which culminated in the sending of the missionaries Kyrill and Methodius in 864, as recorded in the written sources (Kłoczowski 1994, pp. 889 ff.).

Even in Hungary furnished graves from the 11th and 12th centuries have been recorded in churchyards, like in Zsidód, Komitat Esztergom (Molnár 1992). There are also examples from the Byzantine empire, like Corinth, where furnished graves from the 9th through to the 11th centuries have been discovered (Ivison 1992)[24].

If we summarize the picture from Europe from the 5th to the 11th centuries, it is striking that furnished graves disappear in the Frankish area towards the end of the Merovingian period, and that this form of burial appears in the settlement-areas of the slavic tribes and also in the Byzantine missionary sphere at the same time. On the other hand it cannot be denied that one link is still missing if we want to explain this phenomenon, and that is Russia. The silence of the Russian researchers could be interpreted in two ways. Either it is a clear omission in research,

which has never been taken up or examined, or this type of furnished grave within churchyards did not exist in Russia. The problem is that the churches in the towns are never connected with a churchyard and in the villages the churchyard can lie far from the church. The close connection between church and cemetery, as in Scandinavia, does not exist. If we follow the latter suggestion, that this type was not in existence, then it is difficult to understand by which means Scandinavia was inspired when performing this type of funeral, if direct contact with the Slavic-Hungarian areas is excluded. Nevertheless, regarding the furnished graves on Gotland, the concentration of this type in Eastern Europe gives us something to think about.

Résumé

With the arrival of Christianity in the North three new phenomena in Gotlandic churchyards are observed. The first one is the enclosure of the burial area, the second the segregation of the sexes within it, and the third the custom of furnished graves.

Concerning the first point, the research done by B. Nilsson showed that the right of asylum was one of the main factors in establishing the churchyard. The drastic limitation of the area for burials restricted the possibilties which previously existed in gravefields for burial by family association. On the other hand it gave the upper-class a better opportunity to draw a clear distinction between the classes and to demonstrate that they had the right to be buried in the zone around the choir.

The second point, the segregation of the sexes, poses two questions. The first one is whether a stronger or weaker position for women in Viking Age society was demonstrated by dividing the cult centre (the church) and the place of burial (the churchyard) in two halves. This question is difficult to answer, because our knowledge of the situation of women in the Viking Age is partly speculative[25]. A.-S. Gräslund (1987, pp. 90 f.) and B. Sawyer (1992, pp. 81 ff.) are of the opinion that Christianity particularly attracted women, because it provided a female saint - Mary, and offered a more positive perspective regarding the hereafter-belief in the form of heaven. In pagan times it was only men who could enter Valhalla, women could only expect the less attractive equivalent of Hel[26]. The sexual segregation in the North could be regarded as an indication of the "emancipation process". On the other hand it seems as if this apparent equality was weighed with the disadvantage that the image of woman as the weak and uneducated sex was more firmly fixed, as the scripts of Amalarius prove. What B. Nilsson (1994, p. 35) described as the "balance between the strong and the weak" might have been devastating for women who believed in an improvement of their social conditions through the new faith. Instead they were forced to conform to a social pattern. One might suspect that the change of attitudes brought about by conforming with Carolingian and Ottonian law, finally had a negative effect for women.

The second question is why the segregation was abandoned between 1200 and 1300, and why burials were excluded from the area to the north of the church. Is this only a chronological problem; that means there is an initial phase of segregation, which after some generations *de facto* didn't exist any longer. Or is it a social phenomenon, in which the regulations were ignored from the beginning?

B. Nilsson (1994, p. 90) is of the opinion that the renewed interest in the southern side must be seen in combination with the changed position of married women in society. According to him married women were bound more closely to their husbands from the 12th century and were subordinate to them from a legal point of view. If so, then the sexual segregation reflects stronger female independence between the 11th and 12th centuries, which was lost with the double burials of the high-medieval period, where women were more closely tied to their spouses and the ideal of

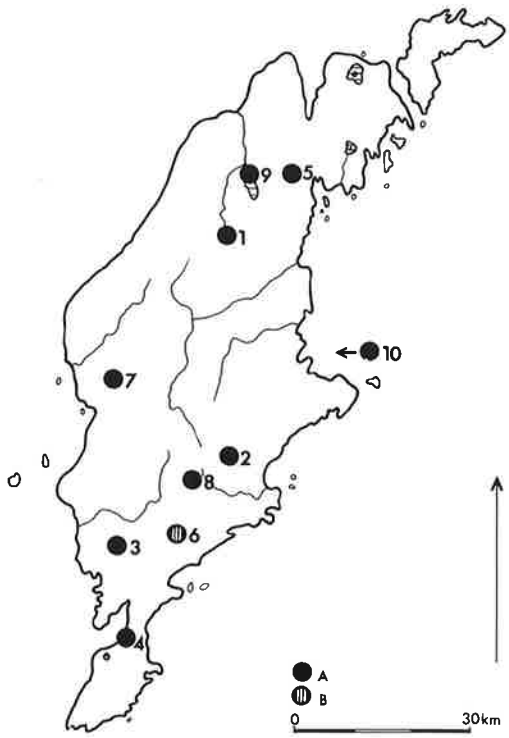

Fig. 8. Distribution of the Gotlandic cross- and crucufixpendants with connection to the Russian-Byzantine area. A. Russian import; B. Byzantine style influence. 1. Öster Ryftes, Fole parish; 2. Garde, Garde parish; 3. Havor, Hablingbo parish; 4. Domerarve, Öja parish; 5. Ytings, Othems parish; 6. Borge, Rone parish; 7. Sandegårda, Sanda parish; 8. Stånga, Stånga parish; 9. Tingstäde, Tingstäde parish; 10. Gotland, unknown findplace.

marriage gained more importance. It might be that Honorius Augustodunensis' thesis, that condemned the northern half of the churchyard, found an audience in Scandinavia after some time, which in turn lead to the abandonment of the northern half of the churchyard.

The third point, namely the custom of furnished graves in churchyards, is still the most difficult to solve. Within Scandinavia there are examples from only three places for the 11th and early 12th centuries: Gotland, Leksand and Grødby[27]. Elements of dress within burials were recorded in all three places, but Grødby showed the biggest divergence in the presence of pottery. Kieffer-Olsen (1993, p. 161 note 339) draws parallels with Lund, where pottery was also found in some graves (see above). In addition to the exceptional presence of pottery in the burial place from Grødby, Westslavic earrings were also found in some of the female graves (Wagnkilde 1996, p. 8) as in Leksand (Serning 1982, pp. 83 f.). This is not the place to make ethnic allocations, but it should be stressed that the islands of Gotland and Bornholm, which played an important rôle in international trade, and the relatively unimportant place of Leksand in northern Sweden, which had already lost its important rôle in trading iron ore, differ from all other excavated churchyards.

It appears quite daring to postulate that there was an active Russian/Byzantine missionary influence when only referring to a burial rite which deviates from the rest of Scandinavia, but we have more supportive evidence from Gotland. In addition to the above mentioned three churchyards, there are finds of cross- and crucifix pendants in gravefields, hoards and loose finds, which on the basis of archaeological and art historical analysis have their best parallels in the Russian/Byzantine area (Staecker 1995, pp. 424 ff.). The pendants, dating from the 10th to early 12th centuries, show a link with the areas around Novgorod, Kiev and Constantinople. Most of them are imported (ibid., map 65-66). Interestingly, there are no parallels to the cross-types from the Germanic and English areas - that means those regions where according to the written sources the mission had its origin (Fig. 8). Allthough a definitive answer cannot be based on the material culture alone, it does reflect an eastern influence unknown from the written sources, in the form of Russian/Byzantine finds and features, as in the case of the cross- and crucifix pendants, frescoes (Svahnström 1993, pp. 162 ff.), woodpaintings (ibid., pp. 173 ff.), baptismal fonts (Roosval 1916), the Russian and the St. Lars churches in Visby (Svahnström 1993, pp. 158 ff.) and the burial rite in the churchyards. This thesis is also supported by the sex-segrega-

tion, which was probably influenced by the Byzantine Church. But in contrast to the furnished graves, the custom was spread over the whole of Scandinavia, even in regions with a recorded German or English mission.

Should we regard these finds and features only as signs of the intensive trade across the Baltic, in which Gotland played an important rôle? Or do these finds witness an otherwise unknown, undocumented mission, which used the established trading contacts between Russia and Gotland for its purposes, until this influence was driven out by the bishop of Linköping?

To answer these questions it is important to analyse Gotland's rôle in the political power structure of the Viking Age. Was Gotland a "strongly organised, democratic farmer republic", as stated with local patriotic pride by E. Nylén (1979, p. 12)? Or should we deconstruct this picture of a "peaceful and independant farmer republic, without ruling overlords[28] and without inner, social conflict, whose wealth was based on its intensive trading-activities, driven by the 'farmer-trademen'", as A. Carlsson (1990, p. 5) has done it in a sarcastic allusion to this local Gotlandic patrotism? Carlsson (1990, pp. 6 ff.) is developing another picture, in which the political structure on the island shows feudalistic features, where powerful individuals had control over the island and the harbours and they in turn were in a relationship of dependency with the Swedish mainland.

A more mediatory position is presented by the historian T. Lindkvist (1983). He stresses (ibid., pp. 281 ff.) that the social structures on Gotland were not comparable with those in Sweden. In addition, the Swedish king had no representatives on the island and the authority of the bishop of Linköping was seriously restricted. On the other hand, Lindkvist (ibid., pp. 285 ff.) recognizes that already in the 9th century and definitely before the early 12th century, Gotland was obliged to pay tribute to the Svear. Lindkvist is convinced that proof of this is contained within the description of the 9th century journey of Wulfstan, where Gotland was included in the empire of the Svear, and also in an early 12th century Florentine document, where Gotland is included in a list of Swedish provinces. However, it must also be recognized that Gotland's active rôle in trade, as traditionally stressed (see Nylén 1979, p. 12), its passive rôle in trade in the form of customs duties, and its political rôle in maintaining a neutral position between the Swedish and Danish power bases in the Baltic, might have given the island a special position[29].

Taking up the question from above, of whether there was an undocumented mission on Gotland and under which political conditions this could have taken place, we see that the island succeeded in maintaining its special position. The situation on Gotland could have been different to the Swedish mainland, where German and English missionaires were active under the protection of the Swedish kings. At the same time it is not easy to decide whether the archaeological material reflects an organized mission or only missionary influence, which had the nature of a private initiative. There is no definitive evidence for an organized mission from Novgorod. On the contrary, the Gutasaga (c. 3-4) reports on the individual actions of men in power, for example the building of a chapel in Åkergarn by Ormika and the building of a church in Vi by Botair. In addition it is possible that Gotlandic and Russian tradesmen brought artists and architects from the Russian empire with them to the island, who helped with the founding and decoration of churches, with Russian priests perhaps performing ministerial duties in this first phase. Moreover, the Gutasaga (c. 5) records that foreign bishops stopped in Gotland before continuing on pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and that they even used this route on their return. The presence of three "Armenian" (Byzantine) bishops in Iceland, as recounted in the "Islendingabok" (Sjöberg 1985, p. 71) could indicate that not only priests belonging to the Latin church used this route, but also priests from Eastern Europe.

Finally the question remains unanswered as

to whether the churchyard graves are an expression of an unknown (individual or organized) mission, which had its starting point in Russia/ Byzantium, or which got its inspiration from there, and which made more substantial compromises than the contemporary German and English missions. This would then explain why Adam of Bremen deliberately does not mention the island and why there are so many archaeological indications of another mission. Another reason could be that local traditions in some remote regions were stubbonly retained for centuries by conservative farming communities. E. Ekhoff (1912, pp. 154 f.) at the beginning of this century proposed that the priests "met with stubborn resistance and compromised on the grounds that by ignoring the lesser evil, higher aims could be attained. This clearly happened in remote places and not near the centre of the mission".

However, this again begs the question: Where are all the examples from the remote regions of Scandinavia? Unpublished, not excavated or simply not in existence?

Acknowledgements

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Notes

1. In contrast to the Gotlandic churchyard finds, five cremation graves were found beside furnished inhumations in Leksand, which could indicate an older gravefield (Serning 1982, p. 74). It has not been possible to date these cremation graves and it is therefore not correct to draw conclusions about the continuity or discontinuity of the burial place from pagan to Christian times.
2. Finds of coins for example in Sigtuna, see Hillbom 1987, p. 230.
3. See also the comment of B. Nilsson (1994, pp. 90 f.).
4. The fact that the Fröjel find place had already been mentioned by Westholm (1926, p. 104) and later by Kyhlberg (1991, p. 166) was not regarded by Thunmark-Nylén. She is of the opinion that there is no clear indication for a churchyard grave here in contrast to Kyhlberg. Thunmark-Nylén (ibid.) mentions Silte, which Kyhlberg does not even have on his lists for single finds.
5. Deviating from Thunmark-Nylén Kyhlberg (1991, p. 166) only mentiones 6 churchyards with single finds: Bro, Buttle, Eksta, Hamra, Klinte and Tingstäde.
6. A complete catalogue of these pendants was last done by Staecker (1995, cat. nr. 66; 70; 75).
7. For example Kopparsvik nearby Visby (Mälarstedt 1979) and Vinor on Fårö (Gräslund 1984).
8. See also A. Andrén (1989).
9. The first part was plagiarised from Nicolaus Petrejis and Lyschanders publications, therefore Strelow was harshly critized by H. Spegel (1683) and J. Wallin (1747) (Lithberg 1933, pp. 5 f.; Dittmer 1961, pp. 129 ff.).
10. The Borgartingslaw (Nilsson 1989, p. 135) relates to this.
11. An example of a churchyard with a possible hedge could be Grødby where neither postholes nor a ditch were discovered (Wagnkilde 1996, p. 7 fig. 8).
12. The churchyard from Björned, Ångermanland, which Nilsson (1994, 80-81) includes, was ignored, because Eriksson & Bergegård (1992, p. 63) are not sure, whether they can postulate a segregation by sex at this stage of the excavation.
13. Nilsson (1994, pp. 80 f..) names three examples from Haug, Tønsberg and Hamar, where no segregation could be registered.
14. See Kieffer-Olsen (1993, p. 120 note 216) about the churches of Oslo, Bergen and Trondheim.
15. Kieffer-Olsen (1993, p. 120 note 216) is of a different opinion and doubts the existence of such segregation.
16. The segregation is not always explained as a kind of balance between the sexes. In the case of the churchyard at Raunds, Northamptonshire, it is postulated by D.A. Hinton that "the tendency for females to be kept at the periphery of the cemetery in later phases could indicate a status lowering".
17. Nilsson (ibid., pp. 142 f.) also notes that sexual segregation was only practised in a few cases. He questions, whether class-differences or even rulings from wills led to the fact, that there was only partial segregation and in fact much interchange. On the other hand Kieffer-Olsen (1993, pp. 99 ff.) tries to explain this interchange in chronological terms, with strict separation only being abandoned in the later phases.

18. An exception could be the gravefield of Grødby on Bornholm, where there is no archaeological evidence for a church. However, the excavator admits that there could have been a wooden church on stone foundations which could have been ploughed out (Wagnkilde 1996, p. 7).
19. However, in the reconstruction a clearer interpretation with a portal in the south has been adopted (ibid., p. 537).
20. To the same postulat comes B. Nilsson (1994, pp. 96 f.) in his answer on M. Lindgrens and M. Vretemarks thesis.
21. B. Nilsson (1994, p. 78) is against this opinion. He is convinced that the churchyards from Löddeköpinge and Schleswig Rathausmarkt indicate an urban milieu. But Nisson is overlooking the fact that on both places there is no clear sexual segregation and that Löddeköpinge - because of the placename's ending - only had a limited urban character, which was first fulfilled by Lund.
22. M. Borgolte (1985, pp. 27 ff.) rejects from a legal historical point to use the concept "donatorgrave" and suggests instead the concept "foundergrave".
23. Interestingly the two graves of a woman and a boy (nr. 808 and 809) in the oratory under the choir of the Cologne Cathedral are positioned in the North (Doppelfeld 1964, 158-159 Beilage 5).
24. Late medieval furnished burials, as mentioned by Felgenhauer-Schmiedt (1993, p. 230) and Müller-Wille (1977, p. 22) for Western Europe and Holl (1970) for Hungary, Harck (1976) and Zoll-Adamikova (1991) for western Slavic regions and Valk (1992) for the Baltic countries, will not be discussed here.
25. In this context the publication of J. Jesch (1991, pp. 68 ff.) should be mentioned, particularly the chapter about the Christianization of women.
26. In this context the presence of cross- and crucifix pendants, predominantly in female graves, is used as an argument for the idea that women were more attracted to the new faith. I have shown elsewhere (Staecker 1995, pp. 38 f.; pp. 431 f.) that this is more of a fashion statement, which provides no information as to the mens' readiness to be amongst the first to be baptized.
27. Regarding the example from Grødby, Bornholm, an interpretation as a churchyard seems to be iustified. Despite the absence of an enclosure and archaeological evidence for a church, the clues however argue against a gravefield. Kieffer-Olsen (1993, pp. 159 ff.) pointed out that sexual segregation, unusual overlapping of graves and the coffin types provide clear indications of a churchyard.
28. In the Swedish literature (see Carlsson 1990, p. 6) the term "stormän" is used, which translates as "greatmen". This term is applied by Swedish researchers to the situation in the Viking Age, because we cannot talk here about members of a nobility in the sense of High Medieval social structures.
29. We get an indication of relations between Danes and Gotlanders by the existence of the Knutsguild and the building of the St. Clemens church in Visby. The privilege, 1177 issued by Valdemar I. for the Knutsguild for Danish travellers to Gotland documents the Danish claim to a permanent place in Visby (Weibull 1946, pp. 85 ff.). Neither L. Weibull (1946), H. Yrwing (1978, pp. 117 f.) nor E. Hoffmann (1989, pp. 210 ff.) regard this as evidence of political influence, but rather as proof of the strong position of the Danes in the 12th century Baltic-trade. Further evidence of a Danish presence on Gotland is the St. Clemens church in Visby. E. Cinthio (1968, p. 110) has pointed out that such churches are missing from the Swedish mainland and showed that they were primarily erected in Denmark and Norway, the countries under Danish control. In the case of the church in Visby Cinthio does not propose its existence was due to Danish influence.

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