



Invitation to the International Conference

Law and Archaeology in the Early and High Middle Ages, AD 400-1200

7–8 December 2010

Carlsberg Academy, Copenhagen, Denmark

We hereby have the pleasure of inviting you to the international conference *Law and Archaeology in the Early and High Middle Ages, AD 400-1200*. You will find a preliminary programme enclosed.

Purpose and aim

Legal history and archaeology are not disciplines that we normally find mentioned in the same sentence. Traditionally, they belong to different subject areas in terms of material and method. For Scandinavia this gap is even wider because of the late introduction of the written culture. In recent years, though, archaeology has increasingly been dealing with issues that touch on aspects of early legal organization. This applies to interpretations of the inheritance and kinship structures behind family burial patterns, the marking of property and related transactions, the control of natural resources etc.

It is our hope that with an interdisciplinary conference we can generate co-operation between the two disciplines in order to illuminate the 'legal mentality' of the period AD 400-1200. We hope that the development of new questions and new approaches to both the archaeological material and the written culture will generate new answers and point out new paths for comparative studies in future co-operation.

The conference papers relate archaeological data to possible legal structures. Many of you have already asked similar questions about power structures. There is a close connection between power and law, since it is important for magnates and rulers either to use existing legal structures

to strengthen their power and position, or if necessary to change or redefine them. Topics for investigation could be the potential of archaeology for offering information on:

- Property law – what did it mean to own land and movables, and how were these rights transferred? Who controlled the resources? etc.
- Burials as evidence of family patterns and inheritance systems.
- Regional archaeological differences as evidence for possible legal divisions.
- Changes in rural settlement organization, burial customs etc. as evidence of changes in the legal landscape.

For the legal historians the task is to reflect, for instance, on what information the legal sources can offer us about material culture, settlement and family patterns, ownership etc. In areas where we have both archaeological material and legal sources is it an interesting question whether changes in the legal and power structure can be traced in the archaeological data. One example could be the Carolingian kingdom, where the fiefs became inheritable in the eighth century, and whether this left any material traces or identifiable archaeological patterns. For the Scandinavian legal material the task could be to ask the traditional question about the extent to which we can draw on the laws to deduce information about the legal institutions before the emergence of the written evidence. For areas such as property and family law in which the Church played a huge role in redefining legal practice, we can pose questions about the subsequent consequences and their influence on society and material culture as revealed by the archaeology.

Practical information:

The conference will take place at the Carlsberg Academy in Copenhagen 7-8 December 2010. The conference fee is 400 DKK. Your meals during the conference will be covered, but we are not able to cover transport and accommodation.

The conference can host maximum 60 participants and the seats will be given according to registration.

Please, be so kind to send a mail with your *pre-registration* to michelle.garnier@natmus.dk. You will then receive a formal *registration form* and asked to pay the conference fee as long as we have vacant seats. Your registration will only be valid when we have received the conference fee.

Yours sincerely

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Preliminary conference programme

***Law and Archaeology in the Early and
High Middle Ages, AD 400-1200***

The Carlsberg Academy 7th to 8th December 2010

Tuesday 7th:

11:15-11:45: Registration of participants

11:45-13:30: *Welcome Introductory speech*

Session I

Egon Wamers, Frankfurt: *Carolingian Pfalzen and Rights*

Lars Jørgensen, Copenhagen: *Property and Resource Control. Economy and Development of Scandinavian Manors in the 6th – 11th Cent. AD*

13.30-14.45: Lunch in the 'Hall of Pompei'

14.45-16.15: Session II:

Mads Dengsø Jessen, Århus: *Early Watermills and the Transition from individual to regulated Milling – an Archaeological Genealogy of Taxation*

Lars Ivar Hansen, Tromsø: *How to Define Borders between Private and Common Land in Norway?*

16.15-16.45: Coffee break

16.45-18:15: Session III

Andrew Reynolds, London: *The Message of the Gallows: Archaeology and the Emergence of Anglo-Saxon Judicial Practice*

Jørn Øyerhagen Sunde, Bergen: *In Search of the Rise and Decline of the Norwegian Bureaucratic Aristocracy and Their Manor Houses in the 13th and 14th Century.*

18.30-22.00: Conference dinner in the 'Hall of Pompei', Carlsberg Academy

Wednesday 8th:

9.00-10.30: Session IV

Helle Vogt, Copenhagen: *From Tribute to Tenth – The Changes in the Understanding of Private Property in Denmark circa 1000-1250*

Mads Kähler Holst, Århus: *From Rights to Law. Regional and Chronological Variation in Rights and Obligations in Late Iron Age and Early Medieval Settlements.*

10.30-10.45: Coffee break

10.45-12.15: Session IV

Frans Theuws, Amsterdam: *The Free and Unfree of the Historians and the Rural Population of the Archaeologists*

Dagfinn Skre, Oslo: *The Nature of Assemblies and their role in Juridical Matters in the Early Middle Ages*

12.15-13.30: Lunch in the ‘Hall of Pompei’

13.30-15:00: Session VI

Torun Zachrisson, Stockholm: *The Establishment of Odel Rights – an Archaeological Discussion*

Robert Layton & Richard Hingley, Durham: *From the Roman villa to the Open Field System - where is the Germanic Mode of Production?*

15.00-16.30: Reception

Departure