

A Viking in the Sun: Harald Hardrada, the Mediterranean, and the
Nordic World, between the late Viking Age
and the Eve of the Crusades

Symposium 3: Multi-Ethnicity in 11th-Century Armies from the Mediterranean and Beyond

Ortigia-Siracusa, Scuola di Specializzazione in Beni Archeologici,
Palazzo Chiaramonte, 13-16 November 2025



Illumination representing the Byzantine invasion of Sicily in 1038, from the 12th-century manuscript, known as the Madrid Skylitzes,
of the 11th-century Synopsis of Histories by John Skylitzes

PROGRAMME

Thursday 13 November:

19:00 Arrival and Welcome Reception

Friday 14 November:

9.30-10.30: Welcome Session

- Welcome by Daniele Malfitana (Director of the Scuola di Specializzazione in Beni Archeologici), Lorenzo Guzzardi (Direttore Scientifico Ventennale Unesco), Lucia Arcifa (University of Catania) and Bergur Þorgeirsson (Director of the Snorrastofa Cultural and Research Centre)
- Overview of the *Viking in the Sun* project by Gianluca Raccagni (University of Edinburgh)
- Lucia Arcifa and Gianluca Raccagni: *Harald's Sicily between Icelandic sagas and archaeological evidence*

10:30-11.00: Coffee Break

11:00-12:30: The Nordic World 1 (chair Sverrir Jacobsson)

- Ben Raffield (University of Uppsala): *Negotiating diversity and inclusion: the socio-cultural composition of Viking-age warrior institutions and raiding fleets*
- Caitlin Ellis (University of Oslo): *All the king's men: Late Viking armies and fleets in the North Sea world*
- Leif Inge Ree Petersen (Norwegian University of Science and Technology): *From Siracusa to Stamford Bridge: Byzantine military influences on the West in the age of Harald Hardrada, William the Conqueror and Robert Guiscard*

12:30- 14:00: Lunch

14:00-15:00: The Nordic World 2 (chair Ármann Jacobsson)

- Minoru Ozawa (University of Rikkyo): *After the breakdown of Cnut's imperium: Harald Hardrada, ethnic transformation, and the East.*
- Viðar Pálsson (University of Iceland): *Gift-Giving and character portrait of King Harald Hardrada*

15:00- 16:00: The Islamic World (chair Bergur Þorgeirsson)

- Delia Cortese (Middlesex University): *Jawhar who?!? One Fatimid general, many ethnic identities*
- Tonicha Upham (University of Uppsala): *The Rūs, Their Swords, and Their Military Allies? Medieval Arabic Presentations of Rūs Military Aggression and Alliance*

16:00-16.30: Coffee Break

16.30-17:30: Southern Italy (chair Lucia Arcifa)

- Vivien Prigent (École française de Rome): *A host of many nations: Byzantine military forces in Southern Italy (9th-11th centuries)*
- Krisztina Ilko (University of Cambridge): *Multi-ethnicity in the army of the eleventh-century Charlemagne Chessmen*

18.15-19.30: Performance: *Field of Broken Ice* – Music and Recitations from Heimskringla and The Strategicon of Kekaumenos by James Cave and Futaba Sato

Saturday 15 November:

9:00-10:30: The Byzantine World (chair Gianluca Raccagni)

- Yannis Stouraitis (University of Edinburgh): *Ethnicity in the Byzantine armies of the eleventh century*
- Sverrir Jacobsson (University of Iceland): *The nation of the Varangians and other eleventh-century ethnicities in the Roman empire*
- Harald Håvardson Hatløy (Norwegian University of Science and Technology): *Foreign Arms, Imperial Image: Varangian Axes in Byzantine Religious Art*

10:30-11:00: Coffee Break

11:00-12:00: The Normans (chair Krisztina Ilko)

- Matthew Bennet (formerly The Royal Military Academy Sandhurst and the University of Winchester): *Not just Normans....: the composition of Norman Conquest armies and navies from north-western Europe to the Levant: an overview*

- William Aird (University of Edinburgh): *Homines boreales* ['The men of the North wind']:
the arrival of the Normans in Southern Italy

12:00-12.30: General Discussion and Concluding Remarks

12.30-14:00: Lunch

Evening: visit to the Catacombe di Santa Lucia

19:30 Conference Dinner

Sunday 16 November:

Morning: Visit to Castello Maniace