

Nadezhda Tochilova, PhD in art history  
(St. Petersburg)  
Anna Slapinia, art historian (Moscow)

Надежда Точилова, кандидат  
искусствоведения (Санкт-Петербург)  
Анна Слапиня, искусствовед (Москва)

RESEARCH of CULTURAL  
CONNECTIONS  
between OLD RUS and SCANDINAVIA  
in the X–XIII CENTURIES

ИССЛЕДОВАНИЕ  
КУЛЬТУРНЫХ СВЯЗЕЙ  
ДРЕВНЕЙ РУСИ и СКАНДИНАВИИ  
в X–XIII ВЕКАХ

*Uppsala*  
*February - May, 2017*

*Уппсала*  
*Февраль - май 2017 года*

REPORT

ОТЧЕТ

## **Introduction**

First of all we would like to thank The Sverker Åström Foundation and personally Disa Håstad for choosing our project and warm welcome in Sweden.

Our research group includes two medieval art historians: Nadezhda Tochilova – PhD in Art History (Saint-Petersburg) and Anna Slapinia – doctoral candidate at The State Institute of Art Studies (Moscow). Our research interests intersect in the area of studying cultural connections between Scandinavia and Northwest of Russia in the medieval period (between the 10<sup>th</sup> and the 13<sup>th</sup> century). That's why we carry out cooperative researches and make co-author reports. And that was the reason for making joint application to The Sverker Åström Foundation.

Our project won in an application competition in the 2016, and we spent marvelous 1,5 months collecting material in Swedish museums during summer 2016. Results achieved during that period we described in our previous report. In the end of the 2016 we decided to write application for our fellowship prolongation. Our second goal was to research the material which was collected during the first trip and to prepare texts and articles.

We were pleasantly surprised to find out that we had received fellowship prolongation for 3 months and decided to make our trip as soon as possible. Our second trip to Sweden lasted from February to May 2017. This report is devoted to the second part of our trip to Sweden and it's results.

## **Conception**

Cultural contacts between Old Rus and Scandinavia (mainly Sweden) between the 10th and the 13th century are established through sagas and numerous archaeological findings in Russian territory, which undoubtedly have Scandinavian origin. But there is one more group of material known to archaeologists – the so-called “things-hybrids”, or products, made under the influence of Scandinavian art while still containing a significant component of local tradition. Those “things-hybrids” are the object of our study.

In order to find out the genesis of this cultural Russian-Scandinavian tradition and determine its original artistic components as well as the ways of image exchanges we use the iconographic and stylistic methods of analyze.

In previous years we had already done research in archaeological departments of several Russian museums: Novgorod State United Museum Reserve, Pskov State Historical-Architectural and Art Museum-Reserve and Old Ladoga Historical-Architectural and Archaeological National Park. As well as looked through archaeological collection of Old Ladoga carried in The State Hermitage (Saint-Petersburg) and collection of Novgorod carried in The State Historical Museum (Moscow).

During that time we made the catalog of objects we are interested in, but before our Swedish trip we hadn't opportunity to compare Ancient Russian archaeological objects with their presumable Scandinavian prototypes. The situation was complicated by the fact that Russian scientific tradition is oriented mainly to the countries which had connections with Byzantine Empire. Ancient Scandinavian art isn't well known in Russia, that's why we needed to turn to the specialists from abroad for making serious research on this topic. Applying to The Sverker Åström Foundation, we had sought to continue our research in an archaeological storages of Swedish museums. By this work we hoped to confirm or refute our preliminary conception about existing certain kind of Russian-Scandinavian art in that period.

### **Practical results of the first part of our research**

During our first trip we:

- collected the corpus of interesting for our research archaeological applied art objects of the late Viking Age and Early Medieval period from Swedish museums;
- explored a content of archaeological layers of Swedish medieval settlements and determined the place which applied art objects take in it;
- found extremely important for our research publications about Viking and Medieval Sweden art, which are not available in Russia;
- made connections with our colleagues from Sweden, who can give us an advice in future, if it will be needed.



Uppsala Cathedral

### **Main objectives of the second part of our research**

The results of the first part of our research became a base for the conception of our project prolongation. Preparing to our second journey to Sweden, we set ourselves three main objectives:

- to research material collected during our first trip and to write texts and articles;
- to explore archaeological collections of two Swedish museums which we didn't explore or explored partly during our first trip – Sigtuna museum (Sigtuna, Stockholm) and Kulturen (Lund);
- to join some scientific events and to expand our contacts with Swedish researchers.

## **Work timeline**

The main goal of our second Swedish trip was to research materials collected during our first trip and to write the texts. That's why we decided to stay in Uppsala where is situated the biggest library in Scandinavia – Uppsala University library Carolina Rediviva. We chose Uppsala not only because of library, but also because of Uppsala University Department of Archaeology and Ancient History, which we wanted to make contacts to. One more reason was that we wanted to have opportunity for consultations with archaeologist Prof. Ingmar Jansson – famous researcher of Russian-Scandinavian connections who lives in Uppsala.

We tried to spend almost all our time working in Carolina Rediviva library, but, of course, we also visited some places around Sweden. First of all, we often visited Stockholm and worked in National Library of Sweden and library of the The Swedish National Heritage Board (Vitterhetsakademiens bibliotek).

Our museum research, which started last summer during our first trip in Sweden, continued by visiting three museum storages. We explored Kulturen museum in Lund, finished our work in Sigtuna museum storage and one more time visited The Swedish History Museum in Stockholm to take a closer look at several interesting for us objects.



Nadezhda in Kulturen museum storage room

During our first Swedish trip we were extremely busy. We had only 1,5 months and tried to make as much useful as we could. This time our timetable was less stressful and we were able to explore some cultural activities. We visited Vasa Museum and Nordic Museum, spent a great time walking around Gamla Uppsala mounds, Håga gård, Valsgårde Gravfält and Broborg.

Also we would like to say thanks to Disa Håstad for parties and events she organized. We spend beautiful evening preparing pancakes for Maslenitsa and five whole of events days during Easter week. Thanks to Disa we met a lot of interesting people, visited beautiful places near Stockholm and felt ourselves as a part of The Sverker Åström Foundation fellows society.

## **Our experience at Carolina Rediviva library**

As we wrote previously, the main part of our work was carried out in Carolina Rediviva library. We want to say thanks to all librarians who helped us with finding literature (some books were quite specific), giving advices and kindly answered to our numerous questions. We were amazed by great amount and availability of rare professional books and magazines and also

about very simple and user-friendly search system. Also we were pleasantly surprised that many books are available for borrowing at home.

In Carolina Rediviva library we got a unique chance to get acquainted with such publications as:

- Gejer A. Birka. Bd. III. Die Textilfunde aus der Gräber. Uppsala, Almqvist & Wiksells Bortryckeri-Aktiebolag, 1938. — 199 pp., plates.

- Bandet A. Östergötlands Runinskrifter. Stockholm, Kungl. Boktryckeriet. P. A. Norstedt & Söner, 1911. — 268 p., 91 plates.

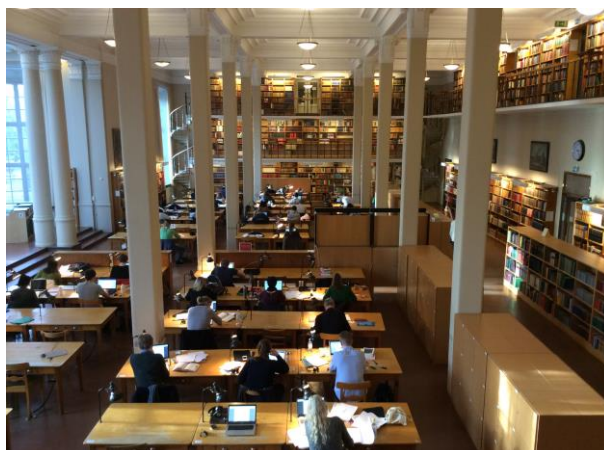
- Roosval J. Die Steinmeister Gottlands. Stockholm, A.B. C.E. Fritzes K. Hofbokhandel,

- Gedruckt von Cederquists Grafiska Aktiebolag, 1918. — 242 p., 66 pl.

- Malmer B. Nordiska Mynt före år 1000. Lund, Berlinska Boktryckeriet, 1966. — 358 p., 57 pl.

- Arne T.J. Ein bemerkenswerter Fund in Östergötland // Acta Archaeologica, 1932. — Vol. III. — P. 67—112.

And many others.



Carolina Rediviva library

## Colleagues



Nadezhda and prof. Ingmar Jansson near runestone in Uppland

In this part we want to express our gratitude to our colleagues, who helped us with our work and inspired for future researches. Our trip would be much less productive without help received from archaeologist prof. Ingmar Jansson, leading researcher of Russian-Scandinavian connections. We spent a lot of time together discussing our project and talking about late Viking Age archaeological finds both in Russia and in Sweden. Thanks to the excursion organized for us by prof. Jansson, we saw the most important runestones of Uppland. Also prof. Jansson introduced us to Uppsala University Department of Archaeology and Ancient History, where we took part in some seminars and made our reports in one of

them. We were happy to meet doctoral students of Department of Archaeology, especially Michael Neiss, who invited us to do these reports and gave a lot of advices not only about our research, but also about academical life of Sweden.

For extremely interesting discussions about Viking Age and early Medieval art we would like to thank Svetlana Svensson and Charlotte Hedenstierna-Jonson, for helping with work in Sigtuna Museum storage – Anders Söderberg, and for warm welcome in Lund – Kulturen museum head of department Conny Hervén and Lund University professor Ingrid Gustin.



Anna at the archaeological seminar  
In Uppsala University

## Results

The second part of our research doesn't seem as saturated as the first one, because we spent a lot of time in the library. But our results are much more evident than the first time, because we have prepared a few texts.

The *main results* of our second trip are a few texts:

- the article about one little-known bone archaeological find from Old Ladoga in context of Late Viking Age art (Anna Slapinia and Nadezhda Tochilova);
- the article about early Romanesque tradition in Northwestern Russia in 11<sup>th</sup> century (Nadezhda Tochilova and Anna Slapinia);
- the article about prolongation and conservation of Viking Art tradition in pre-Mongolian art of Ancient Novgorod (Nadezhda Tochilova);
- part of text about Russian-Scandinavian traditions in Anna Slapinia's doctoral dissertation;
- replenishment and expansion of the catalog of Scandinavian wooden and bone finds (thanks to the research in Kulturen museum in Lund).

## Conclusions

In conclusion, we would like to once again express our gratitude to our colleagues from Sweden and The Sverker Åström Foundation for great time and good results of our fellowship. The second part of our fellowship gave us an opportunity to make really deep and qualitative research based on materials collected during the first trip. We hope that we will publish our

researches soon, and it will be the best evidence of our gratitude to The Sverker Åström Foundation.