

Abstract

This work gives the analysis of iconographic elements which are found on five gold foils. These foils depict two figures which look at each other from their profile. Foils were found in the foundations of the chieftain house in Lofot's islands in Northern Norway, which is from the Migration to the Viking period. For the reason of analysis the author demonstrates three main groups of gold objects – gold bracteates, gold foils and one medallion. On these objects we can find a pair of two figures and these objects were found in Scandinavia. The author presents here the context of such finds, iconographic elements and academic interpretations of the depiction. Author compares the elements such as type of foil, appearance of eyes, posture of man and woman, their dress and hairdress with 91 foils from Scandinavia, and also with bracteates and other objects. She notices the partial concordance among these elements and the other objects and she seeks the iconographic essence and function of each foil from Borg which is later confronted with the theories of the influence of religion.

Because of lack of attributes on the foils, the author's assumption is that there is no general depiction of gods on the foil. On the other hand, each foil has its own story showing people from their common life. According to context of placing the foils in the house in Borg, it might be a model of chieftain and his wife, two lovers, engaging pair, two friends or relatives. In all the examples they participate on collective act which used to be important part of their life in Migration and Viking age period. Placing foils in the house can be seen as religious sacrifices given to the house and the sign of the fact that house is the new symbol of power in the landscape. Foils can also be hidden in order not to be destroyed or stolen in the future. Whichever interpretation can be right, this was unique event of great significance, according to a small number of foils and the fragility of the material of such precious objects.