



Settlement and Lordship in Viking and Early Medieval Scandinavia (MEDIEVAL COUNTRYSIDE)

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This volume aims to define the changing nature of lordship in Viking and early medieval Scandinavia. Advances in settlement archaeology and cultural geography have revealed new aspects of social power in Viking Age and early medieval Scandinavia. The organization of settlement is increasingly well understood and gives evidence of strong social differentiation in rural settlement. Historical research, however, increasingly portrays these societies as characterized by elementary social networks at a personal level rather than at the level of formal institutions. Can these representations be reconciled? When did the possession of land, in the form of manors or large demesne farms, become an important source of power and authority? This question has generated intense debate internationally in recent years, but there is no comprehensive overview for Scandinavia. New sources and approaches allow us to question the traditional view that Scandinavian aristocrats developed from Viking raiders into Christian landlords. Seventeen thematic chapters by leading scholars survey and assess the state of research and provide a new baseline for interdisciplinary discussions. How were social ties structured? How did lordship and dependency materialize in modes of agriculture, settlement, landscape, and monuments? The book traces the power of tributary relations, forged through personal ties, gifts, duties, and feasting in great halls, and their gradual transformation into the feudal bonds of levies and land-rent.

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