



Vikings: Life and Legend

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In the ninth and tenth centuries, the Vikings created a cultural network that spanned four continents: from the Caspian Sea to the North Atlantic and from the Arctic Circle to the Mediterranean. The Viking Age was a period of major change as a result of the Vikings' impact on neighboring areas and the introduction of external influences into Scandinavia. This book explores Viking culture from a global perspective, examining the influences of their varied contacts from around the world and how Viking Scandinavia drew from both Christian Europe and the Islamic world.

The book focuses on the core period of the Viking Age, from the late eighth to the early eleventh centuries. New discoveries by archaeologists and metal detectorists highlight the interconnected nature of the cultures of Europe, Byzantium, and the Middle East.

Vikings accompanies a major exhibition developed jointly by the British Museum, the National Museum of Denmark, and the Museum for Prehistory and Early History in Berlin. Edited by the exhibition curators Gareth Williams, Peter Pentz, and Matthias Wemhoff and with contributions from a number of key experts, the book, with its strong, flowing narrative and integrated illustrations, draws on a wealth of Viking objects to provide a rich and vivid account of the impact of Viking expansion throughout the world.

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Editorial Review

Review

"The book and the exhibition are visually stunning. . . . and the section on 'Belief and Ritual' is fascinating."?Tom Shippey, *London Review of Books*

"Much more than simply a lavish catalog to accompany the exhibition of the same name organized by the National Museum of Denmark, the British Museum, and the Museum für Vor- und Frühgeschichte, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin... this attractive, well-produced volume addresses a comprehensive array of subjects relevant to understanding the material and thought worlds of the Viking Age in northern Europe (roughly AD 750-1150)."?Stephen Mitchell, *Speculum* (October 2015)

"A beautiful, accessible book, with strong interpretive narration that will be enjoyed by Viking enthusiasts, medievalists, artists interested in material culture, and newcomers to the subject."?Library Journal (starred review)

"This volume was written to accompany an exhibition organized by the national museums of Britain, Denmark, and Germany. . . . Contributor Neil Price does an excellent job interpreting belief and ritual for a subject always difficult to treat objectively. The writing is high quality as are the copious illustrations and publication standards. Filled with the latest scholarship, this book would be a valuable acquisition for college and university libraries."?Choice

"A rich and engaging work that offers insights about the worlds of the Viking Age, for both scholars and general readers, *Vikings* is a joy and a surprise to read. . . . Williams, Pentz and Wemhoff (as well as their museum staffs and other authors in text) are to be congratulated for putting together such a gorgeous and substantive work about the age of the Vikings. I am already imagining ways to use it in my World and Western history survey courses."?Thomas J. Rushford, *Itinerario*

"The color photos provide a wonderfully close look at Viking artifacts but also move this exhibit catalog beyond the museum, with lush depictions of countrysides, archival photos of archaeological digs, and art from the era. Enthusiasts and amateurs alike will engage with this modern and cross-cultural take on the Viking age."?Booklist

About the Author

Gareth Williams is Curator of Early Medieval Coins at the British Museum.

Peter Pentz is a Curator of Danish Prehistory at the National Museum of Denmark.

Matthias Wemhoff is Director of the Museum für Vor- und Frühgeschichte, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin.

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