

social occasions. It had a temple for worshipping the gods with feasts and sacrifices, it was a place for judicial assemblies and trade markets as well as for family reunions and marriage contracts. The halls of the Royal Demesne were on the heights. Below were dwelling houses, workshops and outhouses. The thousands of graves surrounding held the king's retainers, the most distinguished families, and all the people who lived there.

A sacrificial grove may also have been used to the west of the "Kings Mounds". Certain trees were sacred and there are still many places named after a sacred grove (lund) saying which gods were sacrificed to there eg. Torslunda, Fröslunda and Närlunda. Of the offerings that were made to the gods in Uppsala horses were the most common animals offered. Most of the meat was first eaten at great sacrificial feasts. Then what was not eaten was hung in the trees of the sacrificial grove.

How can this evidence of a burnt but not rebuilt Royal Hall be interpreted? Surely a king would have been able to rebuild this structure with all the resources at his command. Wladyslaw Duczko of Uppsala Universities Archaeology department offers this explanation (Duczko, W. 2000, 31-36). The Swedish King's Chronicle at the end of the Icelandic *Hervararsaga* notes that the Swedish king Erik Björnsson had two sons, Björn and Anund. On Erik's death the brothers divided the kingdom in half. Björn ruled the city of Birka and Lake Mälaren from nearby Adelsö. This was the king that Ansgar met on his first mission to Sweden. Anund ruled the other half from Gamla Uppsala. Birka was strong economically and politically. Gamla Uppsala was the cult centre of the Swedes and was traditionally where the Viking assembly (ting) met. Also markets were hosted associated with these activities.

It is suggested that Anund craved more power. Viking expeditions had brought back to Sweden not only plunder but the teachings of Christians which included tales of the tremendous wealth and power to be found in the lands of the Christian god. Anund had tried to enlist this god in his favour by proposing before the assembly that the Gamla Uppsala kingdom convert to christianity. The assembly crushed his hopes and the king was furious. His people went against Anund and in the ensuing rebellion the South Hall was burnt down. Anund fled into exile.

A pagan resistance then arose not only in Gamla Uppsala but throughout the kingdom of the Sveas. This was noted in 837AD by the German Bishop Gauthbert who was then expelled from his church at Birka after it had been burnt down and one of his priests killed. Ancient customs were revitalised, public support for the traditional gods shown and art was re-infused with native mythological designs. Gamla Uppsala became the pagan cult centre of the Vikings. The cult grounds were separated from the Kings Halls so the burnt down South Hall was not replaced and its surrounds was used as burial grounds. The new pagan god site was moved to another site. Possibly a new small plateau was constructed under the present day parish church and more responsibility for religious activities given to women with their rising role as priestesses. This is the time of the four boat graves found in the today's vicarage garden, one