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## **ERULI INFLUENCE IN SOUTH SCANDINAVIA – MIGRATION AND REMIGRATION**

### SUMMARY

The author treats the question of the influence of the Eruli in the north and their possible original home in south Scandinavia. The remigration of parts of the Erulic people from southern Europe to Thule (Scandinavia) and settlement near the remaining Gauts (Goths) in the beginning of the sixth century A.D., as described by historian Procopius, is reflected against traces of nomadic Eurasian horse culture in the province of Scania (the finds of Sösdala, Fulltofta and Vennebo) in the 5<sup>th</sup> century. Runestones in the Swedish province of Blekinge and the runic inscriptions *ek erilaR* (possibly “I, the Erule”) are compared to traces of Byzantine influence on the island of Öland (off the south-eastern coast of Sweden). The conclusion is that Erulic and other remigrators who served in the Roman armies might well have had an important influence on Iron Age society in the southern part of the Scandinavian Peninsula.

KEY WORDS: Eruli, Scandinavia, Migration Age, Eurasian nomad culture, Byzantine influence

### **1. Name**

There are different versions of the name. Latin Eruli, Eroli or Heruli and also Eluri (Jordanes) are recorded in the sources. In Byzantine Greek there are likewise several versions.

Sometimes the word for “free man” (*erl*, *eorl*) is connected with the Eruli or else the Old Norse *jara* (struggle). The not uncommon runic inscription *ek erilaR* (Scandinavia) has been suggested to mean “I, the Erule” (Bugge and other scholars, see section 6 underneath). The Greek version Ἐρουλοι may be linked to ἔλη (“swamps”), suggesting the meaning “swamp dwellers”. Egqvist (see section 8) suggests that the name Eruli is related to the dialect word *järl*, *järel*, in the South Swedish district of Varend and the province of Blekinge. It would mean “hardy fellow or warrior” but is also a synonym for *vaerul* or *varulv* (werewolf). The connection is hard to verify (and is to a great extent regarded as out of date by modern researchers), but it is strange that the word should be used exactly in the area believed to be the

home of the Eruli after their remigration (see section 3).

The original home would be:

1. Presumably in some south-eastern Swedish coast district. Jutland and Zealand have been mentioned as possible original home (*Urheimat*). On the other hand, it should be noted, that the Eruli that remigrated in the beginning of the 6<sup>th</sup> century A.D. passed through the land of the Dani on their way back to their home. Ernst Schwarz (1951: 160) places the original home in one or more of the provinces of Scania, Halland, Bleking or Småland, but points to Halland as the most likely area for a remaining Erulian kingdom at the time of the remigration. On the other hand, the Eruli could be an original population in parts of what would later become Denmark and were driven away by the Dani, immigrants in turn from the southern part of the Scandinavian Peninsula (Scania).

2. Later (in the third century A.D.) the Eruli are found on the northern shore of the Black Sea (Sea of Azov). If the Eruli can at all be differentiated from the Goti, there should be an area here where Eruli archaeological finds could be made. It is from here that they ravaged the southern coast of the Black Sea with the Goti moving also out into the Aegean Sea attacking population centres in Greece and Asia Minor.

3. From the northern Black Sea area, the Eruli moved to Illyricum (see section 3 underneath).

4. Finally, we find the Eruli in Italy (see section 3 underneath).

5. The above-mentioned Eruli could be designated as the Eastern Eruli since there possibly also were Eruli somewhere on the continental coast of the English Channel (Western Eruli).

## 2. Ethnic Position

Only meagre evidence exists:

2.1 The Erulic personal names seem to be Scandinavian.

Alvith = "All-wood", "sanctuary-wood" (?)

Fara = the element *-far* is Burgundian, Langobard or Anglian, but above all East Danish.

Fulkaris = Old High German Folch-heri (?). Note the Danish geographical name Fulcarslef on the island of Falster.

Hariso = occurs on a clasp found at Himlingøje on the Danish island of Zealand. Note Old Norse *hersir* = "sheriff".

(H)aruth = compare the Jutlandic people's name Harudes and Norwegian Hordhar. The original Erulic form seems to be (H)aordos (see Procopius, who uses the version Aordos three times).

(H)rodvulf = “honour-wolf” (similar names exist in Denmark and Norway). The popularity of the name Rudolph in Germany might go back to the high status of this Erulic personal name. The element *hrodh* of early kings and priests in Norway, Denmark, and in East Anglian and Jutish dynasties.

2.2 The Eruli were from the beginning ruled by kings, just as were the Scandinavians and the Goti.

2.3 It seems clear that migration of the defeated Danubian Eruli to “Thule” (see Procopius, *History of the Wars*, and underneath in section 3) was a remigration, caused by the desire of these Eruli to assert their traditional right to their old homestead. The natives along the road did not object to their passage on the trek northward. They seem to have had an acknowledged right of remigration. The new homes was to be in the vicinity of the Gauts (= the original Goti) and of the Danes (Jordanes, III: 23). Therefore, the new home would have been in South-eastern Scandinavia.

2.4 Procopius in Book VI, Chapter 14 of his *History of the Wars* relates some brutal customs of the Eruli:

“And they observed many customs which were not in accord with those of other men. For they were not permitted to live either when they grew old or when they fell sick, but as soon as one of them was overtaken by old age or by sickness, it became necessary for him to ask his relatives to remove him from the world as quickly as possible. And these relatives would pile up a quantity of wood to a great height and lay the man on the top of the wood, and then they would send one of the Eruli, but not a relative of the man, to his side with a dagger; for it was not lawful for a kinsman to be the slayer. And when the slayer of their relative had returned, they would straightway burn the whole pile of wood, beginning at the edges. And after the fire had ceased, they would immediately collect the bones and bury them in the earth. And when a man of the Eruli died, it was necessary for his wife, if she laid claim to virtue and wished to leave a fair name behind her, to die not long afterward beside the tomb of her husband by hanging herself with a rope. And if she did not do this, the result was that she was in ill repute thereafter and an offence to the relatives of her husband. Such were the customs observed by the Eruli in ancient times” (Procopius, 1993/VI: xiv 2–7).

These customs have been compared by Eric Elgqvist (1930) with a rite in Varend (on Varend see section 8), an ancient tradition of killing aged people by means of a club. However, the custom is known also in other parts of Scandinavia. In Gautland (Götaland) the custom is known that aged people used to throw themselves from a high rock, the so-called *aeternisstapi* = “the family rock”. In South Jutland a steep cliff was used for the same purpose (Endrupskov Aftaegt). The actual way of performing the deed connects, however, Varend with the Eruli.

It ought to be presumed, therefore, that the Eruli were Scandinavians and that they spoke a Scandinavian dialect (although there are only personal names remaining of the Erulic language). Abroad they were most likely Gothicised (Procopius calls them a Gothic nation).

### 3. Migration and remigration

The original home of the Eruli cannot be identified with precision. There are different theories (for instance the island of Zealand, Denmark). The best evidence for the localisation seems to be Procopius. But also Jordanes (III: 23) is of interest. He writes about the Eruli considering themselves as being the tallest race in Scandinavia and that they, in spite of that, were driven from their homes by the Dani, yet Jordanes does not say anything about the time when the Dani drove out the Eruli. The southern coast of the provinces of Scania or Blekinge seems likely, which would explain relations with the Goti in Prussia, the Rugi in Pomerania and the Chauiones in the Hannover, Germany, area or Friesland. The word *järel* and the custom of killing ageing people might be evidence to the effect of a south-eastern Scandinavian original home.

The Eruli went with the Goti to South Russia in the third century. With the Goti, the Eruli harried Asia Minor in naval raids from 256 A.D. and later. These attacks should in the opinion of this author be regarded as early Viking raids (see also: Pritsak, 1981: 54; Kettenhofen, 1992: 291–313).

In 267 A.D. the Erulic chieftain Naulobatos entered service in the Roman army – the first Scandinavian thus known by name.

In 269 A.D. the Goti and the Eruli fought side by side, but were defeated by Emperor Claudius at Naissus.

In 289 A.D. Erules from the Baltic area, accompanied by Chauiones appear in Gaul, where Saxon pirates have been operating since 286 A.D. together with the Chauici. Between 286 and 292 A.D. Maximian repeatedly drove the invaders beyond the Rhine. Captive Eruli now often appear as mercenaries in Britain, on the Rhine, etc.

About 350 A.D. the Eastern Eruli with their King Halaric were subjugated by the Gothic King Ermanaric (XXIII: 117). Around twenty years later the Eruli and the Goti were subjugated by the Huns, who moved them to Central Europe.

Eastern and Western Eruli were forced to fight each other as mercenaries of the Hun chieftain Attila and of the Roman governor Aetius in 451 A.D.

In 456 A.D. bands of piratical Eruli invaded Galicia (Spain) and about 459 A.D. they ventured as far as the straits of Gibraltar.

From 458 to 460 A.D. and from 476 to 480 A.D. the Erule Timotheos was patriarch of Alexandria. It must be noted here that doubts have been expressed as to Timotheos' Erulic origin. But during the period a number of Eruli had prominent positions in the Byzantine administration.

In 480 A.D. the Eruli destroyed Joviacum (Schlögen between Passau and Linz). Others, with the Rugi and the Sciri, had entered Roman service in Italy and had contributed to Odovacar's *coup d'état* in 476 A.D., when he dethroned the last West Roman Emperor.

In 489 A.D. the Ostrogothic King Theodoric defeated Odovacar and became the first King of Italy.

In about 500 A.D. Theodoric's minister Cassiodorus summoned the Eruli, the Varini, and Thuringi to ally themselves with the Goths against the Franks. The Erulian king (most likely Hrodulf) became "son-in-arms" of Theodoric.

But the Eruli around this time disappear from history. Sometime between 505 and 512 A.D. King Hrodulf was defeated and killed by the Langobardi, whom he has previously subjugated. Some of the scattered Eruli survivors were accepted in the East Roman Empire. Others remigrated to "Thule". The remigration is described by Procopius as follows:

"When the Eruli, being defeated by the Lombards in the above-mentioned battle, migrated from their ancestral homes, some of them, as has been told by me above, made their home in the country of Illyricum, but the rest were averse to crossing the Ister River, but settled in the very extremity of the world; at any rate, these men, led by many of the royal blood, traversed all the nations of the Sclaveni one after the other, and after next crossing a large tract of barren country, they came to the Varni, as they are called. After these they passed by the nations of the Dani, without suffering violence at the hands of the barbarians there. Coming thence to the ocean, they took to the sea, and putting in at Thule, remained there on the island" (Procopius, 1993/ VI: xv 1–4).

That they settled close to the Gauti (*götar*) is stated in the *History of the Wars*, VI, xv: 26:

"Thus, then, do the inhabitants of Thule live. And one of their most numerous nations is the Gauti, and it was next to them that the incoming Eruli settled at the time in question."

From 530 to 553 A.D. Eruli mercenaries were fighting everywhere in the Empire: against Slavs, Caucasians, Persians, Vandali, and Goti.

In 566 or 567 A.D. the Eruli in Italy revolted and their leader Sindval(d) was hanged. Justinian as a result was hailed as Herulicus. This is the final mention of the Eruli in historical sources.

Before 526 A.D. the Northern Eruli were subjugated by the Danes, according to the Norwegian King Hrodulf who visited Theodoric in Italy (Jordanes III: 23). There are doubts concerning the time this happened. Was it before or after remigration of the Eruli to "Thule"? The question must remain unanswered.

#### **4. Nomadic Influence in South Scandinavia – Sösdala, Fulltofta and Vennebo**

The finds at Sösdala and Fulltofta in central Scania, a province in southern Sweden (for more on Scania see Haggman, 1998) seem to prove that there had been a nomadic influence during the 5<sup>th</sup> century in the area. The booty sacrifices at

Sösdala (Forssander, 1937), Fulltofta (Norberg, 1931) and Vennebo (Norberg, 1929) contain around 280 silver and bronze objects, that most likely are from three bridles and five saddles found in 1929/1930 (Sösdala I) and in 1961 (Sösdala II). Most of the objects had been deliberately destroyed in a violent way. Sösdala I gave its name to the so-called Sösdala Style, and had been dated to around 400–430/440 A.D. Sösdala II has been dated to the late 5<sup>th</sup> century (Bunte, 1960/61).

It has been noted in the literature (Fabech, 1991) that the finds were made about 300 feet from one of the largest Iron Age grave fields in Sweden – Vätteryd. Most likely there is a connection.

The Fulltofta finds contain some 20 bronze objects from at least one bridle and saddle. The objects were found as early as 1876 about one mile from a large Iron Age graveyard at Nunnäs. The Fulltofta objects are probably from the first half of the 5<sup>th</sup> century.

The Vennebo finds contain about 40 objects from probably four bridles and two saddles. They were deliberately destroyed and are dated from 400–450 A.D.

The three finds differ from other booty finds, which have in Scandinavia commonly been sunk in water or in moors. These horse-related objects had been buried on dry land and water was close at hand (Fulltofta and Vennebo close to lakes and Sösdala close to moors). It is likely that the parts of bridles and saddles in question were a sacrifice to a god connected to horses.

No other finds similar to the three mentioned above have been made in Scandinavia but similar finds exist in East and Central Europe. Among those are the new Hunnic finds at Zovtnev Velikotomac and Pannonhalma and reinterpretation of older finds at Jendrzychowice and Szeged-Nagyézköz (Tomka, 1986; Kürti, 1987).

Some of the Hungarian finds were similarly destroyed before being placed in the earth, but no graves have been found at these places. There seems to have been a habit among the nomadic peoples to break and destroy parts of the saddles and bridles and throw them next to the grave, after which they were buried not far from the grave in honour of the dead.

A comparison with the Scanian finds shows great similarities. In both cases the objects were destroyed, they were put in shallow holes in the earth. The finds are from the same period.

With the help of these Scanian finds it should be possible to make a connection between South Sweden and Central Europe, concerning also religious rites. We must understand the Scanian finds as indicating not only trading connections but likewise knowledge that the local population had of the traditions among the Eurasian nomads.

It is only natural to link this knowledge of religious rites involving horses to the remigrating Eruli. As mentioned above the Eruli remigrated to Scandinavia (Thule) in the beginning of the 6<sup>th</sup> century, but remigraters might well have come earlier in smaller groups. This Scandinavian people for shorter or longer periods were in contact with, in turn, the Hunni, Sarmati and Avari. The Eruli, as well as the

Goti, could well have come into contact with myths and rituals of the nomadic peoples. Naturally these myths and rituals had close connections to horses.

The three finds dealt with in this section are proof of the great mobility of a large number of Germanic peoples during the Great Migration Age and earlier.

The South Swedish landscape with its woods, lakes and rivers is not very suitable for a lifestyle similar to that on the Eurasian steppes. But the tradition to treat the horse as a sacred animal could have been kept after the return to Scandinavia.

## **5. Byzantine Influence – the Island of Öland**

On the island of Öland, off the south-eastern coast of Sweden and close to the mainland (in modern time connected with a bridge), there is a large number of Iron Age forts. The most important, Eketorp, has been reconstructed (Royal Academy..., 1976).

Several researchers have concluded that there is a close similarity between these forts and Byzantine fortresses. Joachim Werner (1949: 266 f) has especially compared the Ismantorp fort with Late Roman-Byzantine fortifications of the 6<sup>th</sup> century in the region between the Danube and the Balkans, especially Sadovec in Bulgaria. This fortress is only one of many similar buildings dating from the fifth and sixth centuries. The fortresses in inner Noricum and cities like Teurnia in the Dravus Valley and the forts of “Claustra Italiae” were built in the same way as Sadovec. These were situated on heights, had buildings along the fort wall and in the interior of the fortress, very similar to Ismantorp. Werner’s conclusion is that the knowledge of fort building of this type must have come to Scandinavia through soldiers who had served in the Byzantine army. A large number of Byzantine coins from the 5<sup>th</sup> century have been found on Öland. Werner’s view is that the remigrating legionaries also brought the coins. The coins all came to Öland between 457–490 A.D., when in Italy Germanic soldiers of fortune made up the large part of the armies of Rikimer and Odovacar.

Öland is close to “Eruliland” in southern Scandinavia. The coins are too early to come from the large remigration at the beginning of the 6<sup>th</sup> century but as in the case of Scania (see section 4) quite possibly remigrators came to south Scandinavia during the whole century 400–500 A.D.

At Skedemosse, a moor on Öland, a large sacrificial grave has been discovered with bridles, chains, and remains of around 50 horses and 30 humans. It has been dated to between 200 and 500 A.D.

Werner (1949: 270) also concludes that between 480 and 490 A.D. there was some sort of catastrophe on Öland, when the local population was attacked by a superior enemy (early Eruli remigrators?).

## 6. *ek erilaR* and *hariuha* – Erulic Origin?

There are eight inscriptions in Sweden, Denmark and Norway containing the word *erilaR*. For a very long period, there have been extensive controversies whether this word is related to the name Eruli and with the Icelandic social term *jarl*. There can, it seems, be no phonomorphological objections raised to comparing *erilaR* with *jarl*. The latter could indeed be viewed as a derivative form from *erilaR*. Some researchers (for instance Otto von Friesen), have objected to this by claiming that *jarl* would have to have the protoform *\*erlaz*. E. A. Makaev (1996), however, is of the opinion that *\*erilaz*, *\*erulaz* and *\*erlaz* are phonomorphological variants. *ErilaR* lost its connection with the name of the people Eruli at a very early stage and instead acquired the meaning of a specific social term.

Makaev believes that it is at present impossible to determine the exact meaning of the term.

“It is possible that the name Heruli became a common designation for those who engaged in runic writing, a general designation for runemasters. If it is at all possible to view the Heruli as the forerunners of the Vikings, as the representatives of a military caste, rather than as an ethnic group per se, and to see in them the ideal transmitters of runic writing and other elements of culture from southern Europe to Scandinavia... then one can draw certain data from the Song of Rig (from the Older Edda), where it states that the knowledge of runes put one in a higher circle of that society...” (Makaev, 1996: 39–40)

Makaev makes an attempt to construct a chronology.

Runic writing appeared in the first and second century A.D. This is about the same time that Germanic tribes started to migrate. In the third to fourth centuries A.D. Jutland peoples, the Angli, Jutes, and Saxoni migrated to England, which could have opened up Denmark for colonisation by the Dani. Some role in the formation of the people of the Dani might have been played by the Eruli.

To shed light on the Eruli question Makaev also compares the runic personal name *hariuha* with the name of the Eruli king Swartuha (Latin Suartuas) from Procopius:

“They [the Eruli] therefore sent envoys to Byzantium begging the emperor to send them a ruler of his own choice. And he straightaway sent them one of the Eruli who had long been sojourning in Byzantium, Suartuas by name” (Procopius, 1993/VI: xv 32–33).

Furthermore Makaev also compares the ending *-uha* with the name of the Erulic king Ochus, of whom Procopius writes:

“The Eruli, displaying their beastly and fanatical character against their own king, one Ochus by name, suddenly killed the man for no good reason at all, laying against him no other charge than they wished to be without a king thereafter” (Procopius, 1993/VI: xiv 38).



It was in fact a widespread tradition among the Scandinavian peoples to sacrifice kings. Makaev mentions the cases of the Kings Domaldi and Olof Trelgja of the Svear (Swedes). In the case of Domaldi there had been a number of crop failures. King Olof was sacrificed to Odin.

## 7. Eruli in Blekinge?

The general view in Swedish research (Lindqvist, 1923; von Friesen, 1918) has been that the Eruli settled in the province of Blekinge, mainly on the Lister Peninsula. Basis for that assumption has been several runestones found in the area: Stentofte, Gummarp, Istaby, and Sölvesborg. Especially the Stentofte stone contains an inscription that has been interpreted as relating to immigrants:

“The settlers,  
the newcomers  
gave Hathuvolf gifts,  
poured riches over Hariwolf.”  
(Linsqvist, 1916: 119)

Schwartz (1951: 159), however, doubts that the inscription refers to Eruli. First they were not “newcomers” to the area and secondly the Stentofte stone has been dated 620 A.D., around a century after the probable arrival of the remigrating Eruli.

On the Gummarp stone Hathuvolf is also mentioned and the Istaby stone contains in addition to Hathuvolf and Hariwolf also Haeruvolf. So in fact we are probably dealing with names of three Erulic kings on the Lister Peninsula.

Naturally there is speculation of a connection between Hathuvolf, Harivolf and the well-known name of the Erulian King Hrodvulf (Rodolfus or Rodulfus), mentioned by both Procopius in his *History of the Wars* (VI: xiv 14: 11–21 and Paulus Diaconus in *Historia Langobardorum* (I: xx). According to Procopius, Hrodvulf was killed 505 A.D.

The Lister Peninsula on the border between Blekinge and Scania is regarded as a natural choice for immigrants to settle. It is strategically situated for trading and sailing and its hinterland Varend was suitable for agriculture. The peninsula is close both to the rich Scania, to Blekinge and the island of Bornholm.

## 8. A Few Bibliographic Remarks on Literature in the 1980s and 1990s

Swedish Professor Alvar Ellegård in the 1980s presented a new theory on the Eruli (1987): they was not a people but a loose group of Germanic warriors that came into being in the late third century in the region north of the Danube limes that extends roughly from Passau to Vienna. Several of them were recruited into

the Roman army in the fourth century. However, they also continued to exist as an independent Germanic group. Like other such groups they were under aristocratic leadership.

Ellegård accepts that a party of the Eruli consisting of the royal clan and its followers trekked north and settled in Scandinavia, while the main body remained. The Eruli then gradually lost their identity not because they were exterminated, but because they ceased to call themselves Eruli.

He also states that there is no real evidence that the Eruli originated in Scandinavia. Instead they were, as he claims, a Germanic warrior band organising themselves in continental Europe.

Against this view one can say that there is no historical proof for such an interpretation and Procopius does call the Eruli “a Gothic nation (= ἔθνος)”.

The remigration to “Thule” according to Procopius is indeed a strong indication of a Scandinavian origin. Although Ellegård’s theory does not accept the remigration to Scandinavia (for with a remigration there must be an original migration), there are indeed a number of indicators of Scandinavian origin (the customs concerning the treatment of the elderly and the personal names mentioned above).

Ellegård’s article is therefore mainly useful because it provides a thorough inventory of existing sources on the Eruli.

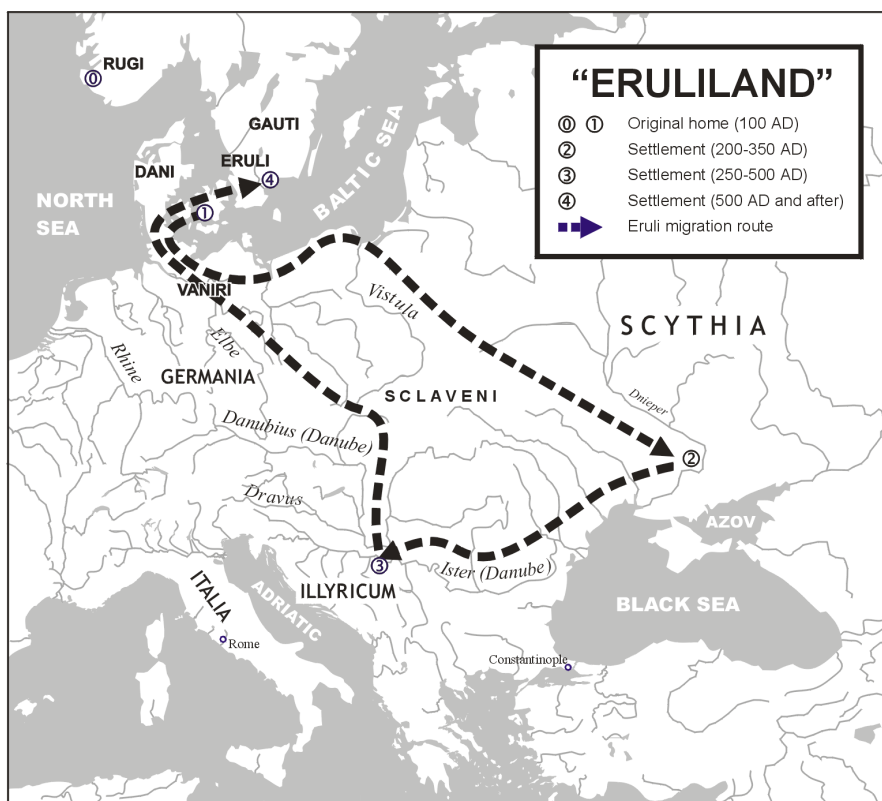
A valuable 1990s addition to the literature on the Eruli is an article by Martin Taylor (1990). Taylor states that “the Erulians” celebrated “return” to Scandinavia in the beginning of the sixth century, and indicates that they could have played an exceptional role in cultural contact between northern and southern Europe”. In the same context, Omeljan Pritsak refers to researchers’ views concerning the Eruli, that “they organised the [Odin] cult, until then unknown in Scandinavia, established metal industries of the South German type (e.g., enamel), initiated a land reform (the Herulian acre), instituted earl (< *erilaR*) and transmitted the Gothic sagas to the north” (1981: 48).

Taylor also believes that it is impossible to reconstruct the meaning of Eruli on Germanic evidence alone. He, thus, attempts to seek Indo-European roots. The name is, according to Taylor) related to the *jarl* (chieftain) words, but *erilaR* cannot be equated with any of them.

In a recent book (Anderron and Herschend, 1997) the authors hesitatingly admit that the Byzantine influence in South Scandinavia probably is the result of more than trade only. Surprisingly, however, Anderson and Herschend manage to avoid mentioning the Eruli at all as possible transmitters of cultural influence from southern Europe. Yet they admit (1997: 114) that the construction of the Eketorp fort on Öland was influenced by Roman building technique. Also at one point Herschend states: “The importance of the trekking of the eastern Germanic tribes, from a Scandinavian perspective, is proof of the keeping of direct contacts with the areas, which the Germanic kingdoms in the East Roman Empire in their own historiography regard as their original home, for it means that the tradition of an original home has old roots (p. 126, my translation from Swedish)”.

## 9. Conclusions

An attempt has been made in this article to present evidence of contacts between the cultural spheres of south-eastern Europe and South Scandinavia. The finds in Central Scania (Sösdala, Fulltofta, and Vennebo) show a connection to customs and religious ceremonies based on mounted nomadic influence in the 5<sup>th</sup> century. Byzantine fort-building and settlement techniques seem to have been known on the island of Öland. Both Scania and the island of Öland are close to the area here described as “Eruliland”. Scandinavian researchers have taken a keen interest in the Eruli. As mentioned above the Swedish philologist Otto von Friesen (see section 8) suggested that the Eruli could be located in the area of Varend in southern Sweden due to the fact that Varend differed from other Swedish regions with regard to the laws of inheritance on the female side. However, the main conclusion must be that the Eruli, after initially settling in Blekinge and Varend also spread to parts of the provinces of Småland and Västergötland (see the map of “Eruliland”).



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## **ERULSKI UTJECAJ U JUŽNOJ SKANDINAVIJI – MIGRACIJA I REMIGRACIJA**

### SAŽETAK

Autor obrađuje utjecaj Erula na sjeveru Skandinavije i mogući smještaj njihove domovine u južnoj Skandinaviji. Remigracija eruskoga naroda s južne Evrope u Tul (Skandinaviju) te naseljavanje u susjedstvu preostalih Gauta (Gota) na početku 6. stoljeća n.e., kako je to opisao povjesničar Prokopije, može se promatrati po tragovima nomadske evrazijske konjaničke kulture u pokrajini Skaniji (nalazišta Sösdala, Fulltofta i Vennebo) u 5. stoljeću. Rune iz švedske pokrajine Blekinge i runski natpisi *ek erilaR* (što je možda značilo "Ja Erul"), mogu se usporediti s tragovima bizantskoga utjecaja na otoku Öland (uz južnu obalu Švedske). Autorov je zaključak da su erulski i drugi povratnici koji su služili u rimskim postrojbama vjerojatno imali važan utjecaj na željeznodopska društva u južnom dijelu Skandinavskoga poluotoka.

KLJUČNE RIJEČI: Eruli, Skandinavija, doba seoba naroda, evrazijska nomadska kultura, bizantski utjecaji

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## **HERULERINFLYTANDE I SÖDRA SKANDINAVIEN – UTVANDRING OCH ÅTERVANDRING**

### SAMMANFATTNING

Författaren behandlar frågan om herulernas inflytande i Skandinavien och frågan om folkets urhem finns på södra delen av den skandinaviska halvön. Återvandringen av en del av herulerfolket från södra Europa till Thule (Skandinavien) och bosättning i närheten av de kvarvarande goterna (gauterna) i början av 500-talet e.Kr. som den beskrivs av historikern Prokopios speglas mot spåren av nomadisk euro-asiatisk ryttarkultur i Skåne (fynden i Sösdala, Fulltofta och Vennebo) på 400-talet. Runstenar i Blekinge och runinskriften 'ek ErilaR' (möjligen betydande 'Jag, erulen') jämförs med spåren av bysantinskt inflytande på Öland. Slutsatsen är att heruliska och andra återvandrare som tjänstgjort i den romerska armén mycket väl kan ha haft ett betydande inflytande på järnålderssamhället i de södra delarna av den skandinaviska halvön.

NYCKELORD: heruler, Skandinavien, folkvandringstiden, euro-asiatisk nomadkultur, bysantinskt inflytande