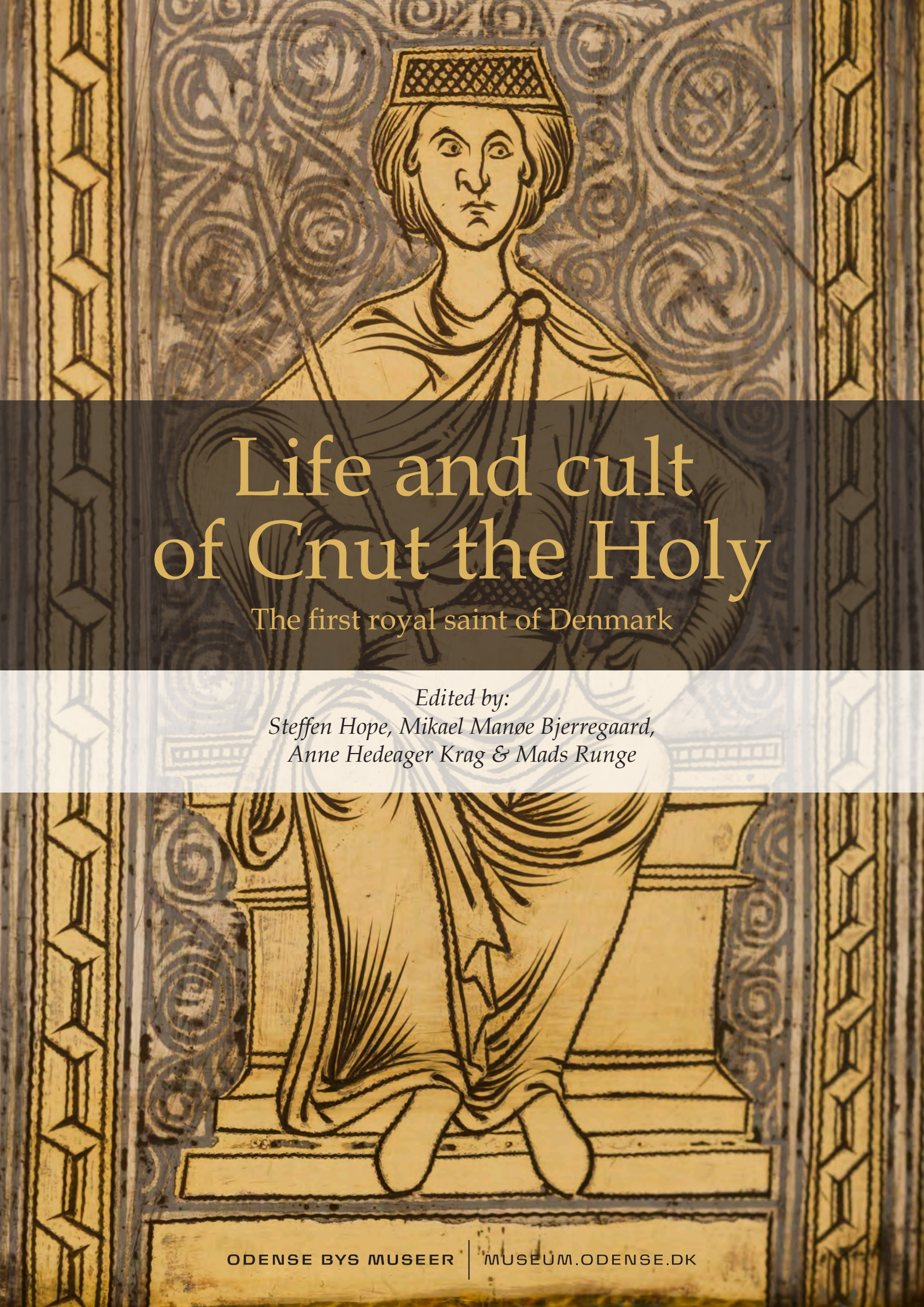

Life and cult of Cnut the Holy

The first royal saint of Denmark

Edited by:
Steffen Hope, Mikael Manøe Bjerregaard,
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Report from an interdisciplinary research seminar in Odense.
November 6th to 7th 2017

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Frontcover: Detail from a St Oswald reliquary in the Hildesheim Cathedral Museum, c. 1185-89.

Backcover: Reliquary containing the reamains of St Cnut in the crypt of St Cnut's Church.
Photo: Peter Helles Eriksen, 2017.

Distribution:
Odense City Museums
Overgade 48
DK-5000 Odense C
museum@odense.dk
www.museum.odense.dk

University Press of Southern Denmark
Campusvej 55
DK-5230 Odense M
press@forlag.sdu.dk
www.universitypress.dk

Content

Contributors

Jakob Tue Christensen
Odense City Museums
Overgade 48, DK-5000 Odense C
e-mail: jtc@odense.dk

Mikael Manøe Bjerregaard
Odense City Museums
Overgade 48, DK-5000 Odense C
e-mail: mimb@odense.dk

Mads Runge
Odense City Museums
Overgade 48, DK-5000 Odense C
e-mail: mtr@odense.dk

Anne Hedeager Krag
Saxo-Instituttet
University of Copenhagen
Karen Blixens Vej 8, DK-2300 København S
e-mail: a.hedeager@gmail.com

Thomas Guntzelnick Poulsen
Museum Østjylland
Stemannsgade 2, DK-8900 Randers C
e-mail: tgp@museumoj.dk

Jesper Hansen
Odense City Museums
Overgade 48, DK-5000 Odense C
e-mail: jesha@odense.dk

Paul Gazzoli
Austrian Academy of Sciences
Institut für Mittelalterforschung
Hollandstraße 11-13, 3. Stock
1020 Wien, Austria
e-mail: Paul.Gazzoli@oeaw.ac.at

Marie Bønløkke Missuno
University of Aarhus
Institut for Kultur og Samfund
Nordre Ringgade 1, DK-8000 Aarhus
e-mail: mabm@qeqqata.gl

Steffen Hope
Linnaeus University
Department of Cultural Sciences
P. G. Vejdes väg, S-351 95 Växjö
e-mail: steffenabhope@gmail.com

Nils Holger Petersen
University of Copenhagen
Faculty of Theology
Karen Blixens Plads 16, DK-2300 København S
e-mail: nhp@teol.ku.dk

Gale R. Owen-Crocker
The University of Manchester (retired)
e-mail: groc@manchester.ac.uk
181, Chester Road, Hazel Grove,
Stockport SK7 6EN, United Kingdom
e-mail: Gale.owencrocker@ntlworld.com

Georges Kazan
University of Turku
Department of Archaeology
Geotalo, 1st floor, Akatemiankatu 1
FI-20014 Turun yliopisto
e-mail: georges.kazan@utu.fi

Tom Higham
University of Oxford
Research Laboratory for Archaeology
and the History of Art
South Parks Road, Oxford OX1 3QY
United Kingdom
e-mail: thomas.higham@rlaha.ox.ac.uk

Øystein Ekroll
Nidaros Cathedral
Nidaros Domkirkes Restaureringsarbeider,
Bispegaten 11, N-7012 Trondheim
e-mail: oeystein.ekroll@nidarosdomen.no

Henrik Ågren
University of Uppsala
Department of History
Engelska parken
Thunbergsvägen 3A,
S-751 26 Uppsala
e-mail: Henrik.Agren@hist.uu.se

Introduction

By Mads Runge, Steffen Hope, Mikael Manøe Bjerregaard and Anne Hedeager Krag

In 1986, to mark the 900th anniversary of the murder of King Cnut IV in the Church of Saint Alban in Odense, the *Book of Cnut* (*Knuds-bogen*) was published. The volume brought together specialists from several disciplines and shed light on different aspects of the life and cult of Cnut as king and saint. Since then, archaeological excavations in Odense, as well as recent national and international research on the cult of Saint Cnut, have provided scholars with new information about the life and times of Cnut. Furthermore, recent scholarship within medieval studies has resulted in a range of studies which allow for innovative comparisons with the Cnut material.

This recent academic output – both in Denmark and abroad – has coincided with an increased interest from local public institutions. The Church of Saint Cnut and the Odense City Archive have initiated a collaboration with the purpose of communicating the story of Saint Cnut's relics in the crypt beneath the church to a wider audience. In addition, Odense City Museums have renewed the focus on the early history of Odense by the implementation of the project *Cnut's Odense – the Viking city*, which includes research, exhibitions and on site dissemination at key locations in the city (https://museum.odense.dk/centrum/urbane-transformationer/knuds-odense)

With the interdisciplinary seminar behind the present publication – organized in cooperation between the research centre CENTRUM at Odense City Museums, Centre for Medieval Studies at University of Southern Denmark and senior researcher Anne Hedeager Krag – we brought together both national and international experts. The aim was to bring forth new aspects of Cnut's life and afterlife and to put these in a wider, international context. By doing so we aimed to lay the basis for future research about Cnut, and to form the basis for further dissemination of the latest discoveries pertaining to Cnut and his time. To be able to fully use the seminar as a groundwork for future research a published version of the lectures is essential. In this perspective we are pleased that almost all speakers have had the opportunity to publish their papers.

The seminar had four sessions: *Life and being of Cnut the Holy*, *The hagiography from the time of king Cnut*, *Relics from the time of king Cnut* and *Saint kings and their influence on later urban development*. The presenters came from many parts of Europe, from museums, universities and from a broad variety of academic disciplines and did thereby cover the many aspects of Cnut, his afterlife, the surrounding society and relevant international parallels. The composition of expertise and academic disciplines contributed to fruitful plenary discussions and more informal talks in smaller groups. On this background the basis for a multitude of new collaborations emerged.

It is the hope of the editors that the present publication will be of relevance for future research in the life and being of Cnut the Holy and other saint kings as well as their effect on the societies in which they functioned, both in life and in afterlife and thereby be a pertinent supplement to the research presented in the *Book of Cnut* more than 30 years ago.

We would like to thank all participants in the seminar and not least the speakers and authors for their contributions.

Life and cult of Cnut the Holy – The first royal saint of Denmark. Interdisciplinary research seminar in Odense. November 6th to 7th 2017

Day 1: Life and being of Cnut the Holy

10-10.30: Welcome, coffee/tea & rolls

10.30-11: Jakob Tue Christensen, Odense City Museums: *Odense before and after the canonization of Cnut*

11-11.30: Mikael Manøe Bjerregaard, Odense City Museums: *The archaeological Sources on the killing of Cnut.*

11.30-12: Anne Hedeager Krag, University of Copenhagen: *The silks from Cnut's and Benedict's Shrines.*

12-14.30: Lunch and guided tour in the special exhibition (incl. the walk to/from the Convent to Møntergården).

14.30-15: Thomas Guntzelnick Poulsen, Museum Østjylland: *The minting system during Cnut's reign.*

15-15.30: Jesper Hansen, Odense City Museums: *King Cnut's deed of gift and settlement structure in 1085.*

15.30-16: Coffee

16-16.30: Paul Gazzoli, University of Cambridge: *Erik Ejegod, foreign connections and the cult of Cnut.*

16.30-17: Marie Bønløkke Missuno, University of Aarhus: *From Cnut the Great to Cnut the Holy: England and Denmark in the 11th century.*

18-: Banquet.

Day 2: Saint literature, relics and urban development

9-9.30: Coffee/tea & bread

The hagiography from the time of king Cnut

9.30-10: Fiona Fritz, Christian-Albrechts-Universität zu Kiel: *Gesta Swenomagni and the early Cnut-hagiography.*

10-10.30: Steffen Hope, University of Southern Denmark: *Cnut seen in the light of the contemporary hagiography.*

10.30-11: Nils Holger Petersen, University of Copenhagen: *Comparison of cult and literature between Cnut Rex and Cnut Lavard.*

Relics from the time of king Cnut

11-11.30: Gale Owen-Crocker, University of Manchester: *Textiles in Christian graves.*

11.30-12: Georges Kazan, University of Oxford: *New methods, strontium; AMS-dating of relics.*

12-12.30: Philippe George, University of Liege: *Relics – The fourth power.*

12.30-14: Lunch (incl. walking to/from the Convent to Møntergården).

Saint kings and their influence on later urban development

14-14.30: Øystein Ekroll, Nidarosdomen, Trondheim: *"Rex et martiris" – constructing the early cult St Olav of Norway 1030 – 1180 (Trondheim, king 1015-1028).*

14.30-15: Henrik Ågren, University of Uppsala: *Eric the Holy – Father of the Nation or idol? (Uppsala, king 1150-1160).*

15-15.30: Coffee

15.30-16: Karsten Fledelius, University of Copenhagen: *From the first to the second holy Cnut and the connections to the east.*

16-16.30: Lars Bisgaard, University of Southern Denmark: *Cnut the Holy as patron saint.*

Odense before and after the canonization of Cnut

By Jakob Tue Christensen, Mikael Manøe Bjerregaard & Mads Runge

Introduction

King Cnut IV was killed on July the 10th 1086 in St Alban's Church in Odense, and in the year 1100 he was canonized as St Cnut and became Denmark's first royal saint. The reliquary with Cnut's earthly remains became an important focal point of pilgrimage, and it was an important part of the background for the establishment of a number of ecclesiastical institutions (Nyberg 1982: 159; Johannsen *et al.* 1998-2001: 1729). Cnut therefore was of great significance in terms of how the town of Odense developed after his death, and even to this day he maintains a key position in the identity of the city, for example, as the central figure in the city arms. But what was Odense like at the time of Cnut IV's reign, and how did Cnut really leave his stamp on the town – during his life as well as after his death?

Below, guided by these questions, a number of

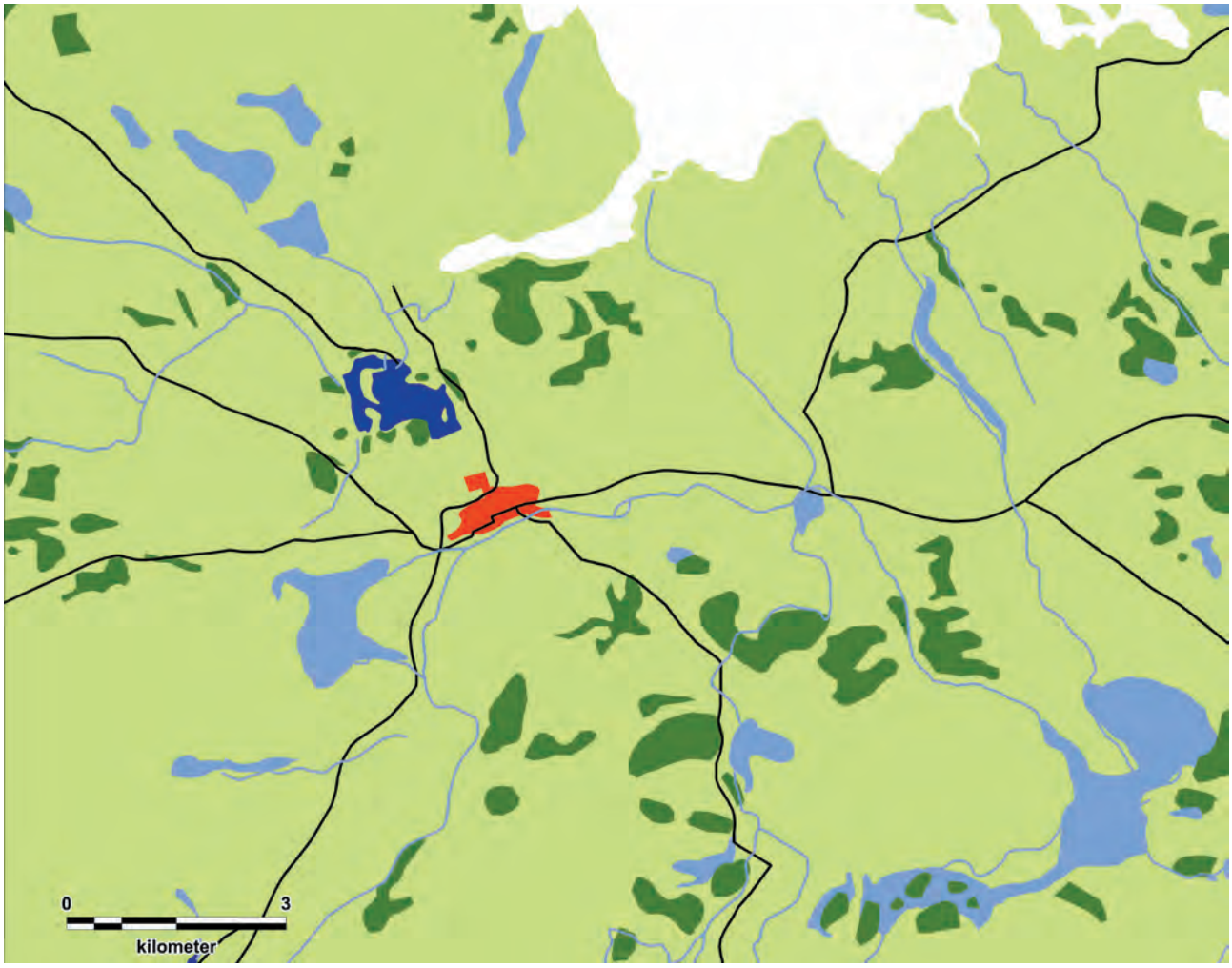


Fig. 1: Odense's location in the landscape marked on the Royal Society Map from the second half of the nineteenth century (digitized by Peder Dam). Red: Odense, light green: open land, dark green: forest, dark blue: lake, light blue: meadow/bog, thin light blue line: watercourse, black line: highway. Background map: © *The Agency for Data Supply and Efficiency.* Drawing: Mads Runge.

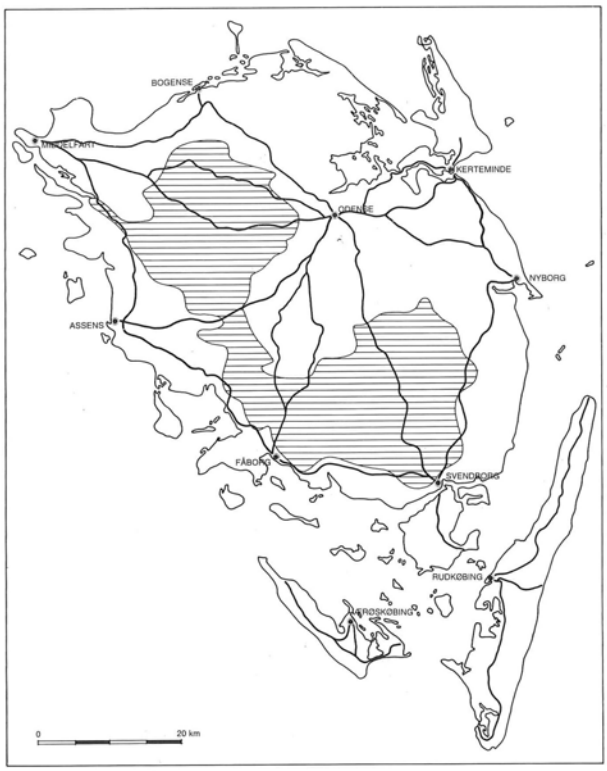
topics are dealt with, such as the topographical situation of Odense, the development of the town in the centuries prior to the official establishment of Odense as an episcopal centre in 988, the establishment of Odense as a royally organised medieval town during the years prior to Cnut's death, and finally, the town's expansion following the canonization of Cnut.

The topographical situation of Odense

Odense was established on a level plateau which is traversed by the steep slopes down to the melt-water valley through which runs the river Odense Å. Except for the Viking ring fort Nonnebakken, which was located south of the river, during the Viking Age and the medieval period the town was generally located north of the river. Two sand bars in the river bed formed part of the crossing between the areas north and south of the river. The western bar is located near the present crossing, with Klaregade north of the river and Hunderupvej towards the south, whereas the eastern bar is located near the present Frederiksbroen. The western crossing connected a workshop area from the 800-900s towards the north, with Nonnebakken towards the south, which may indicate that this crossing is of some age. The eastern crossing appears to be later and probably dates to the medieval period. These dates reflect a general relocation of the town's centre from the west towards the east.

Analyses of the course of Odense Å, from the mouth of the inlet into the town, suggests that the water level of the river may have been roughly the same in the Viking Age as it is today, and that the stream's meandering course prevented larger Viking ships from sailing upriver (Runge & Henriksen 2018:4ff) (fig. 1). Contrary to the understanding of earlier scholars, it appears that access from the sea was not a prerequisite for the establishment of Viking Age towns, which seem to generally have been established some distance from the coast, providing protection against enemy attacks (Ulriksen 2011; Ulriksen *et al.* 2014: 154ff.).

However, it is thought that the association with the sea to some degree influenced the location of Odense, and it is assumed that there may have been a landing place or berth in the lower part of the river, near the mouth of the inlet, where it was possible to transfer goods to carts or other small vehicles. This allowed goods to be carried further up the river to Odense. However, this landing place remains hypothetical. While Odense's situation in relation to local waterways is open for discussion, the town's location in relation to overland traffic routes was clearly advantageous. The town has a central position in relation to the east-west orientated traffic across Funen, and several of the island's other traffic routes also meet at Odense. The roads follow natural topographical features, and some of these roads are presumably old (Henriksen 2002: 174ff.). As Odense gradually became the centre of the island, the situation developed into a self-perpetuating process, where new roads were automatically orientated towards the town (fig. 2).



Fig, 2: Funen's main medieval land routeways. Based on Maps of The Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters 1780 and 1783. The hatched area marks the Funen highlands. After Jørgen Elsøe Jensen (1992: 11).

It is thought that the association of the town with the so-called 'Odin's Vi' may also have been important in terms of deciding where to establish the town (Kousgård Sørensen 1969: 13 ff.; Henriksen 2013; Christensen 2014: 188.). 'Odin's Vi' was a significant cult location where Odin was worshipped. Odense is named after this site, the existence of which has not yet been archaeologically proven. Other 'Odins Vi' place names in Denmark exist and might indicate that places for worshipping Odin was not limited to Odense (Christensen 2010:84f.).

Fig. 3: Locations of the emporia Ribe, Hedeby, Birka and Kaupang. Drawing: Mads Runge.

Odense before AD 988

A new perspective on the earliest urbanization of southern Scandinavia

Earlier models for the urbanization of southern Scandinavia focused on a two-step development, where the first step involved the establishment of the emporia of Ribe, Hedeby, Kaupang and Birka (fig. 3). The establishment of these emporia has been dated to the 700-800s, and they have been interpreted as trading stations or centres associated with Frankish trading networks unconcerned with the local hinterland of the trading stations. The second step traditionally involved the establishment of the towns of the eleventh century by royal initiative, where the king and the church represented the central powers of the time. Odense was – along with Roskilde, Viborg, Lund, and other towns – perceived as a product of the model's second step. The fortified town of Aros (Aarhus), which was established around AD 900, has been suggested as a kind of hybrid station, involving elements of steps one and two (Kristensen and Poulsen 2016: 47f.; Linaa 2016: 33).

A more nuanced version of this two-step model has recently been suggested. The new model suggests that a number of (proto-) towns gradually developed during the 800-900s, based on their local hinterlands and currents in society regarding trading patterns, etc. This group of town-like structures filled the void between the emporia and the medieval towns, and it suggests a tripartite model for the urbanization of southern Scandinavia (Runge & Henriksen 2018: 19ff.).

This model is based on the archaeological and historical sources from Odense during the 700-1100s summarised below. The conclusion is that Odense was established gradually as a (proto-) town during the period from the end of the 700s to AD 1000. However, as early as AD 900 the activities in Odense were probably widespread or significant, which identified it as an actual town, characterized by pit houses focusing on specialized crafts associated with trade, as well as a permanent settlement within a roughly 450m long zone along the northern side of the river. Reconsideration of the archaeological sources relating to the other towns established by royal decree during the eleventh century may suggest that they also initially developed on the basis of local factors before any serious involvement of royal powers (Runge & Henriksen 2018: 19ff.).

The gradual development of Odense, 750-988

A major challenge to interpretations based on the archaeological record from Odense is the record's fragmentary nature. The traces of the town are relatively few and have predominantly been identified in minor excavation trenches, with limited opportunities for further evaluation. This situation is especially true for the western and oldest part of Odense, but the situation in the eastern part of the city centre is better, because of large excavations connected with the 'Fra Gade til By-projekt' ('From street to city-project').

The earliest traces in Odense of an actual town-like character were discovered during the investigation of sites at Mageløs and Vestergade 70-74 around the Odense Å crossing near the Klaregade-Hunderupvej routeway. On a promontory on the northern side of the river, activities were recorded in the form of pit houses defined by craft specialization. The recovered finds date these structures to the 800-900s. From the pit houses and features around them, iron tools, fragments of crucibles, slag from bronze smelting, a mould fragment for an ornament in Borre style, and other objects were retrieved. The finds from the pit houses suggest specialized production aimed at a market for non-subsistence related objects and, probably indirectly, trade. Further towards the east, by the Klingenberg and Skomagerstæde/Overgade 1-3 sites, more possible pit houses were discovered (Runge & Henriksen 2018: 47ff). (fig. 4) In the vicinity of the pit houses traces of domestic structures were discovered, which may have been at least partially contemporary with the former. This might indi-

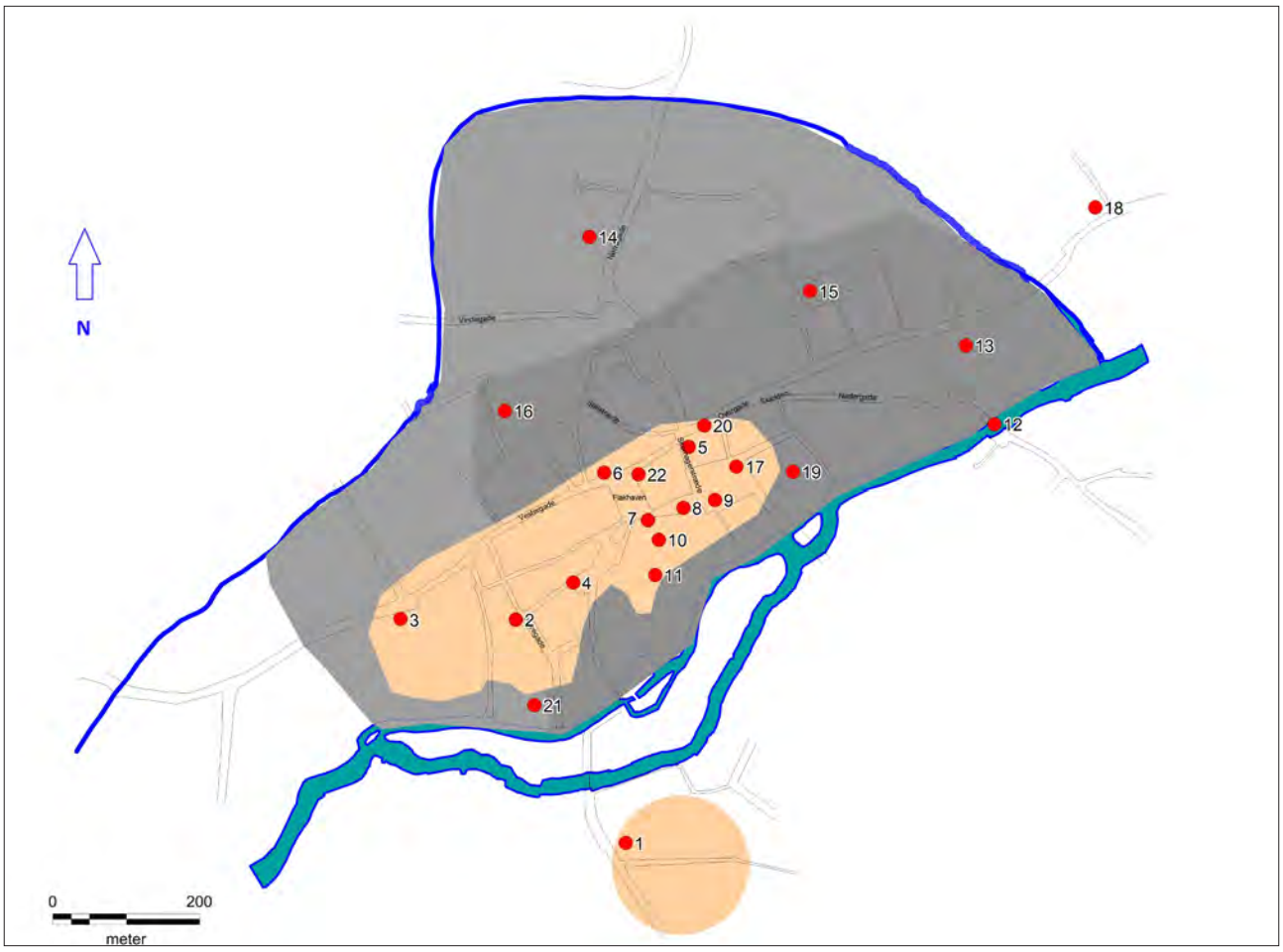


Fig. 4: The extent of Odense during the Viking Age and the Middle Ages. The blue outline to the north marks the stream Rosenbækken, while the blue outline to the south is the Odense River. 1: Nonnebakken (fort) and, later on, Benedictine convent priory; 2: Mageløs/Klaregade; 3: Vestergade 70-74; 4: Klingenberg; 5: Skomagerstræde/Overgade 1-3, I. Vilhelm Werners Plads; 6: Vestergade 13-15; 7: Skt. Knuds Plads I; 8: Skt. Knuds Plads II; 9: St Alban's Church; 10: St Cnut's Church; 11: St Cnut's Abbey; 12: Great Bridge (Storebro/Møglebro); 13: The Church of Our Lady; 14: St Michael's/St John's Church; 15: Blackfriars' Monastery; 16: Franciscan Monastery; 17: Guild house; 18: The St George Lepers' Hospital; 19: The bishop's residence; 20: Market stalls; 21: St Clara's Convent; 22: City Hall. Yellow: AD 700-1000, light grey: AD 1200-1400, dark grey: AD 1400-1600. Illustration: Odense City Museums.

cate that the specialized crafts were associated with a permanent settlement, and that they did not constitute a seasonal marketplace, as indicated by other sites dated to the late Iron Age and the beginning of the Viking Age (see for example Henriksen 1997, 2000: 35ff., 2002; Juel 2010). Other potential domestic buildings from the centuries before AD 1000 were discovered at the sites I. Vilh. Werners Plads, Klingenberg, Skt. Knuds Plads I and II as well as Vestergade 13-15 (Runge & Henriksen 2018: 53ff.).

All traces of the early town were located along an east-west orientated routeway for a length of *c*. 4-500 m immediately north of the relatively steep slope along Odense Å (se fig. 4).

The Nonnebakken site is located south of the river, on a promontory opposite the promontory by Mageløs/Klaregade and Vestergade 70-74, and it produced evidence of activities dated to as early as the end of the 700s or the 800s (fig. 5). However, it is uncertain whether these activities were associated with defence, or whether they pertained to a possible ritual site – an 'Odin's Vi'.

Fig. 5: Part of Braun's prospectus from AD 1593 with Nonnebakken in the foreground. After Füssel (2008: 184).

From the end of the 900s, Nonnebakken formed part of Harold Bluetooth's system of ring forts, and this fortified site may have had an additional function as a royal residence. Nonnebakken's location near the Odense Å crossing suggests that there was some relationship between the town and the fort. It is quite possible that the establishment of the fort was an attempt to control the hinterland as well as the urban settlement. Along with Harold Bluetooth's other ring forts, Nonnebakken also constituted a defence against foreign invaders, but it possibly functioned as a fort for a short period only, perhaps as briefly as 10-15 years (ibid.:32ff.).

From 'birth certificate' to regicide, 988-1086

Odense's 'birth certificate'

Odense – Othenesuuig ('Odensvig') – is mentioned for the first time in 988. The document, which has been referred to as Odense's 'birth certificate', was issued by a regency on behalf of the German emperor Otto III, who at this time was still a child. The letter states that the Danish bishoprics of Slesvig, Ribe, Aarhus and Odense were exempt from tax. The reason for the German emperor's intervention in Danish taxation is that the early Danish church was subordinate to the archbishopric of Hamburg-Bremen (Dipl. Dan.: 1,1, no. 343; Thrane *et al.* 1982: 113-115).

Nothing is known of the church and bishop of Odense mentioned in the document, and it is quite possible that the appointed bishop never resided in the town (Albrectsen 1970: 128ff.; Thrane *et al.* 1982: 113ff.; Madsen 1988: 97). Excavations and dates of the site of St Alban's Church – assumed to be Odense's oldest church – did not date the church to a time before AD 988 (Runge & Henriksen 2018: 61ff.). However, it is not possible to rule out that the church might have had an earlier unexcavated phase, which could corroborate the statement of the 'birth certificate'. It was for example possible to AMS-radiocarbon date a skeleton from St Alban's Churchyard to the period AD 897-1024. Four graves from St Cnut's Churchyard, which formed part of a group of 13 graves, have been dated to the period AD 772-1163 (Runge & Henriksen 2018: 64f.). Although correction of the dates, to allow for a potential reservoir effect, suggests that the skeletons may actually be slightly later, the five graves may indicate the presence of a churchyard in the area – with an associated church – prior to the earliest archaeologically proven St Alban's Church.

The interpretation of the text of the 'birth certificate' is therefore somewhat uncertain. However, the choice of Odense as a bishopric suggests that the location must have been a permanent settlement with a population of a certain size, and that at least some of the residents must have been Christian. The diocese of Funen included Funen itself, the island of Ærø and other islands south of Funen, as well as Lolland-Falster south of Zealand, and within the diocese Odense was the largest town on the largest island.

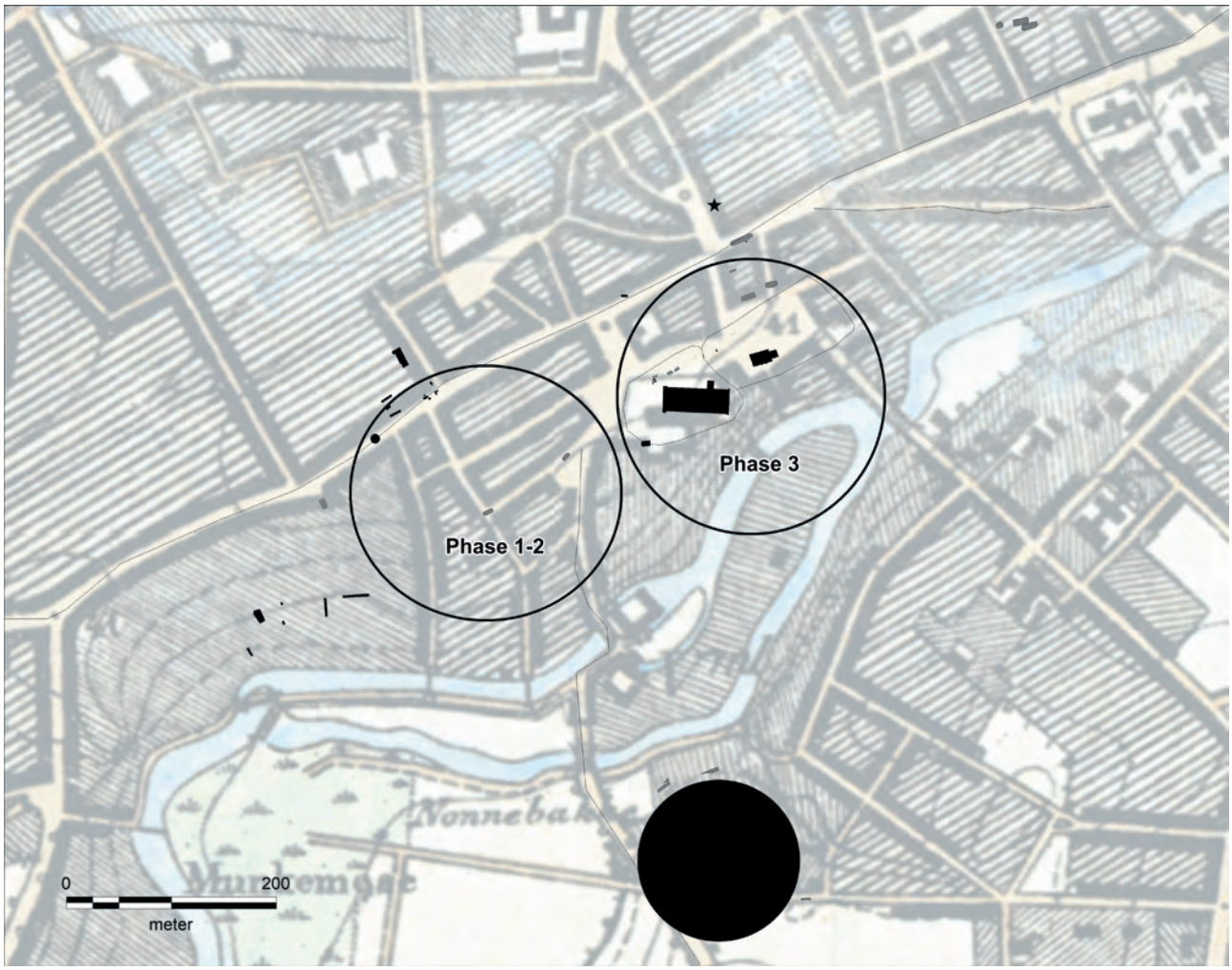


Fig. 6: Displacement of the centre of Odense from phases 1-2 (dark grey) to 3 (black). Marked on the first edition ordnance map from the second half of the nineteenth century. Black, filled-out circle: Nonnebakken.
Background map: © *The Agency for Data Supply and Efficiency*. Drawing: Mads Runge.

It is therefore believed that Odense must have been considerably more important than other contemporary settlements on Funen, and it is assumed that the town may have been the seat of a regional *thing* or court (Thrane *et al.* 1982: 139).

Odense prior to the murder of Cnut IV, 988-1086

The archaeological evidence pertaining to Odense in the eleventh century is more substantial than that pertaining to previous centuries, but it is still too sparse to allow a detailed picture of the developing town's structure and appearance. Nonnebakken probably remained the property of the king, and both the radiocarbon dates and the finds indicate activities at the site during this period. The establishment of a convent in the second half of the twelfth century, presumably on royal land, supports this conclusion (Runge & Henriksen 2018: 15).

St Alban's Church, which is interpreted as the city's early cathedral (Christensen & Hansen 2017), is situated on what would have been the eastern periphery of the proto-town, where free space was available, i.e. in many ways a pragmatic solution (fig. 6). The location of the early cathedral outside the contemporary settlement is also seen in the cases of Aarhus and Ribe. Like the latter, the church in Odense is likely to have originally been dedicated to Our Lady before it received its later dedication through the gifts of the relics of St Alban by Cnut IV (Gertz 1907: 18; Johannsen *et al.* 1998-2001: 1729; Hope 2017: 184).

According to Adam of Bremen, the first named bishop on Funen was Reginbert *c.* AD 1020 (Adam of Bremen 1968: 118), and he probably resided in Odense (fig. 7). Reginbert was appointed by the archbishop of Canterbury and he was followed in the 1050s by Eilbert, who was appointed by the archbishop of Bremen (Christensen & Hansen 2017: 12).

Fig. 7: Odense's first bishop, Reginbert, as imagined by the sixteenth-century historian Hamsfort the Younger. Photo: Per Seesko from *Series episcoporum Otthoniensium* (GKS 3645), The Royal Danish Library.

The latter is thought to be the bishop whose grave was found on the site of the now demolished St Alban's Church. This grave is tangible proof that St Alban's Church functioned as a cathedral and episcopal residence towards the end of the eleventh century (Bjerregaard *et al.* 2016a, 2016b).

The presence of a central power in Odense is also indicated by the fact that during the reign of Magnus the Good in the 1040s, money was coined in Odense. The moneyer, Outhencar, had previously been responsible for money being coined in Lund, and he may have followed King Magnus when he was forced out of Lund, and probably stayed in Odense for a time. Money was also periodically coined in Odense during the reign of Svend Estridsen and Cnut IV later in the eleventh century (Thrane *et al.* 1982: 136; Christensen 1988: 121) (fig. 8).

An actual royal residence in early Odense is not archaeologically recorded, but is mentioned in the text *Passio Sancti Kanuti regis et martyris*, from the end of the eleventh century (Gertz 1907: 18; Olrik 1968: 5; Albrectsen 1984: 14) and in a chronicle from AD 1120 or earlier, written by Aelnoth, an English monk who lived in Denmark from the end of the eleventh century. Here it is described how, at the time of the murder of Cnut IV in 1086, the royal residence stood near St Alban's Church (Johannsen et al. 1998–2001: 1729f.; Gelting 2011: 38) (fig. 9). Tore Nyberg, on the other hand, believes that the royal residence was located on the promontory at Klaregade/Mageløs, close to the later convent of St Clara and the present-day bishop's palace on an area later described as 'kongsmark' – i.e. king's field (1982: 14). Based on the most recent translation of Aelnoth's Chronicle, Anemette S. Christensen holds the alternative view that St Alban's Church was the church for the royal residence and the two were therefore located closer together, with the site of the royal residence perhaps being where the later St Cnut's Church was built (Albrectsen 1984: 79f, Christensen 1988: 33, 70). Archaeological traces of the royal residence have not, however, been found. This is perhaps not surprising in the light of the many later constructions in this area, together with uncertainty about how such a royal residence would be identified archaeologically.

Fig. 8: Cnut IV coin (OBM X10429), minted in Odense. Hauberg type 11. (Hauberg 1900: 228, Tab. XII).
Photo: Nermin Hasic.

Fig. 9: The proposed locations of a royal residence, shown on Braun's prospectus of 1593. ©*The Agency for Data Supply and Efficiency*. Drawing: Mads Runge.

Moreover, it has also been suggested that the royal residence was previously located in the fort at Nonnebakken (Christensen 1988: 33; Olsen 2015: 326).

The various important places of the period were, in general, located within a 6–700m long and c.200m wide zone running east-west. As the ecclesiastical area gradually occupied a large part of the town's south-eastern settlement area, the secular settlement, in the form of possible dwelling houses, and potentially also workshops such as a cat farm/furriery at Skomagerstræde/Overgade 1–3, largely moved northwards. The secular settlement clustered predominantly around the street of Vestergade and its continuation into Overgade, which were now established. The furriery could be perceived as an indication of increased occupational specialization with the aim of supplying a market that possibly encompassed more than the immediate hinterland (Runge & Henriksen 2018: 15).

Around 1072 the German chronicler Adam of Bremen described Odense as a large town ('Odansve…magna civitas') (Adam of Bremen 1968: 249). The first historical sources from Odense itself begin to appear shortly after this time, and the town's general urban structure became obvious.

Odense after the death of Cnut IV, 1086-1300

The death of Cnut IV in 1086 in St Alban's Church had, as already mentioned, a crucial impact on the later development of Odense as we know it (Bjerregaard & Runge 2017: 11). With the 'Odense Literature' we have for the first time more detailed written sources, that can be corroborated with the archaeological facts. The sources deal with, among other things, the rededication of the earliest Cathedral of Our Lady following the king's donation of relics of the English martyr St Alban, a description of the scene of the murder, and the ecclesiastical and political development leading up to Cnut's canonization in 1100.

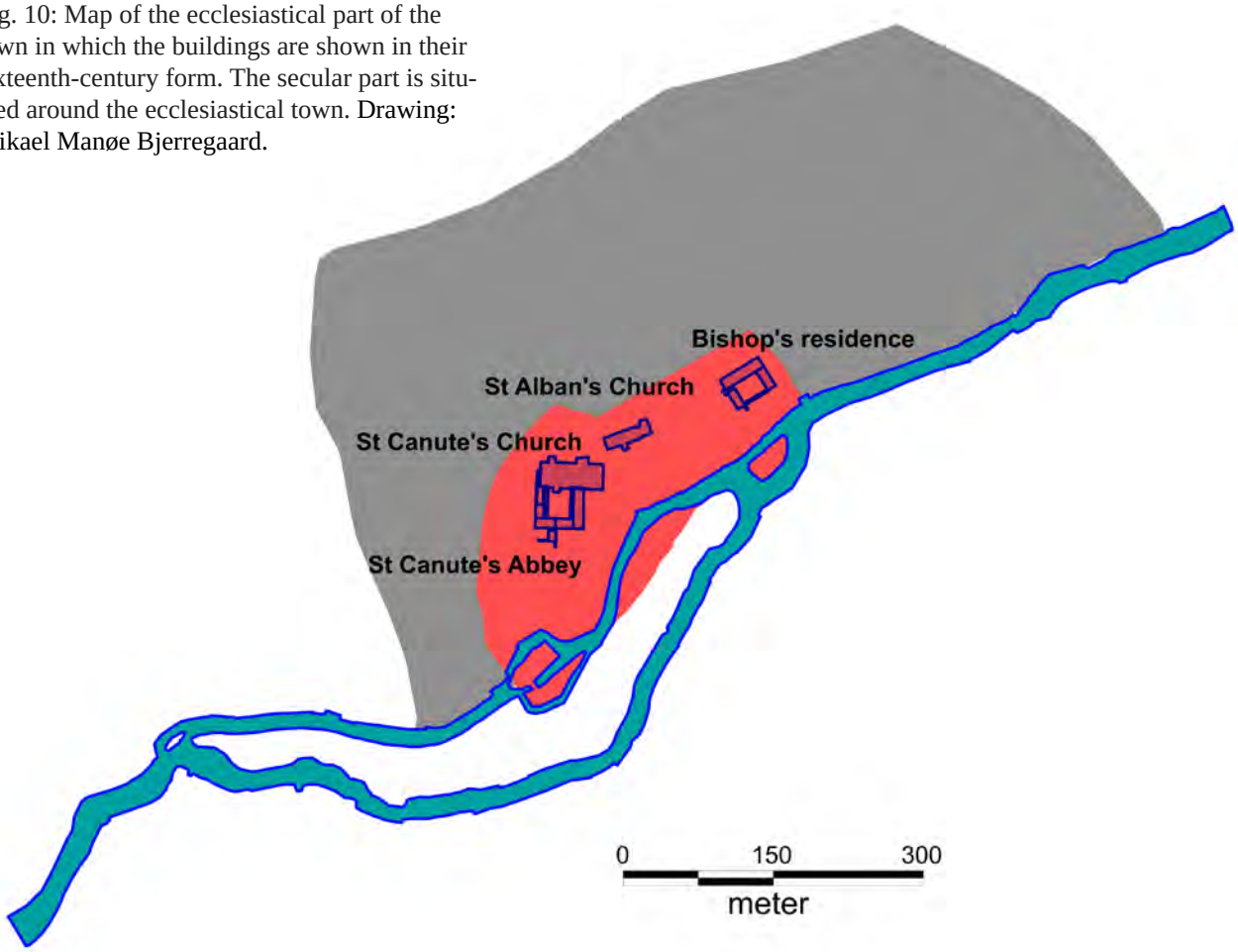


Fig. 10: Map of the ecclesiastical part of the town in which the buildings are shown in their sixteenth-century form. The secular part is situated around the ecclesiastical town. Drawing: Mikael Manøe Bjerregaard.

The town's ecclesiastical quarter

The town was split into two parts. Towards the south, along the river, there was an ecclesiastical quarter, dating back to the early medieval period, with a secular quarter located along the main street and the streets towards the north. The ecclesiastical quarter constituted a separate enclave, which may have been enclosed with a fence, and which followed its own set of laws (Thrane *et al.* 1982: 179, 208). It included St Cnut's Church and churchyard, with the associated abbey towards the west, St Alban's Church and churchyard in the middle and – probably from the earliest times – the area with the bishop's palace towards the east, although the location of the latter is only known from the 1400s (fig. 10).

The ecclesiastical quarter measured approximately 360m from east to west. At the time, it undoubtedly represented a powerful physical presence. The extensive and coherent ecclesiastical quarter suggests that the king probably allocated large areas in the early town to the Church. The first step in establishing this quarter, and a direct effect of the murder of Cnut IV, was the dedication of a new church in his honour, the crypt being inaugurated in 1095 (fig. 11).

Although the construction of St Cnut's Church is traditionally connected with the reign of Erik Ejegod (1095-1103), its planning and the beginning of the construction must have taken place in the reign of Oluf Hunger (1086-1095). The construction of a completely new church, of a size not hitherto seen in Scandinavia, must have depended on influential allies, most notably the royal family, who wanted to promote royal power by having it linked to a royal saint like that of St Olav of Norway (see Ekroll in this volume). As with St Olav, the remains of St Cnut were moved to another church, but this one was constructed just west of the existing precinct of St Alban. The western end of the church, which was inspired by English ecclesiastical architecture with a tradition for imposing facades, fronted the older Viking Age town and the crossing of Odense Å (Johannsen & Johannsen 2001: 25).

The remains of the aforementioned royal residence, probably also located in this area, might in this period have served as temporary housing for the Benedictine monks, who were brought to Oden-

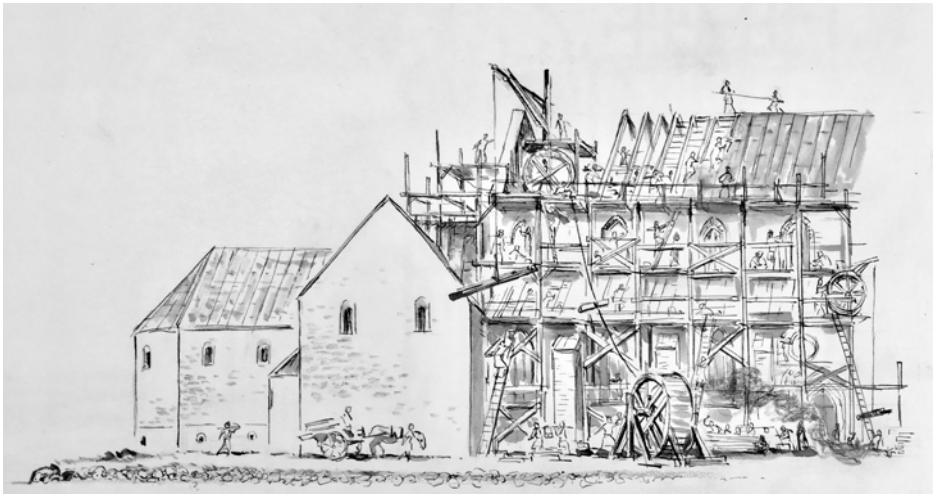


Fig. 11: St Cnut's Church. The Romanesque cathedral was reconstructed as a brick-built gothic cathedral in the second half of the thirteenth century. Drawing: Sune Elskær.

se by Erik Ejegod around 1100 for the veneration of the royal saint, and in the early twelfth century replaced and reformed the original cathedral clergy of St Alban's Church (Christensen & Hansen 2017: 13; see also Gazzoli and Hope in this volume). The foundation of the monastic community was followed by the later foundation of an attached Benedictine convent of nuns inside the former Viking Age fort of Nonnebakken. The two institutions were associated, though whether they formed a double institution like the early monastic sites Seem Church near Ribe and St Michael's Church in Schleswig, is more doubtful (Christensen 1988: 107). Either way, just like the other double-institutions, it was soon divided when the nuns moved to Dalum around 1200 (Johannsen *et al.* 1998-2001:1750).

The expansion of the ecclesiastical centre along the river continued in the twelfth century with the addition of Munkemølle (Monks' Mill) mentioned in 1175 (Dipl. Dan.: I, 3 no. 49; Christensen 1996:15ff). The combination of a continuous ecclesiastical compound, which might have included an episcopal manor east of the precinct of St Alban's Church and the earthworks of the mill, was probably the reason for the relocation of the town's main river crossing from the area of Nonnebakken to the far east end of the town, where Møglebro is mentioned in 1257 (Dipl. Dan.: II, 2 no. 241; Christensen 1988: 38 and 65).

Ecclesiastical institutions in other parts of Odense

As the eastern part of the town expanded, the need for a new parish church emerged, and so the Church of Our Lady was built probably in the first half of the twelfth century, dominating the river valley. The first Church of Our Lady was incorporated into the later Romanesque church and shows a large nave of ashlar originally adorned by pillared entrances to the north and south. Besides being a parish church, the office of provost mentioned around 1140 is supposed to be connected to it (Dipl. Dan.: I, 2 no. 71; Johannsen *et al.*: 1014). Another parish church outside the ecclesiastical quarter is St Michael's Church, the present-day St John's Church (St Hans' Church) in Nørregade. St Michael's Church was probably built of ashlar as well, but is presumably somewhat younger than the Church of Our Lady (Johannsen *et al.* 1998-2001: 1040ff., 1255ff.).

During the medieval period, the town was thus divided into three parishes, each with its own church and frequented by their respective inhabitants. St Alban's Church continued to serve the central part of the town, dated to the Viking Age, whereas the neighbourhoods around Overgade and Nørregade were given their own new churches (Thrane *et al.* 1982: 212, 304.).

With the establishment of the mendicant orders, a new type of monastery, the friary, was also introduced. In the north-eastern periphery of the town, the Dominicans (or the Blackfriars) built a monastery with its own church and cloisters. In the north-western part of town, Erik Glipping in 1279 donated land to allow a Franciscan (or Greyfriars) monastery to be built (cf. Fig.5) (Christensen 1988: 106-109). The mendicant friaries did not own land, but lived from alms received from the town's inhabitants, to whom they delivered sermons and administered confessions. In this way, the religious practices of the monasteries were aimed directly at the inhabitants of the town, and the mendicant friars formed integral parts of the medieval borough culture.

The Order of St John took over St Michael's Church around AD 1300 and eventually developed a monastic society around the church, later known as St Hans' Church (as Hans is a Nordic version of the name Johannes). Immediately outside the town's eastern gate a so-called 'Skt. Jørgensgård' was established. Today a 'Skt. Jørgensgård' would be referred to as a quarantine station for lepers (Christensen 1988: 110; Arentoft 1999). This institution had its own church, as well as housing for the sick who were isolated yet at the same time stayed near the town, as they depended on alms from the citizens for their daily sustenance.

The secular town

Along the main street and the perpendicular side streets, a new town developed within a town boundary which was partly defined by topographical factors and natural watercourses, and partly regulated by human activity. The fortification of the town was the most important communal work in the thirteenth century. To the east and north, the moat ran in a depression with a small watercourse known as Rosenbækken (see fig. 4), whereas to the west a moat was dug between Rosenbækken and Odense Å. The fortification left the western part of the Viking Age town as well as St Michael's Church outside the moat. This marks a decisive shift in the centre of Odense towards the east, which must have begun in the preceding two centuries.

It is also possible to perceive an institutionalization of the market with a row of market stalls established in the thirteenth century (Haase & Larsen 2018) (Figs 12, 13). These have been excavated along the southern side of the westernmost part of Overgade and consisted of light structures of different sizes and constructed from whatever wood was available. It is only to be expected that a magistrate of citizens was mentioned in 1257, as magistrates would have been the most likely initiators of permanent market stalls (Dipl. Dan.: 2, I no. 241; Christensen 1988:124). Although the oldest preserved privileges of the town date from 1335, it has been suggested that they could date to the reign of Valdemar Sejr (1202-1241), and it seems safe to assume that they are at least as old as the mentioning of a magistrate (Christensen 1988:131). A house and plot belonging to the Guild

Fig. 12: A row of market stalls on a map based on 1761 information. North is up. Note that medieval Overgade mentioned in this article is referred to as Østre Korsgade on this map. Drawing: Odense City Museums.

Fig. 13: Two stalls during excavation. Viewed from the north. Photo: Odense City Museums, 2016.

of St Cnut is mentioned about the same time, and it has been suggested that a thirteenth-century stone house in the middle of the large plot on the corner of Overgade and Skomagerstræde, Overgade 1, might in fact have been their guildhall (Lauridsen & Bjerregaard 2015: 28ff).

The earliest traces of what appears to be a project to pave a large street network in the town have been dated to the time around the reign and death of Cnut IV (fig. 14). The paving, which consisted of a compact surface of pebbles with clear tracks from the use of carts, was discovered as a coherent area along 50m of Overgade near Fisketorvet. Considerable remains of the same paving were recorded in the medieval St Alban's Stræde (later Skomagerstæde), which ran along the eastern side of the present town hall (Haase 2017; Grandt-Nielsen 1972: 202-205).

It was probably on this paved surface that, in AD 1100, Cnut's reliquary was carried in a procession through the town to the cathedral. The presence of the royal saint must have given the town both a special attraction and a unique identity. Similar paved

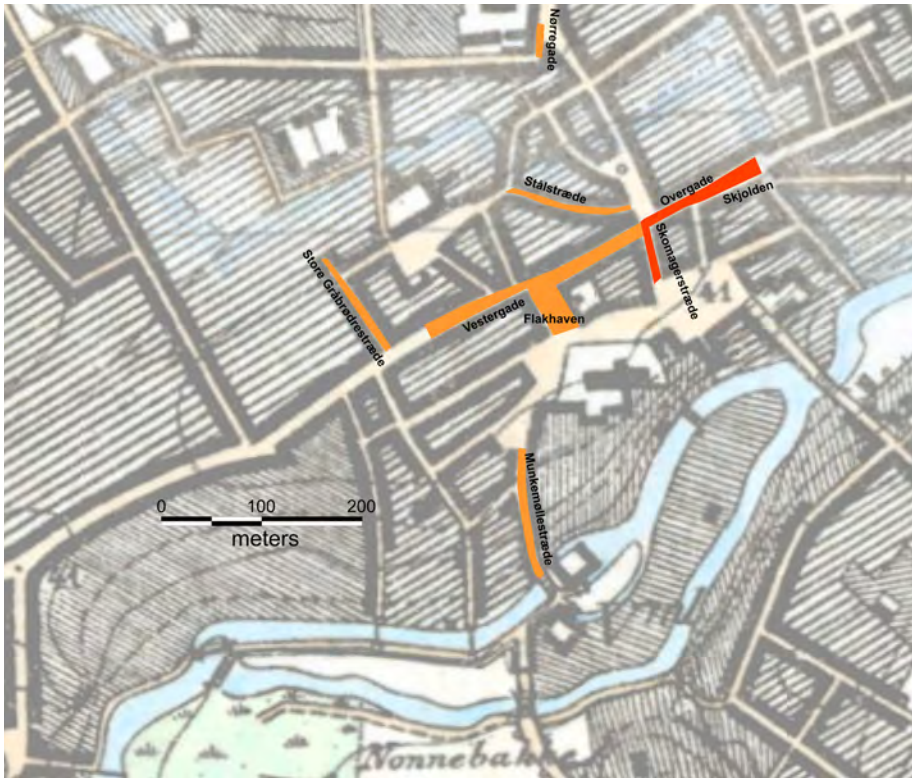


Fig. 14: Metalled streets from shortly before AD 1100 are marked with dark orange. In the streets marked in light orange, a similar pavement – but dated with less certainty – has been found. Background map: First edition ordinance survey map from the second half of the nineteenth century. © The Agency for Data Supply and Efficiency. Drawing: Mikael Manøe Bjerregaard.

surfaces immediately on top of sandy subsoil were discovered at Klingenberg, where one overlay an earlier pit, at Skjolden, at Flakhaven, in Stålstræde, as well as in Nørregade near Vindegade (Nielsen 1998; Christensen 1988: 56; Grandt-Nielsen 1982: 163 & 1988; Bjerregaard 2013; Bjerregaard 2014; Haase 2019: 124ff.). This suggests that the paving was a communal project organised by a central power, such as either King Cnut, King Erik or King Niels.

A structure emerges with Overgade-Vestergade as the main street, supplemented by smaller side streets and alleys. Overgade-Vestergade was also part of the main thoroughfare for the overland traffic across Funen, just as Nørregade may have been the main street leading out of the town towards the north. Archaeological investigations indicate that not all parts of the paved streets had a dense frontage of houses. The contemporary settlement along Overgade around AD 1100 was a quite open and extensively exploited area of large plots, which may structurally have been similar to contemporary rural farms (cf. Hansen 2011, 2015). Only during the following centuries did the settlement reduce the size of plots to smaller ones to form a façade towards the street. During the 1200s, the paving of Overgade also acquired a more varied appearance, suggesting that the individual plot owners along the street were now responsible for the maintenance of their stretch of the shared street (Haase 2017).

Summary: Odense and Cnut

When Cnut IV met his fate in St Alban's Church in 1086, Odense was a well-established town with a long history whose roots reach back to 'Odin's Vi', and a central position in the landscape of Funen. The earliest development of the town probably represents a 'bottom-up' development based on a rich hinterland. The central powers became involved in earnest from the 900s, when Cnut's ancestor, Harold Bluetooth, asserted his power by building the Viking fort Nonnebakken in the area. The fort may have housed a royal residence, which was later moved to the new ecclesiastical centre around St Alban's Church. A royal presence in Odense is also indicated by the fact that coins were minted in the town.

Odense's growth after AD 1000 probably reflects a general development towards increased centralization of power in the towns, where the king, the church and the towns themselves promoted the growth of trade, crafts, etc., and where the towns subsequently developed into meeting places for people from near and far. Cnut IV, as well as other kings from the eleventh century, played a role in this development, but he is primarily remembered for his donation to the original Cathedral of Our Lady. The gift included the relics of St Alban from whom the church received its name (Johannsen *et al.* 1998-2001: 1729).

This situation changed after the death of Cnut, and especially after his canonization. The presence of the almost complete skeleton of a royal saint (Denmark's first royal saint) made Odense a popular place of pilgrimage, and Cnut became an important factor in the growth of the town. Ecclesiastical institutions were established, and gained an unusually large presence in the town compared to other contemporary towns. The so-called Cnut's Market was introduced and held on the day of his death (10th of July). On the day of his enshrinement (19th of April), known liturgically as *dies translatio*, an annual event was established where his reliquary was carried through the town as part of a major procession (fig. 15). The creation of the cult of Cnut is supported by written sources, and these documents form the back-

Fig. 15: The procession with the reliquary of St Cnut. Drawing: Sune Elskær, 2017.

Fig. 16: Reliquaries containing the remains of St Cnut and his brother Benedikt in the crypt of St Cnut's Church, in 2017. Having journeyed from the realms of kings and royal sons, saints and legends, they have now come to rest as relics of the past and objects of interest. Photo: Peter Helles Eriksen, 2017.

ground of the so-called 'Odense literature' from the end of the eleventh century and the first decades of the twelfth century, including Aelnoth's chronicle *Gesta Swenomagni*. This chronicle is frequently referred to as the first attempt to write an actual history of Denmark (Bønløkke Missuno 2017; Michaelsen 2017: 11ff.).

As mentioned in the introduction, Cnut is still an important figure in Odense today, and the crypt beneath St Cnut's Church, where the reliquaries containing Cnut and his brother Benedikt are located, is certainly worth a visit (fig. 16). However, Odense City Museums would like to focus more on Cnut's life through further research and information dissemination in the form of, for example, exhibitions, such as the topical exhibition 'Cnut's Odense – town of the Vikings' (May 2017 – March 2018). It is our hope that through Cnut, we can draw attention to Odense's Viking Age and its medieval period in a way relevant to lay people as well as scholars, thus maintaining his position as one of the town's main foci (Runge 2017).

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Notes

[1] One way of dealing with this problem would be to redefine the course of the river through extensive construction work, such as that seen at the Kanhave Canal on Samsø (dated to the early Viking Age). However, no such structures have been discovered along Odense Å.

[2] Laboratory number Poz-100537. Unless stated otherwise, all AMS dates in this paper are cited at two sigma (95.4% probability).

[3] Laboratory numbers Poz-72615–72616, 72619–72620.

[4] The so-called Odense Literature are various medieval texts concerning the life, death and cult of King Cnut. See also Hope and Petersen in this volume.

[5] The community of monks was established around AD 1101 when St Cnuts's Church became a monastic institution (Albrectsen 1986:21).

The Archaeological Sources on the Killing and Enshrining of King Cnut IV

By Mikael Manøe Bjerregaard

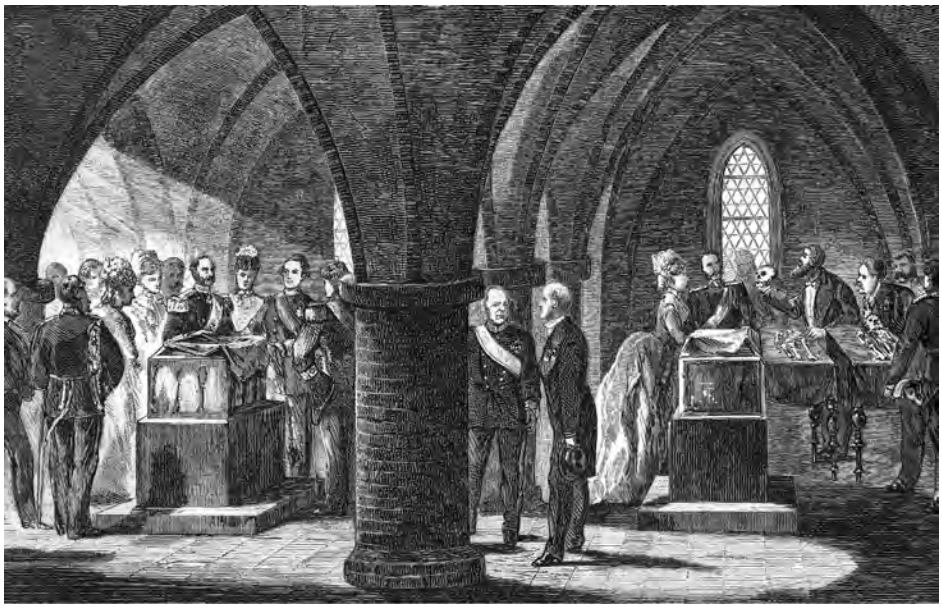


Fig. 1: A royal visit to the shrines in the crypt of St Cnut's Church. Illustration from 1875.

When King Cnut IV was killed in St Alban's Church in Odense in the year 1086 the town was soon endowed with the presence of a royal saint. The shrine containing the relics of the king has been preserved in the Cathedral of Odense for more than 900 years, although with a declining level of religious veneration surrounding it in the centuries after the Lutheran reformation in 1536. Since the nineteenth century, the bones of St Cnut and those of his younger brother Benedikt, as well as the two wooden shrines, have been objects of interest for historians and archaeologists (fig. 1).

This article presents the known archaeological sources on the killing and burial of King Cnut. It consists of two parts. The first part deals with the actual killing of King Cnut, and is concerned with investigations of the preserved bones. Can we be certain that the bones are in fact those of King Cnut, and if so, do the bones reveal how he was killed? The dating and style of the reliquary shrine are also touched upon, as are the bones believed to be those of Benedikt, and his shrine. The second part of the article deals with the archaeology concerning the scene of the killing, the long gone medieval wooden church of St Alban, and is focused on the construction and dating of that church in which king Cnut is said to have been slain.

PART ONE: The Killing: The bones and shrines of Cnut and Benedikt

Before presenting an overview of the results of various investigations of the shrine and the supposed bones of St Cnut, a short history of the whereabouts of the relics throughout the centuries will be given here. Since another shrine, allegedly that of Cnut's younger half-brother Benedikt has had a long common history together with the St Cnut relics, that shrine will also be touched upon in this chapter. For information about the textiles from the two shrines see Hedeager (2010; this volume).

The cult of St Cnut

According to medieval written sources, of which the chronicle of the Odense-based English cleric Aelnoth is the most prominent one, King Cnut was killed in a revolt on the 10th of July in 1086. According to Aelnoth, Benedikt and seventeen of the king's hirdmen

– men of the royal retinue – were slain in St Alban's Church in Odense along with Cnut. The clerics of St Alban's buried the royal brothers in the church's choir, while the hirdmen were buried in the western part of the church. A few years later, in 1095, Cnut and Benedikt were exhumed and translated to temporary sarcophagi in the crypt of the new cathedral which was at that time under construction close to St Alban's Church. This happened after a synod of Danish bishops had declared Cnut to be a saint, following reports of miracles. In 1100, Cnut was canonized by the pope on the behest of King Erik Ejegod, and his bones were enshrined and elevated onto the main altar in the cathedral which has since carried his name (Albrectsen 1984). The bones of St Cnut remained the main relics of the Odense Cathedral throughout the Middle Ages, and an important cult arose around them. Hardly any details about this cult have been preserved, but references to tribute paid to Cnut on his feast in 1504 and 1505 can be found in the royal accounts of Queen Christine (Christensen 1904: 188, 195). In 1504 it is specifically mentioned that Cnut's shrine was carried in procession through Odense on his feast day (Christensen 1904: 89), and this is likely to have happened annually. Although Saxo's history contains fictional elements, his mentioning of reliquaries carried in procession in Odense to greet King Cnut V in 1157 may well be true (Zeeberg 2015: 652; Fisher 2015: 1083 Saxo 14:17:10). If so, one of the reliquaries must have been St Cnut's.[1]

A cult of St Cnut is indirectly documented by several reports of bones and hair from the saint being donated to churches in Scandinavia and beyond throughout the Middle Ages. For example, parts of the jaw and teeth were granted to the Uppsala Cathedral in Sweden and the Franciscan friary in Copenhagen or Roskilde. The Cathedral of Lund held several St Cnut relics in the late fifteenth century: parts of his hair and cape, as well as bones of an arm, a hand, and a wrist bone. These bones are in accordance with bones missing from the shrine in Odense (Steidl 1918: 325ff.; Wallin 1986: 81; Johansen *et al.* 1995: 643; Michaelsen 2017: 73f.). Physical evidence of a medieval St Cnut cult can be found in a few murals and wooden sculptures. These are almost exclusively late medieval and found in the eastern part of medieval Denmark (fig. 2). Exceptions are a mid twelth-century mural in the Nativity Church in Bethelehem and a depiction on a 1180s reliquary in the Hildesheim Cathedral (Kofod-Hansen 1986; Nilgen 1995; see Ekroll and frontpage in this volume). No St Cnut pilgrim badges are known.

Fig. 2: Late 15th century fresco depicting St Cnut. Brunnby Church in Scania. Photo: Mikael Manøe Bjerregaard 2019.

The post-reformation history of the shrines

It is not clear what happened to the shrine of St Cnut immediately after the reformation, but it was most likely soon removed from its prominent position in the cathedral and put away. The shrine emerged again in 1582 when the Chapel of St Cnut on the north side of the church was torn down. The shrine still held bones, textiles and inscriptions on either parchment or a lead plaque (now lost but transcribed and referred to as *Tabula* and *Epithaphium* respectively) (Vellev 1986; Johannsen, Johannsen & Kjær 1995: 424). The shrine was on display in the church for an unknown number of years. It seems to still have been accessible in 1622 when two catholic missionaries from Flanders paid tribute to the relics and were granted a piece of the skull – undoubtedly their interest in the Danish saint was caused by the fact that Cnut was the father of Charles, Count of Flandern. Charles was himself honored as a saint in Flandern after being assassinated in 1127 under circumstances similar to those of his father's death (Skyum-Nielsen 1971: 61f). But at some point, Cnut's shrine, along with a similar shrine, was walled into a niche in the eastern wall of the choir. The shrines were placed standing on end. From this niche they were retrieved in 1694.

Fig. 3: The bones of St Cnut resting in the shrine. Photo: Peter Helles Eriksen 2017.

At this point they were robbed of most of their gilded copper decoration, the lid was missing from the shrine of St Cnut, and the inscribed plaques were also gone. The shrines were walled in again the following year. Since 1833, when the shrines were once again retrieved, they have been on display in the church, and both the shrines and their content have been the object of both antiquarian and anthropological investigation since the 1870s. Since 1875 the shrines, the bones and the textiles have been accessible in the crypt of the cathedral (fig. 3) (Michaelsen 2017, Johannsen, Johannsen & Kjær 1995: 446ff.).

The bones

A number of biological anthropological analyses have been carried out on the bones in the shrines over the years – Schmidt in 1874; Tkocz, Jensen *et al.* in 1985; Rasmussen, Bennike *et al.* in 1993; and finally, Boldsen and Leth in 2008 who also performed a CT scan and a forensic analysis (Becker 1886: XVIII-XXII; 24-27; Tkocz & Jensen 1986; Rasmussen; Bennike *et al.* 1999; Boldsen & Leth 2009).

Since the shrines had been standing on end in the niche, some of the bones of the two individuals had tumbled out and become mixed together. With the 1874 investigation, the bones were sorted and it was clear that they derived from two male individuals estimated to have died around the ages of 40 and 20 respectively. The bones in what has been called 'the shrine with the column-decoration' were determined to be Cnut's, while there was some debate about the identification of the other individual. It is not surprising that some bones were missing given the long history of the bones being relocated several times and the mentioned praxis of donating bones or pieces thereof to other churches.

The bones of St Cnut - Biological-anthropological analyses

Turning to the bones in the shrine with the column-decoration, three analyses have been carried out over the last 30 years. All agree that the individual is male, but there is some disagreement as to the age and height of the deceased (fig. 4). A radiocarbon-dating of the skeleton has determined that the man died between 980 and 1160 (Rasmussen *et al.* 1999). All three analyses concluded there was a lesion on the skull and one on the sacrum, but there is some disagreement as to when and how these lesions were induced.

Year of analysis	Estimated age	Estimated height
1985	Not able to estimate with precision (30 to 55)	178 cm
1993	35-45	178 cm
2008	27-38	165-170 cm

Fig. 4: Result of various biological anthropological analyses of the skeleton in the shrine with column-decorations.

In the skull near the left temple there is a 6,6 cm long fracture to the bone, that shows no sign of healing. However, none of the analyses are conclusive on the question of whether this injury was inflicted pre or post mortem. Tkocz & Jensen (1986) suggest that the injury was caused by a trauma with a sharp instrument, for instance a sword. Rasmussen *et al.* (1999) suggest that the fracture – if premortem – must have been caused by a blunt instrument such as a rock, but also tend to believe that the fracture is a postmortem occurrence to the thin-walled frontal bone. Boldsen & Leth (2009) omit discussion of the injury, indicating that it is irrelevant. More interesting in view of the cause of death and possible killing of this individual is a lesion on the sacrum that shows no sign of healing. The lesion is visible on both sides of the sacrum and is the result of a trauma or heavy blow. Again, there is some disagreement as to which instrument might have caused this lesion. A spear (Tkocz & Jessen 1986:119), a club (Rasmussen *et al.* 1999: 165), and a sword (Boldsen & Leth 2009: 131) have been suggested. It seems clear, however, that the lesion is perimortal. Boldsen & Leth who also performed a CT scan of the skeleton confirm that the lesion cannot be post mortal, since part of the bone is pressed back into the sacrum but still hinged to the sacrum. This indicates that the bone was fresh. Had the lesion been induced at a later point, the bone would have lost its organic substance, and the piece would simply have broken off (Rasmussen *et al.* 1999: 166; Boldsen & Leth: 131). The analyses agree that this lesion must have been fatal and caused death very quickly, since the trauma would have caused severe injury to the bladder and parts of the intestine.

How do these injuries correspond with the details concerning the killing of Cnut given in the medieval texts, and can the texts even be trusted to be accurate in such details? Although the earliest texts, *Passio Kanuti*, *Tabula*, *Epitaphium*, and Aelnoth's *Gesta Swenomagni* were composed few years after the event (see Hope and Petersen in this volume), and although Aelnoth claims to have lived in Odense at the time when Cnut was elevated, neither of the texts is certain to be an eyewitness account. In the violent details of the killing of King Cnut, Aelnoth notes the specific parallel to the martyrdom of St Stephen and St Sebastian, and even to the death of Christ (Albrectsen 1984: 83ff/ Aelnoth ch. 27-28). This suggest that this part of the text is more a literary construction than a trustworthy report of what actually happened. Nevertheless, some coherence can be seen between the written sources and the forensic analyses. Both Aelnoth and the thirteenth-century *Knytlinge Saga* mention that Cnut was hit in the head by a rock causing him to fall over (Bekker-Nielsen & Widding 1977: 84; Albrectsen 1984:83/ Aelnoth ch. 27). This information might correspond with the fracture to the frontal bone, but since the nature of this fracture is uncertain, one probably should not put too much emphasis on this. Aelnoth says that in the king's fatal last moments he was badly wounded with a spear in the side and lay himself on the floor. *Knytlinge Saga* says that Cnut was killed with a sword (Bekker-Nielsen & Widding 1977: 86). Boldsen & Leth argue that the injury to the sacrum could have been caused with a sword by a person standing above the floored king inserting the weapon into the abdomen from below. This could be seen to correspond with Aelnoth's description of the king dying as he lay on the floor with his arms spread out, and also with the details in *Knytlinge Saga* (Boldsen & Leth 2009: 131; Albrectsen 1984: 86/ Aelnoth ch, 28; Bekker-Nielsen & Widding 1977: 86)

The individual in the lidded shrine

The skeleton in 'the shrine with hipped roof' has been analyzed twice in the last decades, and is also believed to be that of a man (fig. 5). While the determination of the age of the deceased only varies a little, the individual is now thought to have been considerable shorter because of new methods of calculating height (fig. 6). The radiocarbon-dating suggests that this individual died between 1020 and 1280. He also had a violently induced lesion at the top of the left femur. The cut was caused perimortally with a sharp tool, perhaps a sword, and showed no sign of healing. According to the injury, this person probably had a violent death, perhaps in a battle. Though not lethal in itself, this injury would, in a battle, have made the person incapable of further fighting and easy to kill

Fig. 5: The bones in the shrine with the hipped roof. Photo: Peter Helles Eriksen 2017.

Year of analysis	Estimated age	Estimated height
1993	18-20	181,9 cm
2008	18-24	167-172 cm

Fig. 6: Result of two biological anthropological analyses of the skeleton in the shrine with the hipped roof.

in ways that are not visual on the bones (Johannsen, Johannsen & Kjær 1995: 444,646, Ramussen, Bennike et al. 1999: 166f: Boldsen & Leth 2009: 133ff). In Aelnoth's account of the aftermath of the fight in the church, we read that Benedict suffered a much more violent death than can be detected from these bones, since his heavily wounded body was mutilated and dismembered by the persecutors (Albrectsen 1984: 89f, Aelnoth ch. 29).

Identification of the skeletons: King Cnut and Benedikt?

The muscular insertions of both individuals bear no trace of hard manual labour. However, the muscular insertions of the younger individual imply that he may perhaps have been doing military service at the time of death, while the older individual probably was not. Quite possibly, both men were part of society's elite around 1100. Further, the shape of the skulls suggests that they could be related. On the skull of the oldest individual a suspiciously high contamination of gold has been detected (Rasmussen *et al.* 1999: 167ff). This might be indirect evidence of a special reliquary for King Cnut's skull, which is mentioned in the year 1505 (Christensen 1904: 195). The golden or gilded reliquary could have left the gold contamination on the skull.

Since the nineteenth century there has been a general agreement among scholars that the bones now resting in the shrine with column-decoration are in fact those of St Cnut. The radiocarbon-dating agrees with this. The same goes for the lesion induced on the sacrum which indicates a violent death. Cnut's exact year of birth is not known, but he is believed to be born around 1042, and if so, he would have been a mature man around 44 years old when he died. This doesn't correspond too well with the latest estimated age of the skeleton which concludes that the deceased was 27- 38 years old at the time of death (Boldsen & Leth 2009). The identification as King Cnut, however, has not been seriously questioned, and DNA results might shed more light on this. The mothers of Cnut and Benedikt are unknown, but a DNA profile of their common father, Svend Estridsen exists, so in theory a determination of kinship would be possible (Kruse 2004, Roesdahl & Lynnerup 2010). Unfortunately, it was not possible to extract suitable material for a DNA-analysis in the 2008 examination.[2]

The identity of the individual in 'the shrine with hipped roof' has been debated, although the general assumption is that it is Benedikt. But it has also been suggested that the shrine held the bones of either St Alban or St Oswald. Relics of both are mentioned by Aelnoth as being in Odense, and the relics of the former were, according to *Passio Kanuti*, brought from England to Odense by King Cnut himself (Gertz 1907, 18f.; Albrectsen 1984: 85/Aelnoth ch. 28; Johannsen *et al.* 1995: 438). But the radiocarbon-dates can now clearly rule out these two saints, who died centuries earlier. The Danish king Erik Lam († 1146 in Odense) has also been suggested, and the date of the bones does not rule him out (Johannsen *et al.* 1995: 430); but Erik's death in an Odense monastery due to illness hardly match the violent and mortal injury on the femur of this individual. It can also be argued that a twelfth-century king who was not a saint is unlikely to have been placed in a shrine for display. On the other hand, one can submit the same argument about Benedikt, of whom we have no report of a papal consecration. There is, however, written evidence to suggest that Benedikt was considered and venerated as a saint at least locally (see also Hope in this volume). *Tabula* mentions both Cnut and Benedikt as martyrs. The details about Benedikt's death in Aelnoth's chronicle emphasized

that Benedikt died a martyr (that is: without a sword in his hand). Aelnoth even called him a martyr equally precious as his brother (Albrectsen 1984: 91/ Aelnoth ch. 29). A twelfth-century prayer preserved in a Russian manuscript mentions St Benedikt in sequence with St Cnut and St Alban, and the so-called *Younger Passio* from the mid-thirtheenth century also refers to Benedikt as *beatus* and *sanctus*, and this suggest that a cult around Benedikt was active at that time (Lind 1990: 10ff). *Knytlige Saga* states that when King Erik Ejegod (r. 1095-1103) had a shrine made for St Cnut, another shrine was made for Benedikt as a resting place in Odense (Bekker-Nielsen & Widding 1977: 49). A 1357 letter of indulgence mentions a *sacellum Benedicti* in St Cnut's Church, and this could be a chapel dedicated to Benedikt (Johannsen *et al.* 1995: 88). Taking these written sources into account, it seems very likely that Benedikt would have been considered a saint locally and displayed in a shrine.

The shrines

The two shrines in the crypt of Odense Cathedral now mostly resemble short wooden coffins. But the present state is the result of a plundering which is believed to have taken place in 1582 and in the 1690s, when the shrines were stripped of both their outside decoration and also of the silken lining of the shrine with the column-decoration (fig. 7) (for further illustrations of the shrines and their decoration see Vellev 1986). Both written sources and a closer look at the shrines reveal that they originally had a very different appearance: they would have been covered in gilded and ornamented copper sheets, and both would have had a lid (fig. 8). At least one of the shrines – and probably both – had also been decorated with semiprecious stones or rock crystals. On the remains of copper sheets on the shrine with the hipped roof are fittings for such stones (fig. 9). One of these measures 2 x 1,5 cm, which corresponds perfectly with a carved rock crystal found in a nearby archaeological excavation in 2013 (fig. 10) (OBM9776 X4468; Imer *et al.* 2017:137f). This rock crystal, as

Fig. 7: The shrine with the column decoration. The imprints on the wood is all that is left of the decoration. It would have consisted of metal plates with the figure of a person under each arch. Photo: Peter Helles Eriksen 2017.

Fig. 8: A few of the gilded copper sheets have been preserved on the shrine with the hipped roof. Photo: Peter Helles Eriksen 2017.

Fig. 9: Oval fitting for gem stone in the gilt cobber plate decoration. Photo: Mikael Manøe Bjerregaard 2017.

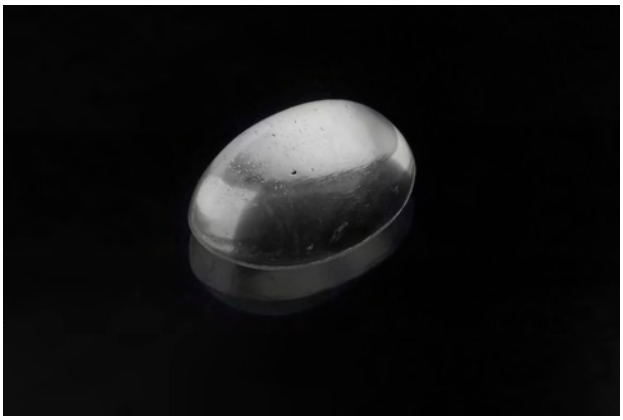


Fig. 10: Oval carved rock crystal found in urban deposits north-east of St Cnut's Church in 2013. Photo: Nermiin Hasic.

well as another from the same excavation, has almost certainly decorated a reliquary, crucifix or another religious object.

Only a small piece of the copper sheet decoration has been preserved on the shrine with the column decoration. It measures 3,5x2,1 cm, and shows parts of a winged animal in late Viking Age or early Romanesque style (Johannsen & Johannsen 1995: 431f). Three samples from various parts of the shrine have been dendrochronologically dated to the late eleventh century, having been felled sometime after *c*.1025, 1072 and 1074 respectively. No sapwood was preserved (Bonde *et al.* 1994: 301). This supports the theory that this is indeed the very shrine made for Cnut's elevation in 1100. The shrine with the hipped roof has not yet been dendrochronologically dated, because it would have to be taken apart in order to extract suitable samples. The decorations on the few preserved copper sheets have been tentatively dated on stylistic grounds to around 1150-75 (fig. 11). Although some elements have eleventh-century parallels, the closest parallel for these ornaments date to the second part of the twelfth century (fig. 12). E.g. the four-leaf clovers on a background of punched dots can be seen on the golden alter in Lyngsjö in Scania from around 1170. If this date is reliable, the overall date of the shrine is somewhat later than the supposed enshrinement of Benedikt (Vellev 1986: 152, Johannsen, Johannsen 1995: 442, 454, 649). A renewed dating of the decoration or, even better, a non-destructive dendrochronological analysis of the shrine would be very welcome.

Although no final conclusion can be made today, there is scholarly agreement that the bones in the shrine with the column-decoration are those of King Cnut. Likewise, in the scientific literature the bones

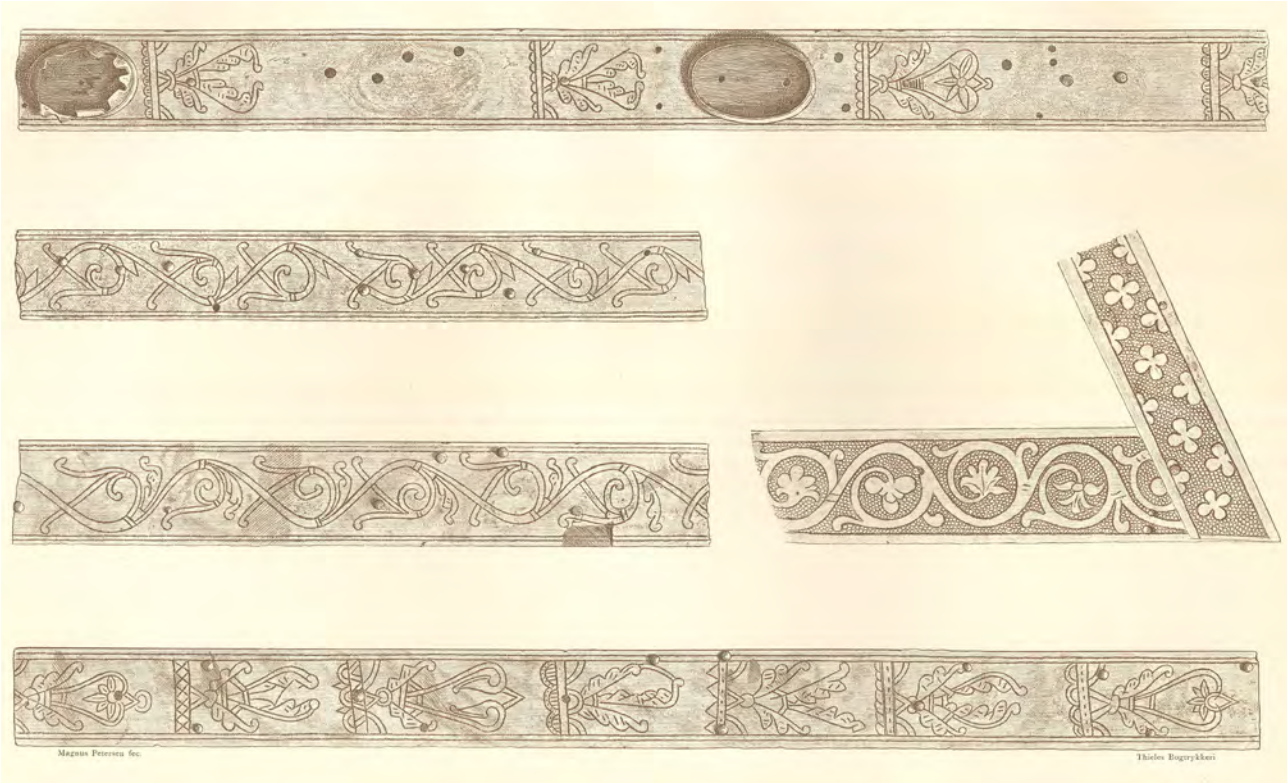


Fig. 11: Examples of ornaments on the shrine with the hipped roof. The sheets are between 2,4 and 3,2 cm wide. The ornaments centre-right are from the lid, the others are from the actual shrine. Drawing: Magnus Petersen (Becker 1886, Table 3).

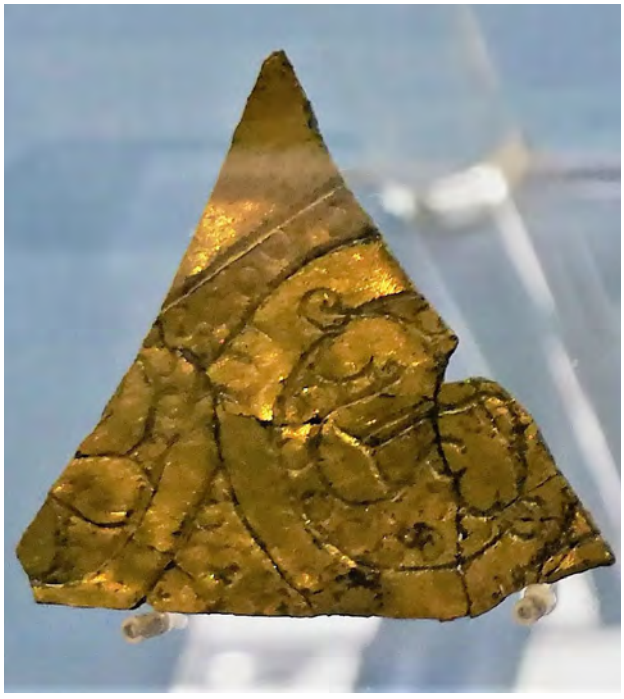


Fig. 12: Another example of a parallel to the ornament on lid on the shrine with the hipped roof is this twelfth century fragment of a guilded copper alloy sheet found in St Augustine's Abbey, Canterbury (Gem 1997: 85). Photo: Else Roesdahl.

in the lidded shrine are now generally believed to be those of Benedikt. Apart from the discrepancy in St Cnut's age at death suggested by written sources compared to the latest estimate of biological age of the bones, no evidence, so far, questions this conclusion. Furthermore, a dendrochronological date of the shrine with the column-decoration indicates that this is indeed the shrine made for St Cnut's elevation in 1100. But the tentative stylistic date of ornaments on remaining mounts on the other shrine suggests that this shrine was made somewhat later.

Fig. 13: "The killing of Cnut the Holy in St Alban's Church 1086". 1843 painting by Christian Albrecht von Benzon (1816-1849) interpreting the historic event. Photo: Odense Bys Museer.

PART TWO: The Scene of the killing – St Alban's Church in the eleventh century

The medieval written sources agree that King Cnut and his followers were slain inside St Alban's Church in Odense (fig. 13). It is not clear whether this church was the only ecclesiastical building in Odense at the time, and whether the construction of the predecessor of the present cathedral (St Cnut's Church) had already started by 1086 (Riising & Johannsen 1990: 66). Quite possibly, St Alban's Church (also called The Church of Our Lady (Gertz 1907: 18f)) was the first church in Odense, and the building might have been a successor to the church mentioned in 988 (Diplomatarium Danicum 1,1: no. 343). A recently discovered grave in St Alban's cemetery that probably dates to the late tenth century supports this view, although an unknown older church may of course have existed in another location (for a further discussion of this see Christensen *et al.* in this volume).[3] The younger *passio* mentions that at the time of Cnut's killing, the Church of St Alban was "the bishop's church", that is to say the cathedral (Gertz 1908-12: 552). This remark has recently been supported by a 2015 discovery of an eleventh century travertine bishop's grave on the site (fig. 14) which will be discussed later (see also Christensen & Hansen 2017). St Alban's Church being the cathedral also supports the theory of St Alban's being the oldest church in Odense. The medieval sources seem to agree that in 1086 the church was built of wood (Zeeberg 2015: 535 Saxo 11.14:14; Albrectsen 1984: 83ff/ Aelnoth ch. 27-28; Olrik 1893-94: 14). Later,

Fig. 14: Eleventh-century bishop's grave inside †St Alban's Church. The travertine blocks that formed a lid have been removed to reveal the skeleton of a male around 178 cm tall. Photo: Mikael Manøe Bjerregaard 2015.

it was rebuilt in stone with additional building parts being added in bricks throughout the following centuries. In the 1540s, the late medieval version of St Alban's Church was torn down and the cemetery laid out as a market square (Johannsen *et al.* 2000: 1748). In the following centuries, even the precise location of the church was forgotten, and it was not until the 800th anniversary of Cnut's killing that parts of the church were rediscovered in an archaeological dig in 1886, which unearthed part of the late medieval choir and vestry. Since then archaeological excavations have taken place in 1956, 1980-83, 1998, and 2015-16 in the area that covered St Alban's Church and cemetery (Albrectsen 1956; Arentoft 1985; Christensen 1999; Pedersen & Bjerregaard 2016; Christensen & Bjerregaard 2017). Now a protected ancient monument, the preserved underground parts of St Alban's Church have sadly been heavily disturbed by construction work during the nineteenth and twentieth century. This means that very little evidence from the eleventh-century has been found, and the wooden church that was the scene of King Cnut's killing is impossible to reconstruct in any detail. However, the existing evidence will be presented here.

Evidence of two wooden constructions was found in the early 1980s in form of the remains of wall trenches from the older construction which had been cut by postholes from the younger construction (fig. 15). The general belief is that this represents two successive wooden churches that predates the twelfth-century stone church (Arentoft 1985: 25ff; Johannsen *et al.* 2000: 1735f). One of these wooden churches must have been the scene of the killing of King Cnut.

The older wooden church

Of the older church, only a few meters of two parallel wall trenches have been found: they probably represent the outer walls. The church would then have been approximately 7 m wide. The church had an earthen floor and possibly walls of vertical planks, but the plan of the church cannot be reconstructed. The building appears to have burned.

Below the remains of the earthen floor, a bell casting pit was observed. It is believed that a church bell was made here, and that the pit is more or less contemporary with the first wooden church. A part of the mould has been dated via thermoluminescence to 1030 +/- 60 years, which could indicate that this church was erected in the first part of the eleventh century (Arentoft 1985: 20ff; Johannsen *et al.* 2000: 1737). Given the limitations associated with thermoluminescence dating, an attempt was made recently as part of the project *The Origins of Odense* to extract material for AMS dating from the bell-casting pit. Unfortunately, this was unsuccessful. A grave (OBM8541 G72) that predates the younger wooden church, and thus might belong to the older wooden church, has been radiocarbon-dated to the period 909-1147 AD, possibly 991-1026 AD. This supports the overall idea of the church being erected in the first part of the eleventh century but does not provide any crucial evidence (Runge & Henriksen 2018: 14, 62f).

The younger wooden church

The evidence of the younger wooden church consists of ten postholes and remains of a clay floor which is in turn superimposed by a deposit rich in charcoal. Based on these remains the layout of the church can only be roughly determined. Six of the postholes probably represent the southern line of supportive posts

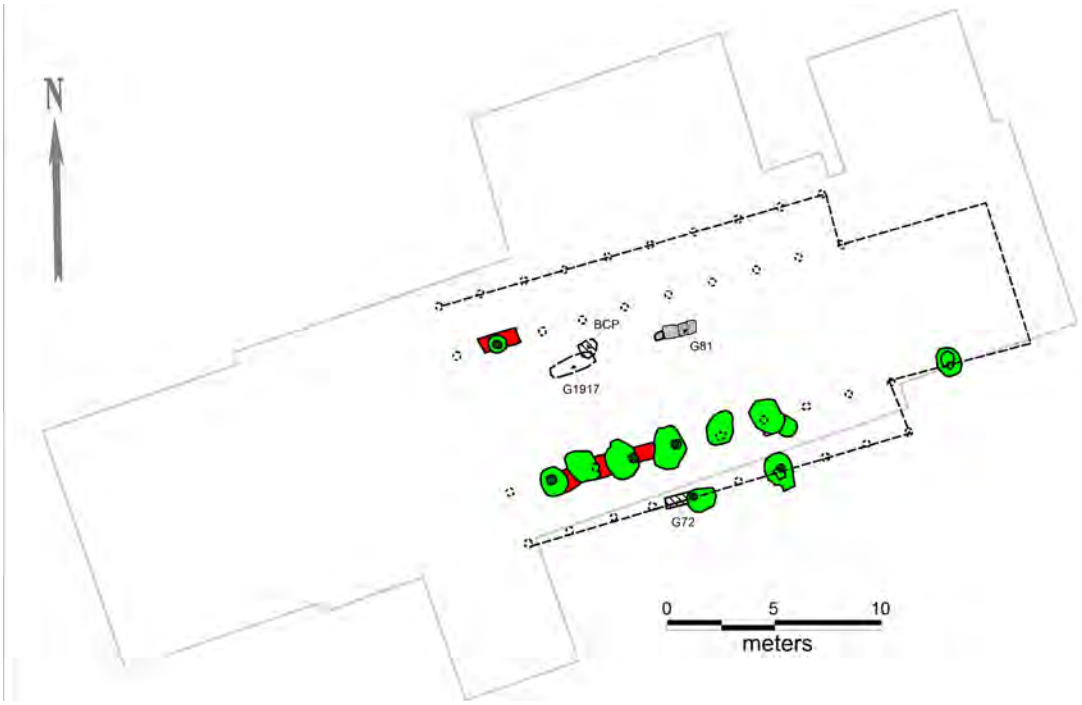


Fig. 15: This plan highlights the archaeological evidence and reconstructed plans for three churches on the site: Two timber churches and the late medieval stone and brick church. The older wooden church is represented by the two red wall trenches, the bell casting pit (BCP) and the AMS-dated grave (G72). The second church is represented by the green irregular shapes with black or white dots. The black dots represent the discovered postholes from the younger church, while the white dots with truncated outline are suggestions for a reconstruction. A suggested plan of the church with a separate choir is marked with a dotted black line. The eleventh-century bishop's grave (G81) is believed to belong to the younger church. G1917 represents a similar grave found in 1917. Finally, the grey line marks the reconstruction of the late medieval stone and brick church.
Drawing: Mikael Manøe Bjerregaard

in a basilica construction. Two postholes located 2.5 m to the south of this row accordingly seem to represent the outer wall. Only one posthole was found that might be part of the northern line of supportive posts, but it does not have an exact counterpoint in the southern line. The central nave would have been around 7 m wide, and the side aisles 2.5 m each. Nothing conclusive can be said about the length of the church. Another posthole 8.5 m to the east of the afore-mentioned row of postholes does not correspond with the direction of the other six and has been interpreted as possible evidence of a separate choir (Arentoft 1985: 25ff; Johannsen *et al.* 2000:1736f).

The time of construction for this church can only be determined as sometime in the eleventh century. This is based on a Svend Estridsen coin (1047-74/76), and small pieces of travertine and human bones found in the postholes for this building. The human bones are believed to indicate that human burials had taken place in this area before these postholes were dug, i.e. those graves represent the older church, while the postholes represent the younger church. The travertine is believed to stem from the construction site of the nearby cathedral, the erection of which is believed to have started around or shortly after 1086 (Arentoft 1985: 15-39; Johannsen *et al.* 2000: 1736f).

Since the two phases of the wooden church cannot be determined with great precision, it will remain an open question whether the older or the younger church was the scene for the killing of King Cnut. Arentoft, who excavated the remains of the churches in the 1980s, tentatively suggests that it was the younger church. The church could have been built on the order of King Svend Estridsen as part of his reorganization of the Danish dioceses in 1060 (Arentoft 1985: 36). Johannsen *et al.*, on the other hand, lean toward the older church being the scene of the killing. The suggestion is based on the same evidence as Arentoft, and even cites Arentoft as the only reference. However, with the premise that the erection of the St Cnut Church started around 1086 and that the travertine pieces in the postholes of St Alban's are spillover from that construction site, Johannsen *et al.* reach a different conclusion. The older church, which appears to have burned, could then have been destro-

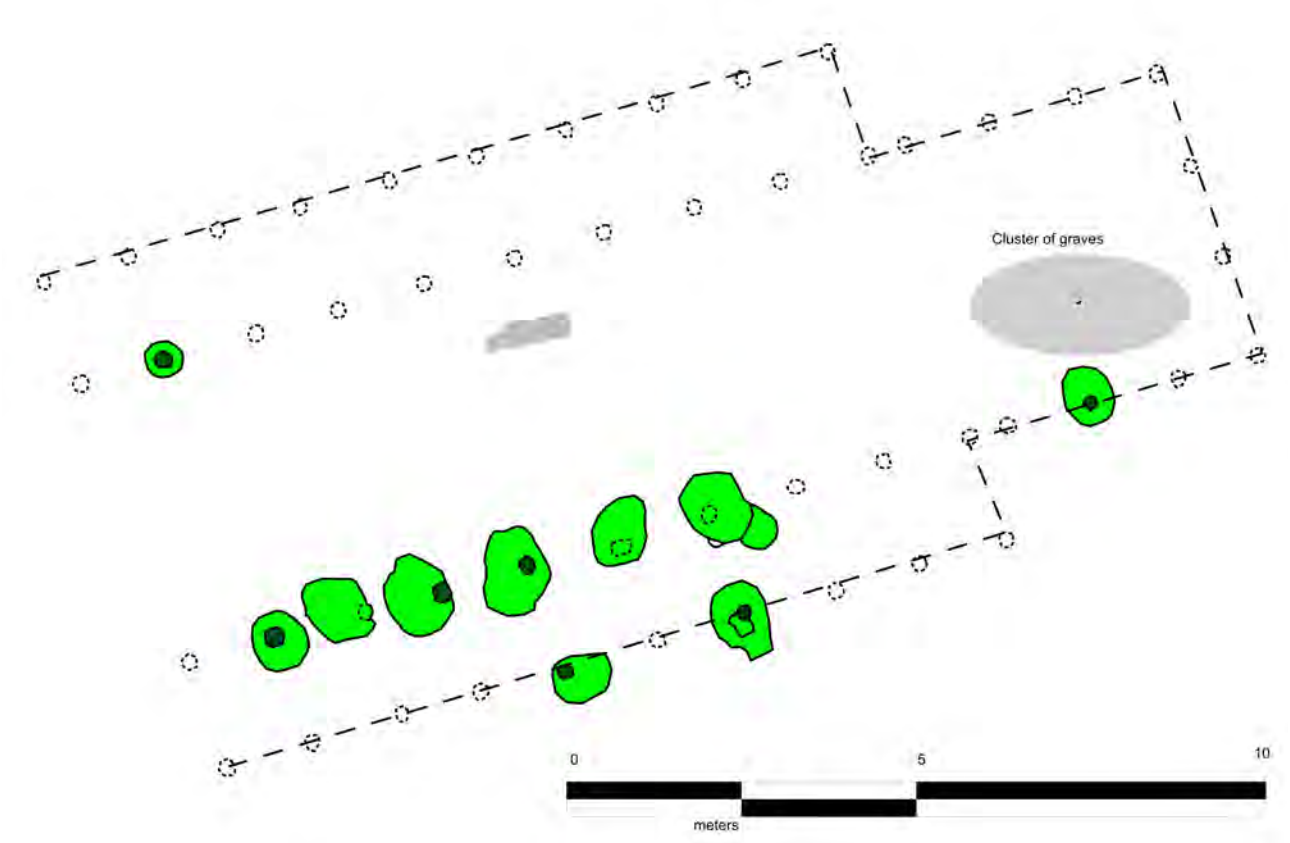
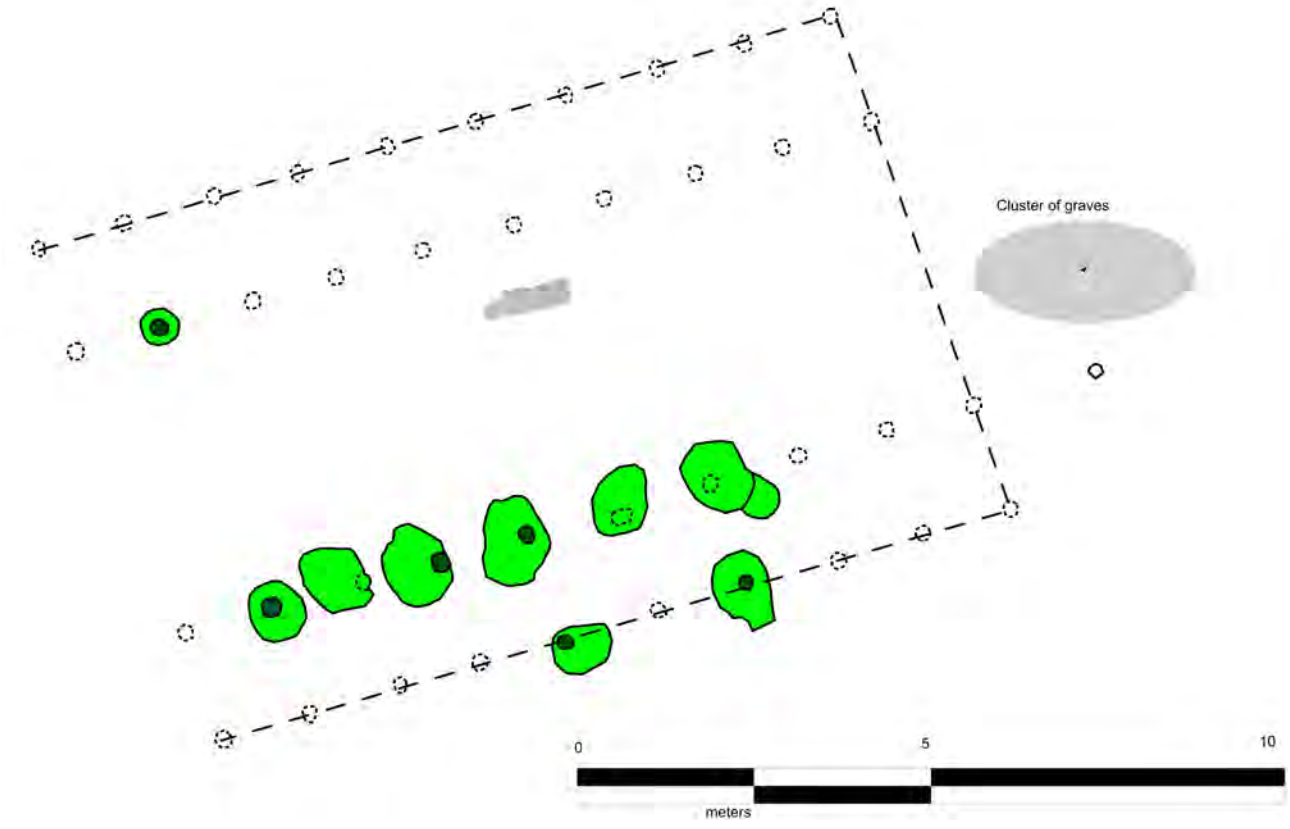


Fig. 16: Top: Suggested reconstruction of St Alban's Church with a separate choir. Only one posthole from this supposed choir has been found. The grey oval shape represents a cluster of graves. Bottom: Suggested reconstruction of the church without a separate choir. The cluster of graves is now located outside the church. Illustration: Mikael Manøe Bjerrregaard.



yed in connection with the killing of the king, and the younger church built on the ruins. The medieval sources state that the mob launched a violent attack on the building, breaking windows, tearing down outer walls and smashing relics and inventory. Both the anonymous *Passio* and Aelnoth mention that the mob intended to set the church on fire, but that heavy rain prevented the fire to take hold (Albrectsen 1984: 40/ Aelnoth ch. 26). The theory about the church being burned down does not seem to match the general idea that Cnut, Benedikt and the hirdmen were buried inside the church shortly after the attack. This shows how the archaeological proofs are open to a variety of interpretations. Even the Svend Estridsen coin and the travertine pieces are dubious evidence for an exact date of the churches. From the tenth century bishop's grave, we now know that travertine was used in the area prior to the erection of St Cnut's Church. Thus, the travertine pieces in the fill of the postholes could stem from construction of such graves – or, who knows, maybe from the carving of floor tiles that was used in parts of the wooden churches. The tiles that make up the floor of the bishop's grave seems to have been carved originally for another purpose, since they don't fit perfectly with the dimensions of the grave. Furthermore, the exact find spot for the Svend Estridsen coin in the fill of the posthole, cannot be extracted from the original excavation data. Did it end up in the fill of the posthole when the post was erected thereby giving a *terminus post quem* dating of the construction? Or did it end up there when the post was removed or decomposed thereby providing a *terminum ante quem* dating of the construction? Arentoft, in his article (1985), draws the former conclusion, yet in his excavation report (1984) he admits that this evidence is uncertain.

It is clear that the basis of a reconstruction of the younger church, especially the separate choir, is very thin. I would like to suggest that the floor plan could have been even simpler with nave and choir under one roof (also suggested by Holm & Mikkelsen 2016:18, see also Bertelsen 2016: 111f) (fig. 16). A cluster of graves found in the 1980s excavation would have been located inside the choir if the first hypothesis is correct. In a church without a separate choir, the graves would have been located just east of the church's eastern gable. The graves have not been AMS-dated, but if they turn out to be from the eleventh or early twelfth century, I find it more likely that these graves were located outside the church. Given the still quite restricted attitude towards burials inside the church in that period, it is hard to imagine that so many graves would have been allowed that close to the main altar inside the church (Andrén 2000: 8). One of the graves is a child's grave, which I believe is even less likely to have been originally inside the church. Only at a later stage when a choir was added – perhaps only with the erection of the stone church in the twelfth century – the graves would have come under roof. A parallel to such a later addition of a choir might be seen in the tenth-century Trinity Church (St Drotten) in Lund (suggested by Cinthio 1996: 7, but disputed by Carelli 2001: 60). It remains an open question whether the church in an urban settlement could have had such a simple plan by the late eleventh century, or whether this was the case only for smaller village churches (Bertelsen 2016: 111f; Holm & Mikkelsen 2016).

St Alban's Church as cathedral

In 2015 an unusually well-constructed grave for a male in his mid-40s or early 50s was discovered on the site of St Alban's Church (fig. 14). It provides the first archaeological evidence of St Alban's Church holding cathedral status in the eleventh century. The grave was a sarcophagus of carved travertine blocks, and held – apart from the skeleton – a miniature eucharistic set (chalice and paten) made of almost pure silver (fig. 17). A stylistic analysis of the chalice and paten, as well as an AMS-dating of the bones, place the burial in the eleventh century. A well-argued theory is that this could be the grave of bishop Eilbert (†1072), who was a cleric from Hamburg-Bremen. The eucharistic set also has close parallels in Northern German material. However, we only know of two Odense bishops in the eleventh century, yet there must have been more about whom the written sources are silent (Christensen & Hansen 2017; Bjerregaard 2017). Whatever the identity of the bishop, it is believed that the grave can be no younger than 1095, when the erection of the new travertine cathedral (present-day St Cnut's Church) was so well underway that the graves of Cnut and Benedikt were moved from St Alban's Church to the crypt of the new church. Around that time, the episcopal status was also transferred from St Alban's Church to the travertine church that was planned as one of the largest churches in Denmark at the time (Johannsen *et al*. 2000: 172f; Bertelsen 2016: 121). Probably from that time on, the Odense bishops would have chosen their last resting place in this new church in close vicinity of the grave of King Cnut who would only a few years later be declared a saint.

Fig. 17: Eucharistic set in silver found in the eleventh-century bishop's grave. The paten depicts the hand of God (Dextera Domini) which is also mentioned in the inscription. Photo: Jens Gregers Aagaard.

Given the age of the grave, it must be seen in connection with one of the wooden phases of St Alban's Church, and quite possibly the church where King Cnut was killed. The bishop's grave would then have been located under the floor centrally in the nave of the church. It is hardly surprising that a cathedral in one of the major settlements of Denmark would be constructed of wood, even in the last part of the eleventh century. This seems to have been the case with several of the other Danish cathedrals at that time (Christensen & Bjerregaard 2017: 117). In the light of this recent discovery of the bishop's grave, we should probably also reconsider the remains of another – poorly preserved – travertine sarcophagus that was found in 1917, just a few meters west of the sarcophagus discussed here (Arentoft 1985: 49; Johannsen *et al.* 2000:1741). Quite possibly, that find represents another eleventh century bishop's grave.

Although the approximate location of the choir has been pointed out, no archaeological evidence of Cnut's and Benedikt's temporary graves have been found. Nevertheless, the spot was until recently marked in the modern pavement as the scene for the killing of King Cnut. Aelnoth's mentioning of the seventeen hirdmen being buried in the church's atrium or antechapel (*in atrio*) has not been documented archaeologically either. This atrium, Aelnoth says, was located in the western and northern part of the church, an area that has probably not been excavated (Albrectsen 1984: 95/ Aeloth ch. 30). Also, although hundreds of graves have been found inside the church and on the surrounding cemetery, no graves have been found that can be attributed to the hirdmen. The cemetery seems to have been well in use in the eleventh century. Four graves from the 1998 archaeological campaign was superimposed by a layer of travertine, and thus associated with the wooden church(es). Four of these individuals have recently been AMS-dated, and as a group they can have been buried no later than the end of the eleventh century. Hitherto unpublished AMS-dating of some of the stratigraphically oldest graves from the 2016 campaign on the eastern part of the cemetery seem to give similar results. But as the datings are quite wide this is by no means unequivocal (Runge & Henriksen 2018: 64f).[4]

Conclusion and suggestions as for future research

The archaeological sources to the killing of King Cnut are quite tangible, including the bones and the wooden shrines. The sources to the scene of the killing, the eleventh century St Alban's Church, are scarce, but nevertheless crucial to our understanding, not just of the church itself, but also the early history of the town of Odense and the church history of Denmark. The sources include a bell casting pit, postholes, wall trenches, and small remains of floor. In addition to this is a number of graves inside and around the church – including an eleventh-century bishop's grave. The general scholarly consensus is that the two skeletons in the shrines are those of St Cnut and his half-brother Benedikt. Based on dendrochronology, the shrine with the column-decoration is beli-

eved to be the original shrine used for Cnut's elevation in 1100. Future DNA analyses may cast more light on the kinship of the two individuals as sons of a common father, Svend Estridsen. Furthermore, a dendrochronological examination of the shrine with the hipped lid would be very welcome. As for the future archaeological research on the protected site of St Alban's Church, only a slight hope of finding further remains of the churches remains, as most of the area has been disturbed by modern building activity. However, the ground below the travertine sarcophagus is intact, since this construction has been left in situ. Also, parts of the church's west end might be preserved in an area that is at present undeveloped. A non-destructive georadar investigation of this area could be one way of gaining more knowledge about possibly preserved remains of this part of the church. Hopefully, we might someday get a better dating of the wooden churches from the already discovered archaeological findings, or from future excavations.

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Notes

[1] For more information about the manuscript by Aelnoth and Saxo see the website Medieval Nordic Literature in Latin https://wikihost.uib.no/medieval/index.php/Medieval_Nordic_Literature_in_Latin.

[2] In connection with the exhibition “Cnut’s Odense – Viking City” at the Odense City Museums in 2017, an application for a renewed attempt to extract DNA material from the bones in the two shrines was filed in order to determine the possible kinship between these two individuals and Svend Estridsen. However, the necessary permissions could not be obtained from all involved authorities at that point.

[3] Laboratory number POZ-100537. 1060 ± 30 BP. 1.3%N, 3.5%C, 3.4%coll. 68.2% probability: 970AD (68.2 %) 1019AD. 95.4% probability: 897AD (14.4%) 925AD; 943AD (81.0%) 1024AD.

The date should be taken with a reservation, since the reservoir effect has not been taken into account.

[4] Laboratory numbers of the yet unpublished dates Poz-100507-100509, Poz-10511-10512, Poz-10539-10540.

Oriental and Byzantine silks in St Cnut's reliquary shrine

By Anne Hedeager Krag

Fig. 1: St Cnut's reliquary, with the yellow pillow, in the Cathedral of Odense. Photo: Lars Skaaning.

The Danish king Cnut IV was murdered in Odense on the 10th of July 1086 in front of the altar in St Alban's Church. The king was killed by Danish rebels together with his brother Benedikt and seventeen of his knights. On the 19th of April 1100, the shrine containing the body of St Cnut was placed at the high altar of Odense Cathedral (Danmarks Kirker IX, 1: 426). St Cnut's remains were wrapped in a silk cloth with an eagle motif and put into a shrine. This textile is known as the Eagle Silk. Today the shrine is in the crypt of the cathedral, where a skeleton believed to be that of the murdered King Cnut lies on a patterned yellow silk pillow with bird motif. The Eagle Silk is displayed in an adjacent glass case.

The shrine's walls are lined on the inside with thin purple-like silk material, probably of the type known in the Middle Ages as cendal or sandal. On the floor of the casket a large, flat quilt of yellow silk was laid, as well as the smaller yellow pillow with a pattern of birds in a now pale blue colour (fig. 1).

The English monk Aelnoth of Canterbury wrote of St Cnut and his silks about fifteen years after the canonization of St Cnut:

> a magnificent shrine for the sacred bones, shining like silver and in the reddish flame of gold ornamented with lovely blue and yellowish stones, in it the sacred bones of the saint shall rest. Silk, saffron-yellow, precious stones, all in the most splendid trappings (Albrechtsen 1986: 21ff).

St Cnut's shrine is unique due to the fairly well-preserved state of the remains of the king and the precious silks found in it. Thus, the shrine of St Cnut's earthly remains is among the most important medieval artefacts of Denmark (Fledelius 2010: 9). Based on comparative research, the silks found in Odense are believed to be of Byzantine and Central Asian origin (Hedeager Krag 2010: 16ff). The remains believed to be those of St Cnut's brother, Benedikt, are in

Fig. 2: The Eagle Silk. Photo: The National Museum of Denmark.

the casket next to that of St Cnut. Benedikt was never canonized, however, and in his casket there were no precious patterned silks. This article will present an interpretation of the silk motifs, style and use against a wider European background, informed by the latest research as well as new colour analyses of the Eagle Silk and the pillow with the birds (Hedeager Krag 2010). The symbolic meaning of the silks will also be discussed, as they have inspired royal houses in the later centuries, as seen in the case of King Frederik VII of Denmark (1848-1863).

The largest of the silks from Odense, dated AD 1050-1100, is the so-called Eagle Silk, 110 x 133 cm, red with a pattern of dark blue eagles (fig. 2). The cloth has been trimmed, and, judging from the symmetry of the pattern, the width must originally have been at least 195 cm, perhaps as much as 230 cm – that is, a very large textile. The silk is woven as samite, the weave is tight, and the Z-spun warp is relatively coarse, alternating in reddish-brown and undyed silk, while the weft is of unspun red and bluish-black silk in various thickness (Hedeager Krag 2010: 18, Hedeager Krag 2018: 49) (fig. 3).

Fig. 3: Detail of the Eagle Silk.
Photo: Annemette Bruselius Scharff.

The pattern of the Eagle Silk appears almost black against a dark-red ground. The two shades of silk threads in the warp – uncoloured and brownish red – give the red ground a changeable nature. The pattern consists of large oval patterned medallions, interconnected in both height and width, a feature also known from Byzantine and Sassanid silk weaves. The so-called recesses, where the frames meet one another in fours, contain small pattern-filled medallions. Inside each large oval medallion is an eagle with spread, patterned wings, spread tail feathers, and

Fig. 4: Inscription from the Eagle Silk.
Photo: Annemette Bruselius Scharff.

with its head in profile. In its beak the eagle carries a jewel in the shape of a crescent ring with a pendant. The large medallions with the recurrent eagle motif are 82 cm in height and 65 cm in width.

On the base on which the eagle stands, there is an inscription of which there have been various interpretations (fig. 4). Some scholars think it consists of Islamic characters, others that they are Greek. Only a few of the letters are legible, but the Danish classical philologist Carsten Høeg considered them to be based on Greek letterform (Geijer 1935: 104ff; Muthesius 1997: 195; Riis & Riis 2004: 259ff)

Symbols

The eagle motif is ancient (fig. 5). The legions of the Roman Empire fought under the Eagle Standard. This was the sign of imperium, and the power of the military commanders of the Roman Republic was later

Fig. 5: The Eagle silk from the reverse, where the motif is red and the background blue.
Photo: Annemette Bruselius Scharff.

adopted by the Roman emperors as one of their main insignia. Known as the *aquila*, the standard itself became an emblem of Imperial power (O'Connell & Airey 2018: 19). The eagle motif continued as an imperial symbol in the Byzantine Empire (AD 330-1453). An association between eagles and emperors can be traced in Byzantine sources, where figures of emperors and their families are offered protection in the shadow of the wings of an eagle (Muthesius 2004: 227ff). In the "Book of Ceremonies" edited by Constantine VII (913-959), examples of eagle motifs on textiles used at the Byzantine court are mentioned (Muthesius 2004:235). In the iconography of Christian art, the eagle with spread wings is a symbol of the power of the world and is associated with John the evangelist. The motif has been used in connection with the representation of the Passion, where the lamb, the lion and the eagle symbolize Christ's Death, Resurrection and Ascension (Schiller 1972: 136).

There is a recognized group of surviving eagle silks which have been identified with *panni imperialis de Romania ad aquilas magnas*, a designation which appears in Latin church inventories from 1295 in Rome (Vellev 1996: 114). Otto von Falke labelled them a "Imperial silks", and saw them as evidence of the imperial workshops, the *gynnaecea*, in Constantinople (Beckwith 1989: 38; Falke 1913).

Imperial eagle silks are known from Auxerre and Brixen. Both places were important ecclesiastical centres. From the grave of St Germain at Auxerre, France, there is an eagle silk – now in the Church of St Eusèbe, Auxerre – which is one of the finest Byzantine silks in existence. The eagles are freestanding in horizontal rows across the silk in a yellow and dark-green colour on blue-purple ground. It is said to be a chasuble that belonged to bishop Albuin (975-1006) (Flury-Lemberg 2004: 298ff).

Another silk, now in the Cathedral Treasury at Bressanone (Brixen) in the southern Tyrol, Italy, can plausibly be identified with a documented *casula purpura* decorated all over with a large-scale eagle motif, presumably presented as a gift to Bishop Albuin (Muthesius 1997: 49). It is patterned with large dark-green eagles, with the details picked out in yellow, on red-purple ground, and with large dark-green rosettes in the intervening spaces.

The pillow with the bird motif

The yellow pillow-case with the bird motif consists of several pieces sewn together, perhaps re-used, of which one piece, measuring 30 x 40 cm, covers the front of the pillow and about a third of the back, while the rest consists of strips about 5 cm wide (fig. 6). They have been cut off without regard to the pattern and cover roughly the other two thirds of the back, possibly reusing a chasuble. The material is very loose in structure. The weave is of the samite type and has a closer density than the Eagle Silk. The silk with the bird motif probably dates to about AD 900. The pattern has been compared to a group of Sassanid Persian silks that go back to the 700s-900s (Falke 1913: 989).

The pattern consists of cross-like figures that have a round termination at the top, two short transverse

Fig. 6: The pillow in the shrine (close-up). Photo: Peter Helles.

Fig. 7: Magnus Petersen's drawing from 1886. (Burman Becker 1886: Table 6).

lines and a base piece. It resembles an anchor (fig. 7). The cross-like figure is between pairs of opposed birds with long, patterned tails (Burman Becker 1886: 53; Geijer 1935: 58). Between each group at the height of the birds' heads, a heart has been woven. All figures are light blue with faint golden contours against the yellow ground. The size of the repeated pattern varies from 5.5 to 6.5 cm in height and 7 to 9 cm in width.

The birds on the yellow pillow case are probably peacocks. Perhaps the design showed peacocks placed on each side of a cross or the Tree of Life. In the iconography of Christian art, peacocks are a symbol of immortality and resurrection (Schiller 1971: 172). In early Christian art, especially from Ravenna, one finds peacocks grouped symmetrically in pairs around a vase, a cross, or a monogram (Bovini 1991: 61). The peacock comes from India, where it still lives in the wild today. The opposing pairs of peacocks with a cross symbol or the Tree of Life between them are considered to have been an Iranian motif with its origin in the Sassanid period (AD 226-661) (Reimbold 1983: 17, 40). Motifs with birds were very common in contemporary silk patterns from Central Asia, and the actual bird motifs are thought to come from Sogdiana, the northeastern province of the Central Asian area in northern Iran, Turkmenistan and Kurdistan. The most important city of the province, Samarkand, developed from the 700s onwards as a centre of Islamic culture, and at the same time it was an important station on the Silk Road.

In 2008, the shrines in Odense were opened, both for new analyses of the skeletons and for colour analyses. On this occasion, ten small thread specimens were taken for dye analysis, which was conducted at the Netherlands Institute for Cultural Heritage (ICN) in Amsterdam. The samples were examined under a digital microscope with a magnification of 10X prior to analysis, in order to observe colours and determine if the threads contained fibres with a colour different from the overall impression. If that were the case, attempts were made to divide the threads and analyse them separately. This process is not destructive and therefore has no influence on dye analyses.

From the report it is evident that dyes of nine of the ten threads have been identified (Bommel 2008: 9). Results of the dyestuff identification of the Eagle Silk shows that the red colour was made from two colours, indigo or woad and madder species, which, combined, produced the red-brown colour (indigotin, alizarin). The blue colour in the Eagle Silk was achieved with three dyestuffs, weld (luteolin), madder species (alizarin), and indigo or woad (indigotin). It is known that small amounts of madder roots are added to the dye bath to help the fermentation process of indigo. This could be an explanation for the presence of trace amounts of alizarin in the dark blue coloured textile samples from the Eagle Silk (Bommel 2008:9).

THE EAGLE SILK

	Result dyestuff analysis	Conclusion
Red colour	Alizarin	Madder
	Indigotin	Indigo
Blue colour	Luteolin	Weld
	Alizarin	Madder
	Indigotin	Indigo or woad

THE PILLOW WITH THE BIRD MOTIF

	Result dyestuff analysis	Conclusion
Yellow colour	Type C, Component	Sappanwood/redwood
	Quercetin, Rhamnetin and kampheol	Persian berries
	Indigotin	Indigo or woad
Dark Blue Colour	Indigotin	Indigo or woad
Light Blue Colour	Indigotin	Indigo or woad

Fig. 8: Results of dyestuff identification (analysed with high performance liquid chromatography (HPLC). (Hedeager Krag 2010:39-41)

The colour analyses of the yellow bird-patterned silk pillow distinguished three or four vegetable dyes: a red, sappanwood/redwood, a yellow, Persian Berry; and one ore two blue, extracted respectively from the woad or indigo plants. The red colour sappanwood/redwood and the yellow Persian Berry (fig. 5), both used in the yellow silk from the pillow, are remarkable, as the origin of both colours is Central and Eastern Asia. The roots of sappanwood/redwood give a red dye which was imported to Europe from the Far East. The earliest known textiles identified as having been dyed with sappanwood/redwood are a group of multicoloured and patterned silk fabrics from Loulan in eastern Turkestan, excavated by Aurel Stein in 1913-16. The silks have been dated to the period from the second century BC to the third century AD (Hofenk de Graf 2004: 142).

Recently, it has been stated that the Odense yellow pillow has a pattern that is very similar to patterns originating from the Tashkent commercial city of Uzbekistan in Central Asia. The city was known to be an important trading station on the Silk Road.

The yellow dye, which was determined by analysis in 2008 to be coloured by both sappanwood/redwood and Persian berries, which gave both red and yellow colours, might originally have a colour resembling that of saffron, which interestingly corroborates the account by Aelnoth's assertion that St Cnut's shrine was adorned with saffron-yellow silk (Albrechtsen 1986: 21ff).

Silk and the Silk Road

On the basis of the various interpretations of the Odense Eagle Silk, it can be concluded that it could well have been made in an area under Byzantine influence outside Constantinople between 1050 and 1100, perhaps in southern Italy. There was a dissemination of Byzantine silk to Western Europe, especially in the tenth to the twelfth centuries, both as merchandise and as diplomatic gifts, and it had a great effect on the use of silk in religious contexts. This was also true in Denmark.

The yellow pillow case has a pattern showing more an Oriental than a Byzantine pattern, and colour-analyses support the suggestion that it was probably woven in Central Asia, perhaps near Tashkent.

Silk production in Byzantium is known from the reign Emperor Justinian (527-65) (fig. 9). The silk styles were characterized by both Byzantine culture as well as the influential Sassanid culture in what is present-day Iran (226-661). The Odense silks are woven in the technique samitum, which is a technique that utilizes the qualities of silk in the very best way. Samitum technique became widespread throughout the Mediterranean, including Byzantium, and also further north. A samitum-woven silk piece reached Denmark in the early Viking Age, where a

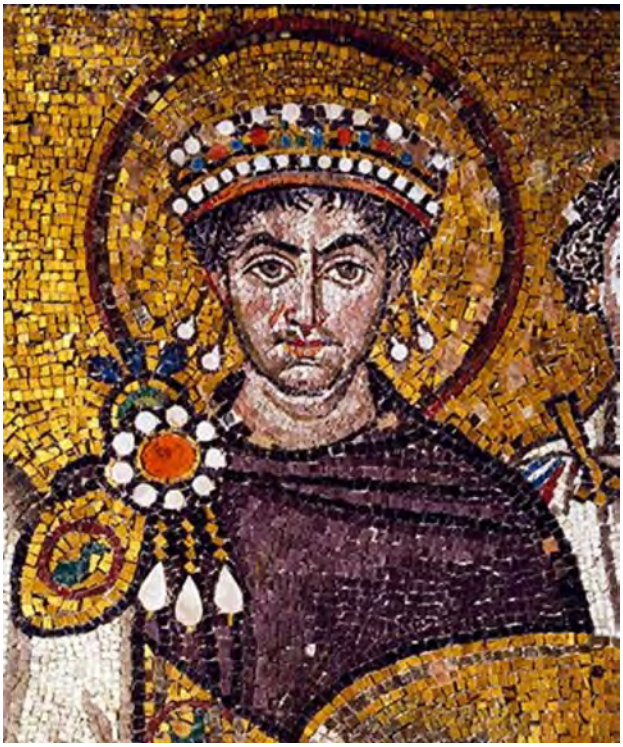

Fig. 9: Emperor Justinian. Detail of a 6th century mosaic in the Basilica of San Vitale, Ravenna. Photo: Basilica of San Vitale, Ravenna.

small piece of 2.5 cm x 1.2 cm is known from a grave in Fløjstrup at Randers (Hedeager Krag 2010: 64).

From the beginning of the ninth century, the Vikings in Rus' had contact with both the life of the steppes and the caliphate in Baghdad. Settlements were built along the rivers Oder, Neva, Volga and Dnepr, and new hubs established themselves as trading stations for merchants who brought goods to and from the south. Staraja Ladoga and Novgorod were new trading centres that expanded the major Euro-Asian trade routes all the way to the furthest parts of northern Europe. This is evidenced by the many fine silk weavings textiles made in Byzantium and Central Asia which have been found in burial places in Denmark, Sweden and Norway (Hedeager Krag 2018: 56).

However, it is the silver coins that clearly show the extent of the long-distance trade. The Vikings were well aware of eastern contacts. For example, a coin hoard found in 1932 in the remains of a vessel at Randlev in East Jutland consisted of 237 silver coins (Skov & Varberg 2011: 87). 235 of the coins were Arabic or imitations of these; only two were of European origin. The coin hoard was buried in the early 900s. Some of the Randlev Arabic coins are imitations‑produced in the Volga-Bulgarian area of Russia, where Nordic and Arab merchants met on the important trade route along the Volga River. The Randlev coins are characteristic of Caucasus, Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan and Uzbekistan; the same areas where there was also a great deal of silk.

Precious textiles and clothing as salary and gifts are mentioned in the Icelandic Sagas. *Egil's Saga*, chapter 55, describes how Egil spends the winter at the court of the Christian King of England, Athelstan: "Then gave Athelstan further to Egil as poet's friend two gold rings, each weighing a mark, and there with a costly cloak that the king himself had formerly worn". Norse literature employs the word *heidinnstykke*, which means "heiðneskr", the same as oriental silk.

Another written source, which mentions silk transmitted from the East to the Vikings, is Ibn Fadlan, who was sent in 921 on a mission from the Caliph in Baghdad to the king of the Volga Bulgars. He describes how a Viking chief was buried in Bulghar, dressed in precious cloth, in the form of a brocaded silk caftan (Frye 2005).

Summary

The two patterned silks from St Cnut's shrine in Odense, discussed in this paper, thus suggest, through new colour analyses, that there were both Byzantine and Oriental silks in Denmark in the early Middle Ages, which may have arrived variously as gifts, through diplomatic connections and the silk-trade via the Silk Road through Byzantium. The new dyestuff analyses of the silks identify a red dyestuff, sappanwood/brazilwood (Caesalpinia sappan), and a yellow dye, which has been determined to be Persian Berries (Ramnus family). Both dyestuffs are known from silks traded along the Silk Road from Central Asia. Of particular interest here is the yellow dyes, since the description "Saffron-yellow" was given to silk placed in the reliquary of St Cnut in Aelnoth's description of Cnut's second translation. The written source from *c*.1110-17 thus agrees with the scientific pigment analyses done today.

Precious textiles, especially silk and gold-embroided silk, were needed in Danish churches in the establishment phases of the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Silk that came from Constantinople was of great prestige in Western Europe in the Early Middle Ages (c. 550-1100). There was thus a connection between silk, politics and religion. Both the Eagle Silk and the pillow with the bird motif are symbols that can be associated with imperial power and Christianity. In the iconography of Christian art, peacocks symbolize immortality, and the eagle symbolizes power, and one can hardly conceive of clearer symbols in connection with the murdered king who was later canonized. This symbolic language is likely to have been known to the donor. Possibly the silks were gifts from Cnut's widow Adèle, later married to the South Italian Duke Roger of Apulia, when the items were deposited in the royal shrine in Odense.

Postscript: Frederik VII (1848-1863)

Another Danish King is connected with the yellow pillow is Frederik VII. The antiquarian George Stephens claimed that the silk had been cut by Frederik VII himself, when Cnut's shrine was opened in Odense in 1833. The Danish King used the silk as a gift in 1863 to the Danish Princess Alexandra (1844-1925) for her wedding with the Prince of Wales, later King Edward VII (1844-1925) (Hedeager Krag 2010: 33). A splinter of wood from the True Cross was wrapped in a piece of this silk for Alexandra's gift. King Cnut was the first Dane to be canonized and he participated in Asbjørn's raid c. 1069 to England, but his own raid was cancelled. With all its valuable and symbolic elements, the purpose of the jewellery was to document Princess Alexandra's

background, the king's lineage and its long and venerable past with good connections to the world and the Almighty (Mørch 2018). Those symbols were well-known to Frederik VII, and it was common for kings to cut silk from relics, as they were thought to have a magical significance (Hedeager Krag 2010: 33).

Both Frederik VII and the French Emperor Napoleon III were enthusiasts of history and archaeology. About 1862 Frederik VII presented Napoleon III with a number of archaeological objects from Denmark. In the archaeological exhibition of the Musée d'Archéologie Nationale in the Château de Saint-Germain-en-Laye in Paris there is a showcase containing Frederik VII's gifts to Napoleon III. Among these gifts are a bronze horn, a bronze cell and flint axes from Denmark's past. In return Frederik VII received the French Honorary Legion's official cross, star and great cross. A source indicates that Frederik VII, on this occasion, also presented Napoleon III with a fragment of the Eagle Silk, but the silk does presumably not exist today.

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Notes

[1] https://da.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frederik_7.

[2] The following description of the silks was previously published in Hedeager Krag 2018 and appears here by permission of the editors and publisher.

[3] Dr. Zvezdana Dode, professor at Stavropol State University, Russia, has found an unpublished piece of fabric at the Stavropol Museum that is similar to the Odense bird-silk. Email correspondence, 4th of February, 2012.

[4] See http://sagadb.org/egils_saga.en.

[5] Sarracian: People from the east, oriental. Information given by email from Anette Lassen, Associate Professor, Department of Nordic Studies and Linguistics, 7th of January, 2019.

[6] Odense Stadsarkiv received an e-mail in the beginning of 2017, where it became apparent that the missing piece of the Eagle Silk was today in a museum in Paris.

Danish Coinage under the Reign of Cnut IV, 1080-1086

By Thomas Guntzelnick Poulsen

This article is based on a research project on Denmark's early medieval coinage titled 'De danske udmøntninger under Svend Estridsens sønner' (Danish Coinage During the Reign of Svend II Estridsen's Sons). The aim of the project was to thoroughly revise the coin issue from the period 1074-1134, as well as to gather all previously published material into a single article. The results of the project were published in Årbøger *for nordisk oldkyndighed og historie* (Yearbooks of Scandinavian Antiquarianism) (Poulsen 2016). As is evident from the title, the project covered the reign of Svend II Estridsen's five sons, i.e. from Harald III Hen (1074/76) to Niels (1104-34). This article will exclusively focus on the coinage from the time of Cnut IV.

Danish coinage before the reign of Cnut IV

The first Danish coins were issued as far back as the eighth century in Ribe. In the ninth century, coins were issued from Hedeby as well. Both were, however, local coins and almost exclusively used in the town. In the rest of the country, weighed silver was still used as payment. Tell-tale signs of this weight-based economy are clearly evident in the hoards from the past, consisting of a mixture of silver ingots, cut jewellery, and foreign coins (Fig. 1). The first coin type that seems to have been used throughout the country was Harald Bluetooth's cross coins from Hedeby (Moesgaard 2015: 235-241). The success of the cross coin was however short-lived, as

Fig. 1: Silver hoard dating from the tenth century found by metal detectorists south-east of the town of Randers in the late summer of 2018. The hoard contains mostly silver ingots, cut jewellery, and a few coins.
Photo: Museum Østjylland.

Fig. 2: Svend Forkbeard's coin with the inscription ZVEN REX AD DENER. Photo: National Museum of Denmark.

production ceased after Harald was overthrown by his son Svend I Forkbeard.

Svend I Forkbeard was the first Danish king to add his name to the coins and utilise stylised portraits of himself. Only a single Danish coin is known from his reign. The inscription on it reads: ZVEN REX AD DENER (Bendixen 1967: 18) (Fig. 2). At the same time, large amounts of imitations of English coins were produced. The individual coin types mix front and back motifs with each other, and often the inscriptions are just a collection of letters without meaning. These coins were probably minted in Lund and Sigtuna (Malmer 2010). The coins have a high content of silver and thus fit well with the weight-based economy. Production of these coins continued until the end of the 1020s. During the reign of Cnut I the Great the names of several Danish towns begin to appear on the coins. Towns like Lund, Ringsted, Roskilde and possibly Ribe. Most of these towns remained important places of coin production during the first part of the Middle Ages. There are also signs that Cnut tried to reform the Danish coin system by introducing a regulated weight for the coins, and new motifs that were not just imitations of English coins (Malmer 2003). Judging from the composition of the hoards, the coins were still used according to weight. Consequently, coins were still cut, and there are frequent signs of the silver content of the coins being assayed by pecking. Moreover, by far the greater part of the coins found in hoards were foreign. There are, however, signs from a number of finds from the 1030s and 1040s indicating a tendency towards a monopoly of Danish coins. This is most evident in the single find material from the most important towns, i.e. Lund, Roskilde and Odense (Moesgaard 2018b: 191).

Signs indicating that coinage was evolving from the weight-based economy of the Viking Age into one of regulated coinage governed by a stringent framework and royal monopoly are evident solely from the coin finds themselves, since no description of this has been found in any written sources that have survived so far. As mentioned above, this process seems to have started in the 1030s. The coins are still fragmented, but for the larger part in halves or quarters indicating a usage based on numbers and not weight (Malmer 2003). This process appears to have picked up pace in Denmark in the second half of the eleventh century during the reign of Svend Estridsen. Prior to *c.* 1050, we hardly see any Danish coins in the hoards, except in hoards from the above-mentioned towns. Furthermore, the coinage seems to have been spontaneous, without any kind of central organisation. Many different types of coin and motifs were used, and coins were issued from many different mints. Towards the end of Svend Estridsen's reign, however, this had changed. Danish coins now constitute over 80% of the coins found in hoards (Moesgaard 2018b: 208). The various coin types were now centred more permanently on specific mint towns and there were more moneyers per coin type than had previously been the case. That is to say, the various types were minted in larger quantities by greater numbers of moneyers, suggesting a more structured coinage. From the reign of Magnus I the Good, 45 moneyers can be identified from the inscriptions on the coins. Between them, they issued 38 different types of coin. During the reign of Svend Estridsen, 202 moneyers issued 77 types of coin. The development is very conspicuous during the reign of Harald Hen, since there are 33 known moneyers is-

Fig 3: The two types of coin issued during the reign of Harald Hen. The type featuring a saint on the obverse and a clavate cross on the reverse was minted in the Scanian provinces and in Jutland, and the one featuring a crowned bust in profile on the obverse and a small central cross on the reverse was minted on Zealand.
Photo: Thomas Guntzelnick Poulsen.

suing only six types of coin (Ljungkvist 1986: 263). Moreover, the minting is concentrated in far fewer towns, with Lund as the most important mint town followed by Roskilde, and only two types of coin were minted (Fig. 3). Furthermore, the silver content became regulated and harmonised in the country as a whole.

Formerly, numismatists entertained the belief that these developments reflected the fact that an actual coin reform had been implemented by Harald Hen. However, the belief generally held today is one of a gradual shift, begun in the first quarter of the eleventh century and more or less completed during the reign of Svend Estridsen. It has been suggested that part of this process could be connected with Svend Estridsen's runic coins. Arguably, the new runic coins were intended to render Danish coins easier to recognise compared to foreign ones (Jensen 1995: 19-20 and 82-84) (Fig. 4).

Fig. 4: One of Svend Estridsen's runic coins from Lund. On the obverse, a figure of a saint. On the reverse, a cross with runic inscription along the edge.
Photo: National Museum of Denmark.

Coins minted during the reign of Cnut IV

Thus, by the time of Cnut IV's accession to the throne, Danish coinage was a regulated monetary economy. This development was part of a general expansion of the powers of the king and the country's development towards a modern Western European medieval society. The Danish coin was distributed in three regions, each of which constituted the legal entity for the minting of coins. Choice of motif, weight, and dimensions were governed as much by the regional origin of the coins as by the reigning monarch. The administrative units at the time were based on a regional subdivision of Denmark which, from ancient times, had been divided into a number of *land*s, each with their regional assemblies or *landsting*. The most important of these were Lund, Ringsted, and Viborg. The regions covered by the coinage were the Scanian provinces, Zealand, and Jutland. Recent studies have also proposed that part of southern Jutland centred on Slesvig functioned as an independent region. As a rule, any given coin was only legal tender in the region where it had been minted, so travellers had to exchange their coins at royal exchange booths.

The coins from the Scanian provinces tended to be of the highest quality and this region was also the most highly developed in terms of coinage (Fig. 5). This is clearly evident at each royal succession until, and including, Erik I Ejegod, as there was an overlap of type, so that the first coin of the newly crowned king was always identical to that of his predecessor. From the efficient Scanian mints, it was possible to issue coin bearing the name of the new king without the need for a major coin exchange procedure. Coin exchange, or *renovatio monetae*, as it was known, was an important source of income for the king, since a fee was levied for exchanging the coins, while at the same time rendering the old ones invalid. There is evidence to suggest that Cnut IV made frequent use

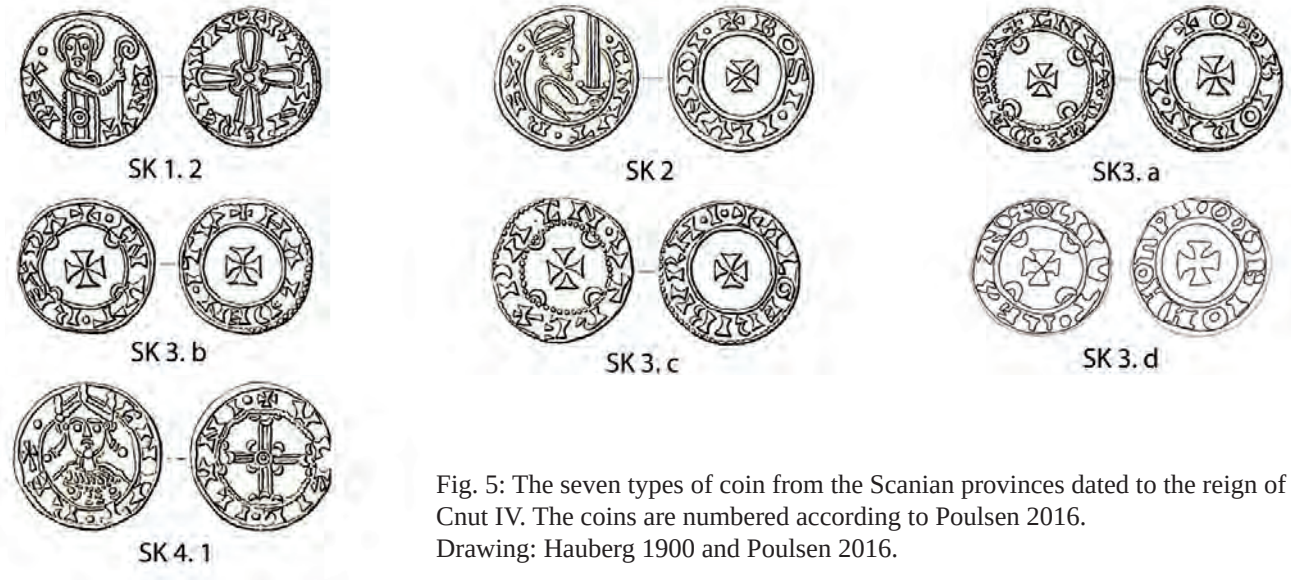

Fig. 5: The seven types of coin from the Scanian provinces dated to the reign of Cnut IV. The coins are numbered according to Poulsen 2016.
Drawing: Hauberg 1900 and Poulsen 2016.

Fig. 6: Cnut IV's simple coin type from the Scanian provinces. This specimen is from Lund.
Photo: Thomas Guntzelnick. Drawing: Hauberg 1900.

of this right in the Scanian provinces, since he was the one of Svend Estridsen's five sons who had the most coin types minted in this region. Cnut IV also had a specimen of the very popular Zealandic coin type featuring a crowned bust on the obverse minted in Lund. This should presumably be interpreted as an attempt at unifying the Zealandic and Scanian coin. Moreover, Cnut IV had a coin minted in the Scanian provinces that was unique to his reign: a very simple type featuring a central cross on both the obverse and reverse surrounded by an inscription (Fig. 6). This coin type was minted at several locations, including Lund, Thumatorp, Borgby and Nordby. Where the first three are well known towns in Scania, the name Nordby is actually only known from a single coin in the collection of the British Museum. No known town in Scania carries this name, but judging from the motif the coin is clearly from Scania (Jensen 1986). By far the majority of the coins originate from Lund, and, judging from the number of known moneyers linked to this type of coin, it was minted in great quantities.

On Zealand, the above-mentioned coin type featuring the crowned bust was predominant (Fig. 7). It was universal during the reigns of Harald Hen, Cnut IV, and Oluf I Hunger. Formerly, this coin type was believed to have been minted in Odense, too. Funen is considered part of the Jutlandish regional coin, and the idea inferred by this interpretation was significant, therefore, since it meant that this coin type would have been minted in all three regions during the reign of Cnut IV. Thus, Cnut would have succeeded, albeit only for a brief time, in introducing a single coin type for the whole country. The assessment of this coin had originally been made by Peter Hauberg in his major work about Denmark's medieval coins *Myntforhold og Udmyntninger i Danmark indtil 1146* (Coinage and Coin Issue in Denmark Before 1146) (Hauberg 1900). However, the assessment rested on a misreading of the reverse inscription as IN ODE instead of I ROSE. Hauberg reused an old drawing from *Museum Regium* from the end of the seventeenth century, and had presumably never seen the actual coin (Poulsen and Moesgaard 2015: 26). The preposition IN was not used in Danish, which is why it could never be deciphered as IN ODE. Moreover, the letter N on the coin is rather damaged and may equally read as an R and the letter D is clearly an S. This makes it I ?OSE, which presumably reads I ROSE, meaning in Roskilde. The moneyer is ULKIL, familiar from other coins originating from Roskilde (Fig. 8).

From the reign of Cnut IV a very particular coin from Zealand stands out, not just from the regional coins but from the coins of the nation, generally. Peter Hauberg attributed the coin to Svend Estridsen because of the appearance of the name SVEIN on the

Fig. 7: The five types of coin from Zealand attributed to the reign of Cnut IV. The coins are numbered according to Poulsen 2016. Drawing: Hauberg 1900.

Fig. 8: The reverse of the coin which had incorrectly been attributed to Odense. The name of the moneyer ULKIL is visible on the right half. On the left half, the reference to the mint town I (R)OSE.
Drawing: Poulsen 2016.

obverse. He was convinced that this name could only refer to a king, since he did not believe that the Church had been involved in issuing coins at this early stage (Fig. 9). The provenance of this coin is the subject of heated discussion. Only one specimen of it is known to exist, kept in the Royal Collection of Coins and Medals of the National Museum of Denmark. It was purchased in London at Sotheby's in 1855, but is known to have been in the collection of Gerhard Schønning, professor at Sorø, in 1771, possibly originating from the extensive, but scattered, Holsteinborg hoard (Jensen *et al.* 1992: no. 30). Stylistically, the coin bears close resemblance to the coins issued by Harald Hen and Cnut IV. This is true of the figure on the obverse as well as the central cross on the reverse, which clearly shows a type first put into use during the reign of Harald Hen. The preposition I is used instead of ON for the place name I ROSC, which is characteristic for the period after Svend Estridsen. As for the figure on the obverse, it is essential to pay attention to the pallium he is wearing. This vestment conclusively identifies the figure as a bishop, contrary to the crozier, which is also, in some cases, used for royal figures during the eleventh century. Consequently, the name Svein cannot refer to Svend Estridsen, but to a bishop. This bishop can only be Svend Norbagge, the chaplain of Svend Estridsen, later bishop of Roskilde in 1074, who died in 1088. The moneyer SIBBE mentioned on the reverse is also well known from other of Cnut IV's coins from Roskilde. During his time as bishop, Svend Norbagge completed the construction of the cathedral in stone (Poulsen 2016: 147-148). Cnut IV very likely granted Svend Norbagge the rights to issue coin in Roskilde on a temporary basis, thus enabling him to finance the building of his church. This became customary later in the Middle Ages until, by the High Middle Ages, it had become common practice. However, the case of Svend Norbagge is the earliest example of such practice in Denmark (Galster 1978: 81-86; Posselt 1985; Jensen 1995: 116).

Fig. 9: Svend Norbagge's coin from Roskilde. Photo: Thomas Guntzelnick Poulsen. Drawing: Hauberg 1900.

Recent coin hoard finds from Zealand have shown that the coin exchange system or *renovatio monetae* known from Scania and Jutland had not yet been introduced on Zealand at this time. Older coins were apparently still in circulation, and a large part of the coins in the hoards are from other Danish regions, mainly the Scanian providences. Not until around 1100, do the coin hoards show clear evidence of systemised *renovatio monetae* (Moesgaard 2018a).

Compared to the coins from Scania and Zealand, all of which are well-organised with clear general features, the coins from Jutland appear very unstructured (Fig. 10). There is a distinct lack of the regional character distinguishing coins from Scania and Zealand. Although different series of coin were issued from various towns in Jutland under each king, there are no continuous types issued under several kings. In contrast to the coinage in Scania and on Zealand, no major mint town existed in Jutland comparable to Lund and Roskilde in Scania and on Zealand, respectively. There is no doubt that the king also controlled the coinage in Jutland, but the production here appears to have been much more decentralised. Until recently, the role of the southern part of Jutland in relation to the rest of Jutland was also unclear. Excavations

Fig. 10: The five types of coin from Jutland attributed to the reign of Cnut IV. The coins are numbered according to Poulsen 2016. Drawing: Hauberg 1900. Poulsen 2016.

from Slesvig have now revealed a continuous line of new coin types, that all seems to have been minted in Slesvig and used primarily in this part of the country, among which are two from the reign of Cnut IV (Moesgaard, Hilberg & Schimmer 2016). This indicates that Jutland was split in at least two separate coin regions. The relation of Ribe to the rest is Jutland is still unclear. Such decentralised administration was not limited to coinage. Jutland was the only region in Denmark which was subdivided into administrative units called *sysler*. Whether this subdivision was due to the size of Jutland or merely traditional is difficult to say, but it indicates that Jutland was governed differently from the rest of the country at several levels, including coinage. A common problem with regard to coins from Jutland is the fact that the kings did not consistently put their names on them. Hence, there is a handful of coins which cannot, with any degree of certainty, be attributed to either Harald Hen or Cnut IV (Fig. 11).

For example, at Lindholm near Aalborg, a very special coin was found. The obverse motif is unique in Denmark, and takes its inspiration from German coins where the columnar church with pointed gables featuring a cross was a frequently used motif as far back as Charlemagne (768-814). The type featuring the two flanking towers is known from Cologne and is attributed to Archbishop Anno II, who was archbishop from 1057-1075 (Hävernick, 1935: no. 354). The motif on the reverse was commonly used during the period 1074-1095, especially during the reign of Cnut IV. Also, the moneyer EDVVARD was well-known under Harald Hen and Cnut IV. The central cross on the reverse of the coin is formed by four triangles combined. This feature is characteristic of the central crosses found on Cnut IV's and Oluf Hunger's coins, while none of the crosses on Harald Hen's coins taper towards the centre in the same way. This specific type, therefore, is attributed to the reign of Harald Hen or Cnut IV with evidence favouring Cnut. The coin was presumably minted in Viborg .

Fig. 11: By Danish standards, a unique coin after German model. This coin has been found on two occasions, both times at Lindholm near Aalborg. Photo: Thomas Guntzelnick Poulsen. Drawing: Nedim Gruhonjic.

Fig. 12: Cnut IV coin from Odense. The obverse motif is copied from one of his father's Lund coins. Presumably to signal that it was a fine quality coin. Photo: Thomas Guntzelnick Poulsen. Drawing: Hauberg 1900.

EDVVARD was moneyer in Viborg under both Harald and Cnut, and the coin has only been found in the northern part of the Jutland Peninsula (Poulsen 2016: 131-132) (Fig. 12).

Cnut also had coins minted in Odense, which, in this case, is easily decipherable in the form of the inscriptions I ODEN, ODE, or OI. The obverse motif was copied from Svend Estridsen's late coins from Lund (Hauberg 1900: Svend Estridsen Lund, Hbg. 26, 28, 30, 31). In the Middle Ages, all regional coins were issued based on the unit weight of one mark, corresponding to 218 g. The difference in the individual weight of the coins is due to the fact that varying quantities of coin were struck from a mark of silver in the three regions. In the Scanian provinces, 240 coins were struck from one mark, which means an average weight of 0.91 g per coin. On Zealand, either 240 or 288 coins were struck from one mark. In case of the latter, this averages out at 0.76 g per coin. In Jutland, either 288 or 384 coins were struck per mark. In case of the latter, this would result in an average weight of 0.56 g per coin (Hauberg 1900: 149-150). Thus, there was a substantial difference in the weight of coins and hence in the content of silver they represented in each region, but also, at times, within the same region. In the case of Cnut IV's coin from Odense it is very heavy for a Jutlandish coin, and there is possibly a connection between the choice of motif and the weight. As mentioned earlier, the Scanian provinces typically issued heavy coins. By using a motif from an earlier coin from Lund, the aim might have been to inform the population that this was a good coin (Fig. 13).

Fig. 13: One of Cnut IV's much-maligned debased coins. This specimen is from Randers.
Photo and drawing: Thomas Guntzelnick Poulsen.

Fig. 14: Erik Ejegod's coin from Aalborg, the Jutland Peninsula, whose obverse motif was a reuse of Cnut IV's much-maligned debased coins. This is the only known specimen of the coin. Photo: Thomas Guntzelnick Poulsen. Drawing: Nedim Gruhonjic.

The last of Cnut IV's Jutlandish coins is also one of the more interesting in Danish medieval numismatics. The coin is primarily known from two hoards found at Jegstrup near Viborg and Øster Bjerregrav close to Randers (Jensen *et al.* 1992: no. 31 and no. 32). The obverse motif shows a seated king with his sword and shield while the reverse motif is a double cross with trefoils at the terminals. The obverse motif is original and not based on any recognisable example. From the inscription on the reverse, it appears that the coin was minted in Aalborg, Viborg, and Randers. The dies seem wholly identical and must have been made by the same die-cutter. From a central place they were distributed among the three provincial towns in the Jutland Peninsula. The coins are highly debased compared to those in the rest of the country, weighing only 0.5 g. Assays made on coins from the Øster Bjerregrav hoard show the silver content of the coins to be only 550 ‰ compared to the standard silver fineness of 90 % (Galster 1934: 130-131). The coins have been linked to the campaign against England planned by Cnut IV and the subsequent grievances about Cnut's reign described in Aelnoth's chronicle, *Gesta Swenomagni*. Here it was pointed out that royal provosts and bailiffs assigned a higher weight to the mark, leaving the øre hardly worth an ørtug while the medieval coinage ørtug was usually worth three øre (Albrectsen, E. (ed.) 1984: *Ælnoths Krønike*. Odense.). A debasement such as this lowering of the value would provide income for the king, as he could economise on the silver.

Fig. 15: Erik Ejegod's coin from Lund featuring two persons on the reverse. Presumably Cnut IV and his brother, Benedikt. Photo: Thomas Guntzelnick Poulsen. Drawing: Hauberg 1900.

According to this hypothesis, the coins can be dated fairly accurately to 1085, the year prior to the rebellion against Cnut IV and his subsequent murder. Assuming this to be the case, it would be the earliest documented attempt in Denmark to raise money for the state by deliberate devaluation.

An interesting anecdote about the story of Cnut's last Jutlandish coin is the fact that the enthroned royal motif from the obverse, as the only Jutlandish motif, was not limited to one king, but was also used by Erik Ejegod (Fig. 14). It is intriguing to note that this particular motif was reused under Erik, since the original type was specified in Aelnoth's chronicle as being one of the grievances about Cnut's reign and thus a contributing factor to the rebellion. The explanation for this might be that the type is linked to the king's wish to have Cnut canonised. A similar example is known from three contemporary coins from Lund, where the reverse is assumed to be depictions of Cnut and his brother, Benedict, who was killed with him in St Alban's Church (Fig. 15). From a Danish point of view, the Scanian types have been interpreted as a political promotion towards having Cnut canonised, and similar ideas may have been behind the motif of its Jutlandish counterpart (Jensen 1995: 124). Nevertheless, it is interesting that Erik Ejegod selected a motif from the very coin that enraged the people of Jutland to such an extent (Poulsen 2016: 135-136) (Fig. 16).

A relatively recent find from Danelund near Ribe indicates that Cnut IV may have minted additional

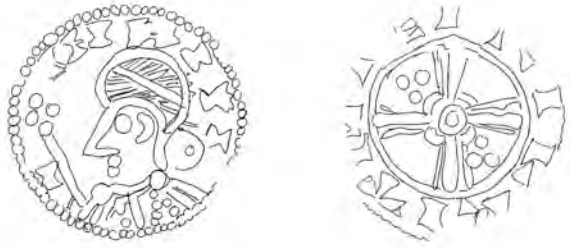

Fig. 16: Cnut IV's copy of Edward the Confessor's coin featuring the expanding cross from the Danelund hoard. Drawing: Jens Christian Moesgaard.

coins to finance his planned campaign against England. In 2002, a hoard consisting of 72 medieval coins was discovered by a metal detectorist. The youngest coins in the hoard were three of Cnut's debased coins from the Jutland Peninsula described above. A total of 63 coins in this hoard were copies of the English expanding cross type from Edward the Confessor minted during the period 1050-1053. These coins are inferior in quality and the inscriptions are illegible and nonsensical. They are clearly not English coins. Low in weight, they resemble Cnut IV's debased coins from the Jutland Peninsula. There is no indication on the coins to suggest where they were minted, but judging by where they are found, they are attributed to Slesvig. It must still be regarded as a working hypothesis that these coins could be linked to Cnut's plans for a campaign against England, but the coincidental dating combined with the debasement of both types of coin is nevertheless striking. The reason for using an English example for Slesvig coins remains unknown. Having said that, Edward the Confessor's coin was actually copied by Svend Estridsen, meaning that a close precedent did exist (Moesgaard 2007).

Cnut IV's coinage policy

As is hopefully evident from the above review of Cnut IV's coin, a clear trend can be traced in all three Danish regions of a king who was strongly engaged in coinage and the scope for making money from it. In the Scanian provinces, he was responsible for a higher output of coin than any of his brothers while making a brief attempt at uniting the Scanian and Zealand coin type. On Zealand, he distinguished himself by being the first Danish king to grant the Church minting rights, presumably to help finance the bishop's cathedral-building in Roskilde. The most interesting aspect, in my opinion, is the attempt by Cnut IV to deliberately devalue the Jutlandish coin in order to finance a planned attack against Eng-

land. Providing that the coins from the Danelund hoard also turn out to be part of Cnut's endeavours to finance his campaign against England, this means that the entire mint-issuing area of Jutland was included in this devaluation. Judging from the number of die variations on the Danelund coin hoard, the production of these was very substantial (Moesgaard 2007: 115). A similar analysis has not been carried out on Cnut IV's coin from the Jutland Peninsula bearing the enthroned king. If we look at the quantity of known moneyers, no less than 20 different people have signed their name on the reverse, indicating that the production of this type was equally extensive. Hence Cnut appears to have begun a very extensive coin issue from Jutland prior to the invasion.

Cnut IV was a modern Western European medieval king, who wanted to do away with aristocratic government and the system of chieftains and, instead, extend royal powers to include all levels of society. It is far more likely that he was killed for this reason than by the conscripted *leding* peasants, fed up with waiting for their king by Limfjorden while their crops were rotting in the fields. Coinage was an important part of the 'toolkit' available to medieval European kings. At the time of Cnut's accession to the throne, this was a wholly new economic tool in Denmark. It had not been an option until the latter years of his father's reign, when the king gradually assumed the monopoly of the coin and, as such, was able to enforce the exclusive use of its own coin in the country. Judging from the impression left by his coinage policies in the form of preserved coin types, Cnut IV appears to have made active use of this new economic tool.

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King Cnut's donation letter and settlement structure in Denmark, 1085 – new perspectives on an old document

By Jesper Hansen

One of the most important sources to the history of medieval Denmark is the donation letter of Cnut IV, dated 21st of May 1085 and signed in Lund (fig. 1). This letter is a public affirmation of the royal gifts donated to the Church of St Laurentius, the cathedral church in Lund, and it represents the first written record of rural administration and fiscal rights in Denmark (Latin text, appendix 1).

Cnut's donation letter to the church in Lund (Dipl. Dan 1.2:21)

In the name of the indivisible Trinity, father, son and Holy Ghost, we desire it to be known to everyone in the Christian faith, how I, Cnut IV, son of king [Svend] Magnus, after having received the kingdom as my paternal inheritance, gave a dowry to the Church of the Holy Laurentius – which is situated in Lund – even though it is not yet completed, so that it can forever be a bride to the lamb that carries the sins of the world, holy for the holy, immaculate for the immaculate, dignified for the dignified. And we have disclosed what, or of what kind, this bridal gift will be, before these witnesses: The bishops Rikwal, Svend and Sigvard; Earl Håkon; the priests Arnold, Theoderic, Henrik and Gottskalk; the stallars Alle, Håkon, Peter, Svend, Asser Håkonson. We desire to establish [this gift], fixed and for all eternity, with God as protector. This is, then, the land which Øpi Thorbjørnson in Lund gave in reparation for his peace. In southern Uppåkra [Lilla Uppåkra], four and a half hides [1 *mansus* = ca. 1 hide]. In the other Uppåkra, the same number of hides. In Herrestad, eight hides. In Skälshög, two hides. In Flädie, five and a half hides which Håkon gave to the king. In Hilleshög, half a hide. In Håstad, one hide. In Gärd. In Venestad, one hide. In Skättilljunga, half a hide. In Sövestad, half a hide which Skore paid for his peace. And half a hide in Karlaby which the same Scora gave for his peace to the king. In Brönneslev, half a hide which the king redeemed from Thorgisl Gunstenson. In Gudesbo [Göinge]. In Sandby, one hide. In Zealand. In Ramsø Hundred [modern Danish: *Herred*] in Øm, two hides. In Sømme Hundred in Tjæreby, two hides. In Tune Hundred in Winningawe, two hides. In Horns Hundred in Skuldelev, one hide. In Odense [or Onsved], one hide. In Lower Smørum [Smørumnedre], two hides. In Lynge Hundred in Børstingerød, two hides. In Jørlunde Hundred in Tollerup, one hide. In Skenkelsø, one hide. On the island of Amager. In Western Sundby [Sundbyvester], five [hides]. In Brundby, three hides. Of the money given each year from the plots in Lomma, three marks. Of the same money in Helsingborg, three marks. From the plots in Lund, twenty marks and one. If any powerful man, of noble stock or not of noble stock, born or not yet born, puffed up by insolent boldness, desires to violate this agreed-upon decree against the command of holy religion, he is to be excommunicated upon the Return of our Lord and to be consigned to eternal punishment where worms never die and fire is never extinguished. Let his table before him be for him a snare, a retribution, and a stumbling block, with those who said to the Lord God, go away from us, we have no desire to know your ways. But that which pertains to the king's justice in this aforementioned region, of whatever cause it be, shall be put before the priest and the rest of the brothers serving God in this place, except three offenses. If someone is outlawed he must buy peace from the king [by which that [offense] is repaired], but his wealth is taken by the priest and the brothers. If he neglects a call for military service [*leding*], he must make reparations to the king. Horses for the [royal] carriages need not be given unless the king himself comes. Set down in Lund on the twelfth kalends of June [May 21] in the year of Our Lord's incarnation 1085 in the 8th indiction, the 22nd epact, and the second concurrent, in the fifth year of the lord King Cnut. The aforementioned bishops were present and confirmed it in the Maker, Our Lord Jesus Christ, who is blessed forever and ever. Amen.

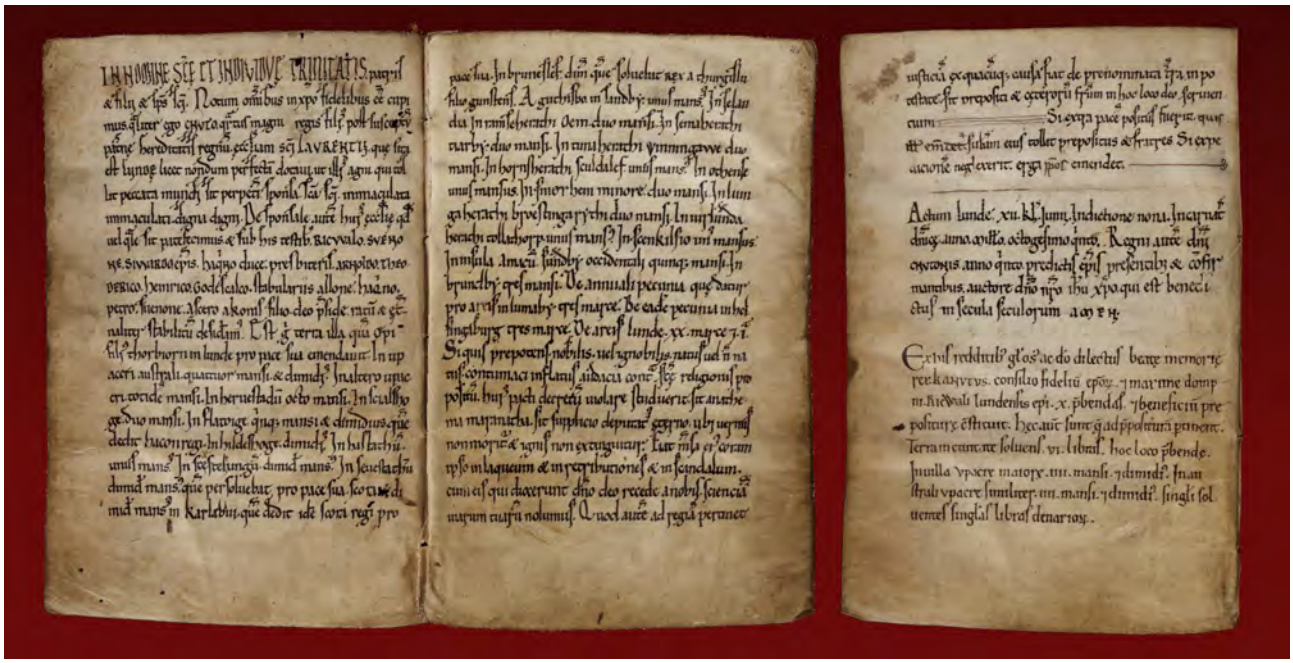


Fig. 1: Transcript of King Cnut's donation letter of 1085 in Necrologium Lundense, a collection of names and documents relevant to Lund cathedral's history, which is dated no later than 30th of June, 1123 (Lunds Universitetsbibliotek, ALVIN, edited by Peter Birch).

Details pertaining to the organization of Danish settlements that are reflected in the document can be studied in tandem with the available archaeological data of that period, and vice versa. Due to the scarcity of sources from the period in question, an interpretation of the document within a framework of settlement history – with a focus on administrative, organizational and judicial elements – is therefore best conducted in comparison with the archaeological record.

Research on the content and structure of the donation letter was prominent during the 1920s and again in the 1970s and '80s (e.g. Weibull 1923, 1925; Köcher 1923; Christensen 1969, 1977; Skansjö & Sundstrøm 1989; Weibull 1989). Since then, our archaeological knowledge about settlements and the organization of (rural) society in Late Iron Age and the medieval period has changed markedly, and within the last couple of years a fundamentally new interpretation of settlement organization has been presented (Hansen 2015).

The purpose of this paper is to examine whether King Cnut's donation letter can be seen to correspond with an idea of a strict judicial structure, i.e. a hundred- and *thing*-system as known from medieval law texts (twelfth and thirteenth centuries). And if this is the case, the question then is whether it is possible to arrive at a tentative dating of the assessment of land according to Annette Hoff's hypothesis (see below) underlying the listing of hides in the document, and thereby establish an interdisciplinary basis for protohistoric assessments of land in Denmark based on archaeological, as well as written, records, and also place names.

Initially, I will outline the archaeological results from my thesis on settlement organization, so as to provide comparison with the surviving written records. Secondly, I will address the content of the donation letter of 1085. My primary focus will be on the presence, and absence, of localities identified in accordance with the hundreds system. Apparent inconsistencies in the use of designating hundreds and lands have, since the 1920s, been a challenge for settlement and legal historians in attempting to systematically correlate the content and structure of the donation letter with requirements of, and legal affiliation towards, a *thing*-system of the hides mentioned. By combining the archaeological and the written record, I will discuss how these inconsistencies can be explained within the complex dynamics of the organization of settlements.

Before addressing the theme in further detail, I will emphasize that I speak from the point of view of an archaeologist, and the paper is to be seen as a contribution to what will hopefully be a fruitful dialogue between archaeologists, historians and philologists in trying to understand this amazing document in its context of eleventh-century settlement history.

Research history

From the 1920s onwards, scholars such as the historian Lauritz Weibull (1923, 1925), Arthur Köcher

Vill	Designation	Vill	Designation
	Lund		Zealand
Lilla Uppåkra		Øm	Ramsø Hundred
Uppåkra		Tjæreby	Sømme Hundred
Herrestad		Vindinge	Tune hundred
Skälshög		Skuldelev	Horns Hundred
Flädie		Onsved	
Hilleshög		Smørumnedre	
Håstad		Børstingerød	Lynge Hundred
Venestad	Gärd	Tollerup	Jørlunde Hundred
Skättiljunga		Skenkelsø	
Sövestad		Sundbyvester	Amager island
Karlaby		Brøndby	
Brönneslöv		Lomma*	
Sandby	Göinge [Guthisbo]	Helsingborg*	
		Lund*	

Tab. 1: The vills and designating hundreds/areas arranged as listed in King Cnut's donation letter of 1085. The table demonstrates the variation which has been used as arguments related to date the formation of hundreds in different regions of Denmark (i.e. Zealand and Scania). (*) represents money given annually from plots.

(1923) and Aksel E. Christensen (1977) have been aware of the importance of the donation letter when researching early Danish history (Weibull 1989). Nevertheless, the information about settlement organization provided by the donation letter has hitherto primarily played a part in discussions about the time of the -thorp-period (which I argue begins c.800 AD, see below), as well as the formation of hundreds in Scania (which I argue might have begun c.600 AD, see below (e.g. Rasmussen 1961, Hald 1974, Jørgensen 1980, Svensson 2015)). The focal point of these discussions has traditionally been the frequency of

Fig. 2: The map depicts the traditional geographic interpretation of the place names listed in King Cnut's donation letter. The name of the individual vill is marked (●) as is the designating name of the local hundred-thing to which jurisdiction the mentioned vills belongs. (■) marks money given annually from plots. The circle marks a 40 km distance from Lund (Based on Fenger 1989:80).

-thorps and the varying use of designating hundreds in relation to the listed vills in different parts of Denmark, i.e. Scania and Zealand (see table 1 and fig. 2). In his dissertation from 1923, Arthur Köcher interpreted the elaboration of hundreds in the donation letter within a context of a formalized *hundred*-system, and thereby the donation letter as a legal document strictly structured according to the formal levels in the legal system contemporary to Cnut's reign (1923: 124, 140). However, some central elements of Köcher's dissertation were rejected in his own time, as well as decades later (Weibull 1925; Bergh 1988: 44). As a result, Köcher's general idea of the donation letter being strictly structured within the *thing*-system has not played a significant part in contextualizing the donation letter within research of settlement history in general.

Nowadays, the donation letter plays a rather absent part in research that addresses the organization of landscapes and settlements of the eleventh century. Symptomatic of this is that the most prominent explanation of the use of the designating place names (e.g. Ramsö härad, Horns härad etc.) seems to rely on the theory of Ole Fenger (fig. 2), presented in the discussion at a seminar in Lund in 1985, and reiterated in his contribution to vol. 4 of *Denmark's history* from 1988 (1988: 126, 1989: 80).

Fenger's theory explains the varying use of names of hundreds from geographic closeness relative to Lund cathedral, with the assumption that only for the identification of the remote farms (>40 km) was there a need for designated place names. The theory is sought strengthened by a representation on a modern map where a perfect circle is used to illustrate the geographic threshold for this requirement, without any regard to landscape, waterscape, infrastructure or the context of landscape organization, i.e. features which one could rightly argue to be inextricably linked. Therefore, let us take a closer look at the context of landscape organization in which the donation letter was produced.

Archaeological settlement history in South Western Scandinavia 200-1200 AD

The following section summarises the overall archaeological conclusions of my PhD thesis on landscape organization in the period 200-1200 AD. This study incorporates a large and multifaceted dataset consisting of place names, maps, written documents, and archaeological findings of 1547 excavated houses supplemented by 1466 radiocarbon-datings from the island of Funen in central Denmark (Hansen 2015; 2019).

The result of the thesis challenged the settlement-historical paradigm that had characterized the relevant scholarship since the 1970s, according to which it was assumed that the settlement organization known from the medieval period was established during a period from the tenth to the twelfth century (Grøngaard Jeppesen 1981, Porsmose 1981, Hvass 1983, Skansjö 1983). In the mid-1980s, Johan Callmer adjusted the South Swedish/Scanian settlement model, suggesting that up to half of the historic vil-

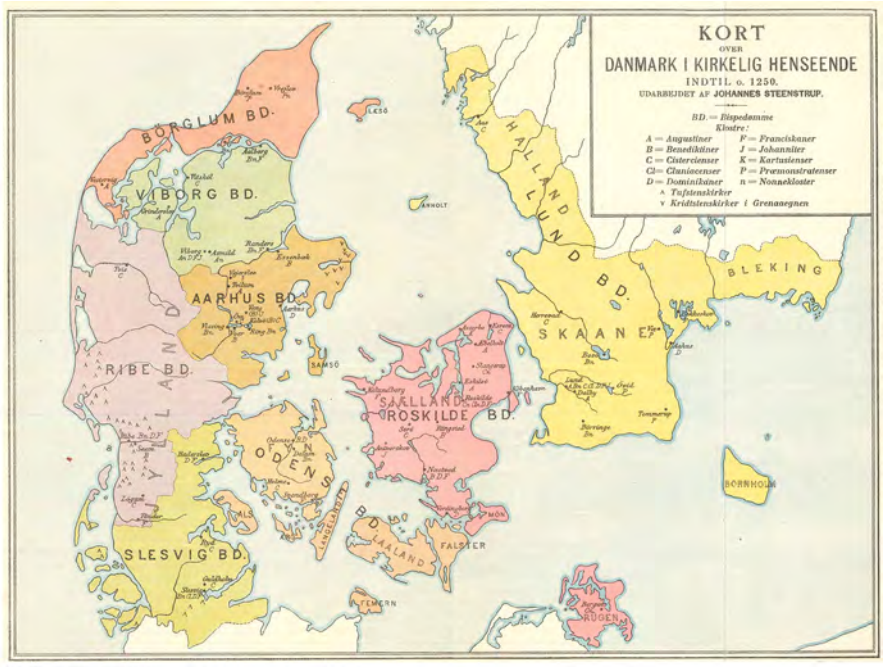


Fig. 3: Denmark in the medieval period and its division into dioceses (Steenstrup 1896). Funen and surrounding islands lie in central Denmark with Odense as the main town and episcopal centre.

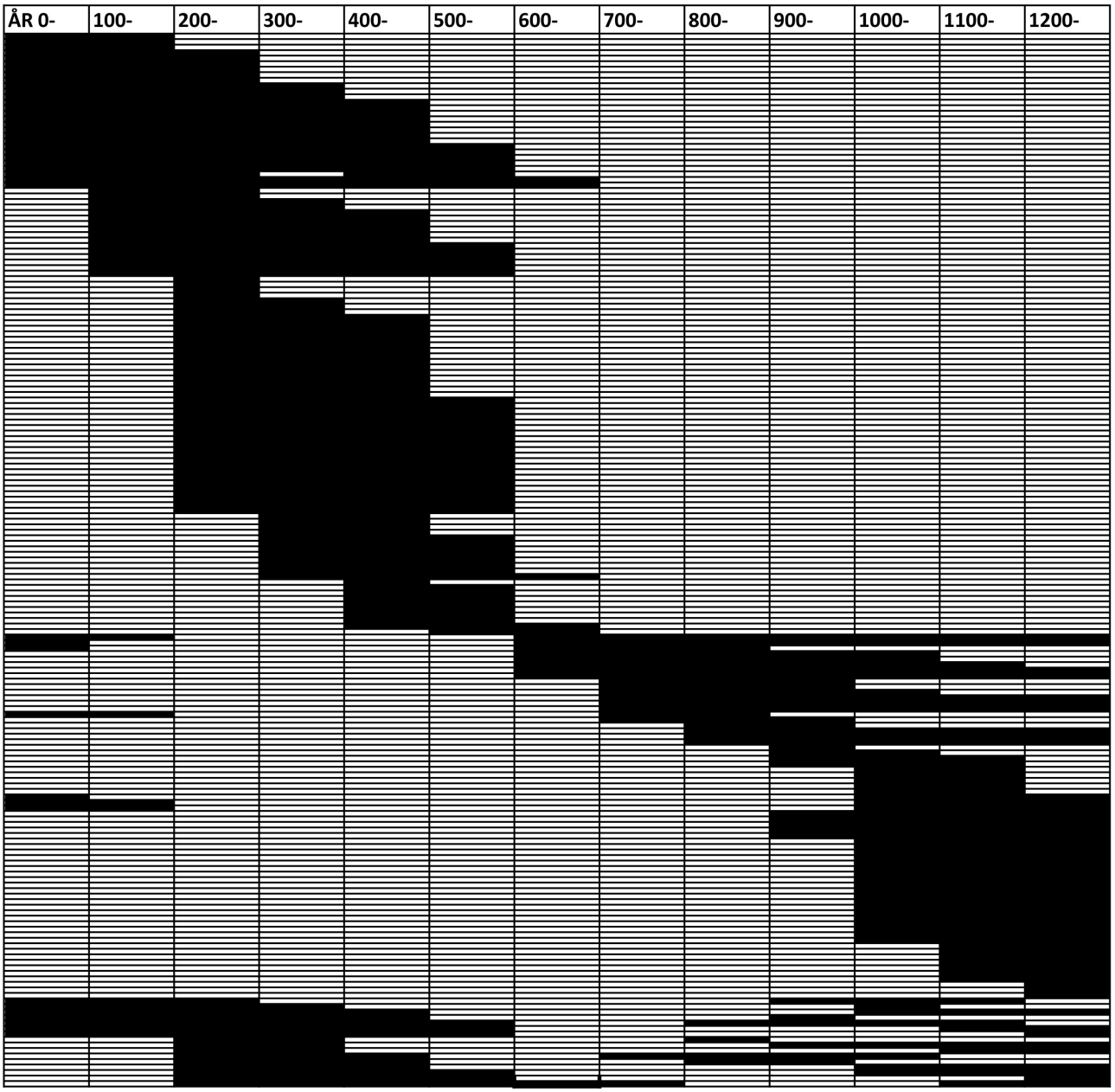


Fig. 4: Diagram displaying the site continuity of all Funen settlements 200-1200 AD (Hansen 2015).

lages in Scania ought to be categorized as geographically static or semistatic (site-fixed), with only minor geographical corrections since the late migration period or early Viking Age (Callmer 1986). A similar adjustment of the widely accepted settlement model based on the case study from the town of Vorbasse in central Jutland never really gained traction in the Danish scholarly community, and so the Vorbasse model was generally unchallenged until the late 2010s (Hansen 2011, 2015). Despite minor differences between the paradigmatic Danish and Swedish theories, a shared feature was the idea that even if settlement continuity was found across the periods, this never led to interpretations of structural continuity between prehistoric and historic times, because a notable reorganization of the farms during the early medieval period was unquestioningly assumed (e.g. Callmer 1986: 186, 1991: 346, Jönsson and Persson 2008: 145, 183ff).

My study from Funen (figs.3 & 4) shows that until the beginning of the seventh century farms were generally relocated every 30 to 40 years, without displaying any fixed duration or direct ties to neighbouring farms (Hansen 2015; 2019). In contrast to this absence of micro-scale temporal uniformity, the archaeological material displays remarkable macro-scale coherence of circumstance, dividing the excavated settlements into two consecutive groups. This division is characterized by the observation that

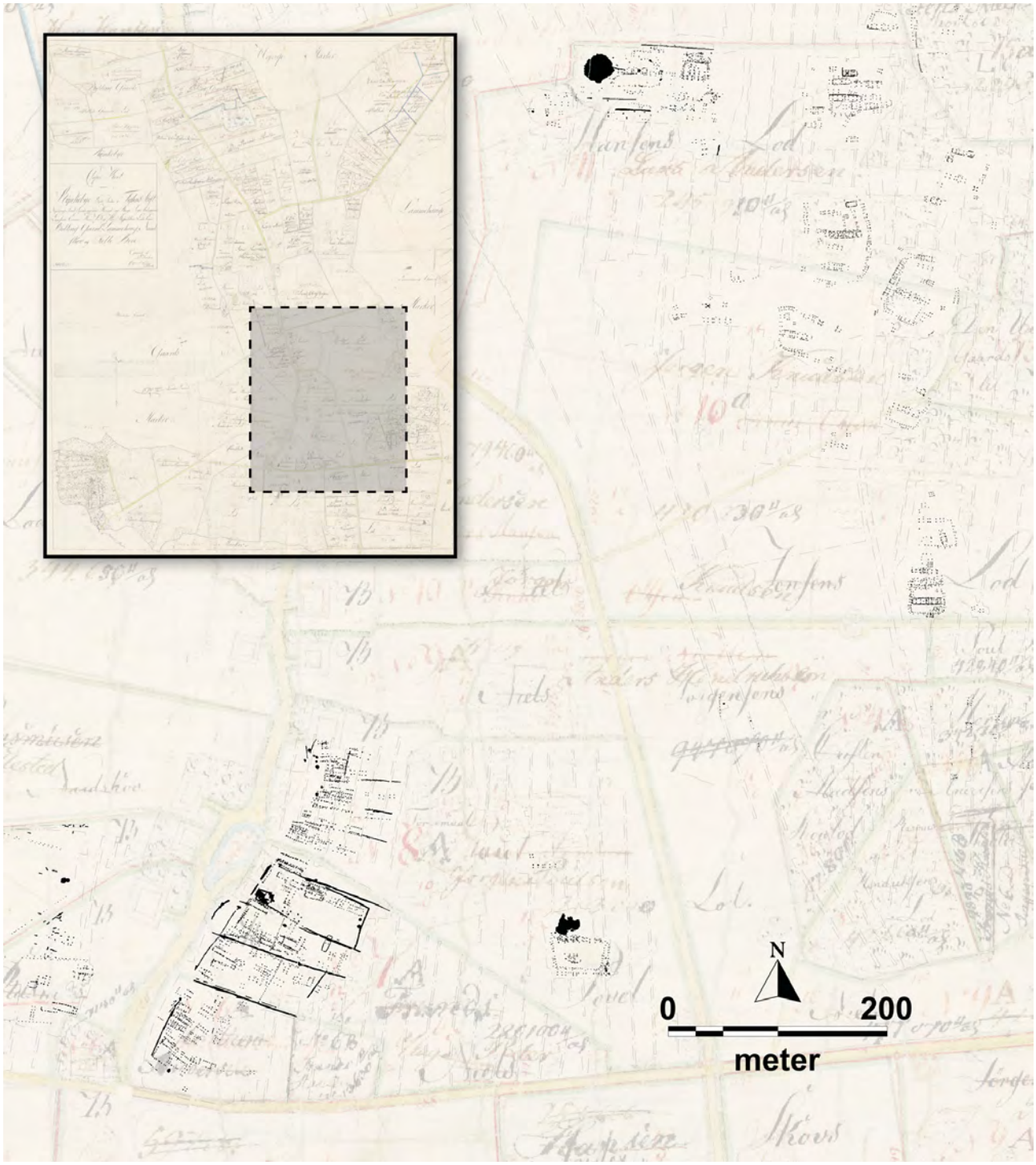
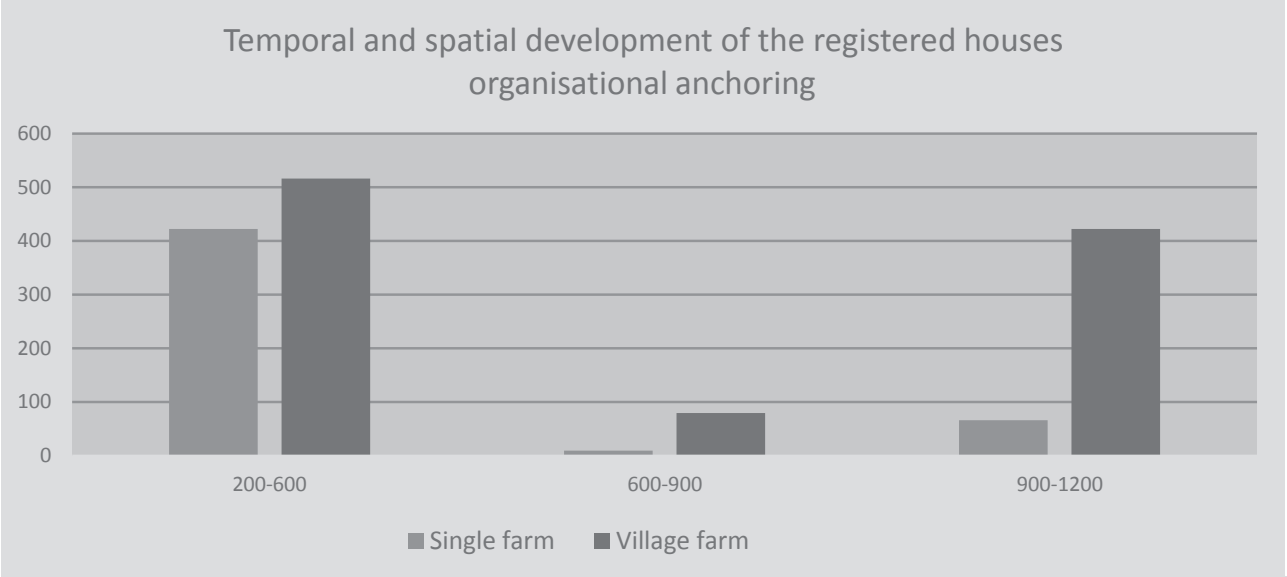


Fig. 5: Excavations in and around the village of Rynkeby, on central Funen, 200-1400 AD. The fixation of the present-day village took place around 600 AD (Hansen 2019).

the settlement grounds dated to the sixth century never continues through the seventh century. In other words, during a relatively short period of time, roughly set to 600 AD, settlements were reorganized and relocated. Displaying all the analysed data in a single diagram specifying site-continuity for the individual settlements clearly demonstrates that something fundamental happened in terms of land organization around 600 AD.

To illustrate the general process in question, the village of Rynkeby on central Funen represents the most complete structural picture (fig. 5). The cluster of late Roman and migration period farms to the northeast was loosely organized within a typical parcel-like structure. From a time around 600 AD no further farms were built or rebuilt in that area, and



Approximate ratio of the excavated agrarian houses	200-600	1:1
social implantation as geographical single farms or	600-900	1:9
village farms, 200-1200 AD.	900-1200	1:6

Fig. 6: Model displaying the frequency of excavated single farms and village farms during the first millennium (Hansen 2015).

all later structures are found within the boundary of the historic village dated from 600 AD until the present day (Hansen 2011, 2015, 2019). This is a village fundamentally different from the late Roman and migration period settlement, now structured in much larger and regular side-by-side tofts, which would or could be divided into smaller units, probably owing to a division of a family's inheritance.

Apart from the general reorganization, further distinctions can be seen regarding settlement-organization before and after 600 AD. When displaying all the farms in a diagram, divided into single farms or regular village farms, it is clear that the organizational system fundamentally based on the unstable single farm was replaced by a system based on regular villages around 600 AD. In fact, single farms from the seventh and eighth centuries have yet to be found on Funen, whereas single farms from the previous centuries are very common – as is, to a certain degree, the case from late Viking Age and the Early Middle Ages (fig. 6).

Addressing the formation-process of the historically known vills (e.g. Rynkeby, fig. 5, small map) is another classical question to which I have paid renewed attention. Such analyses have to implement some kind of an evaluation of spatial synchronization between the actual settlements and the borders of the individual vill in terms of an economically rational positioning. My working hypothesis is as follows: If the analysis reveals a period when the settlements in general display a particularly prominent central position within the vills, this period is assumed to be the time of establishment of the oldest existing layer of vills (fig. 7).

Analysis on a macro-scale level demonstrates that

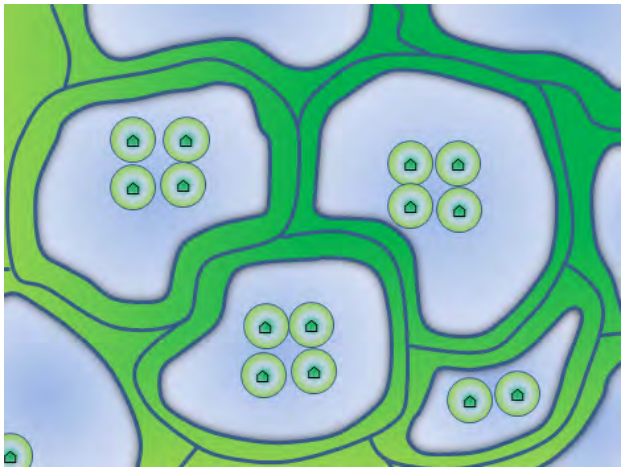


Fig. 7: Theoretical model of the vill and settlement at the time of the formation of vills in Denmark (Hansen 2015).

there is no strict correlation between recorded settlements dated between 200-600 AD and the fundamental organization of land- and village structures known from medieval laws, legal documents and

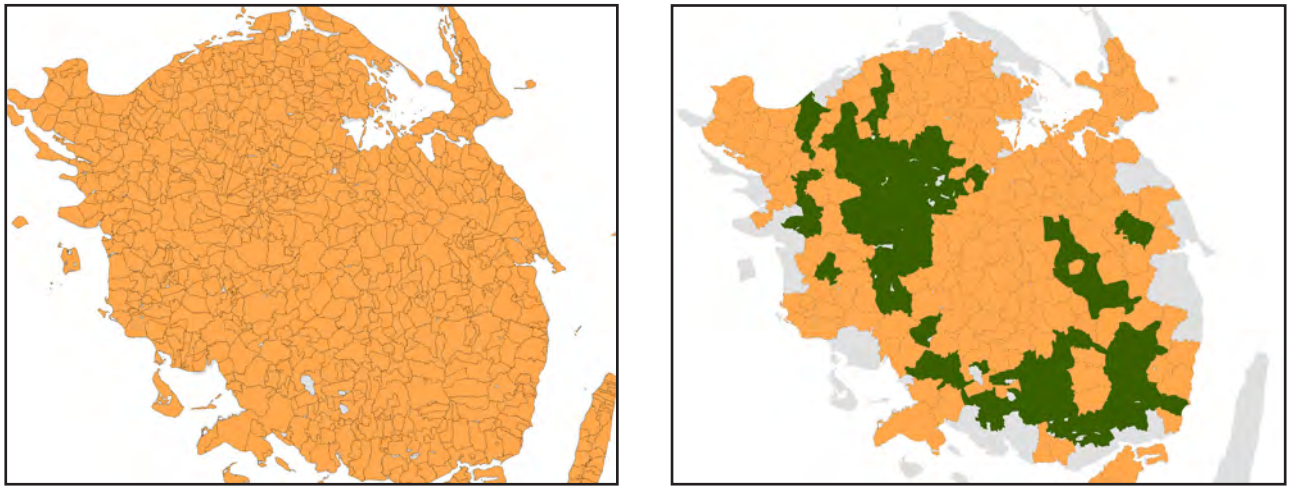


Fig. 8: Medieval vills (left) and 600-800 AD primary-vills before the outparcelling of thorps and magnate farms (right). Green represents forest while grey coastal areas are unresolved (Hansen 2015).

eighteenth-century cadastral maps (cf. fig. 5). When we look at the settlements from the seventh to the ninth century, on the other hand, the data show a very different and remarkable feature when compared with the aforementioned older settlements. When combined with the cartographic material displaying the vills of present villages, there is a striking tendency towards a simple correlation. The seventh- to ninth-century agrarian settlements are, systematically, centrally placed with surrounding land well suited for agrarian production.

Reassembling original vills (primary-vill), here meaning vills prior to outparcelling of magnate farms and thorps, is a well-known method (e.g. Christensen & Sørensen 1972; Porsmose 1987: 45, 66; Hansen 2015: 148-156; Hansen & Lauridsen 2019; Hansen in prep). By combining the method with (pre-Viking Age) place names it is possible to approximate a map sketch representing the organizational divisions and the macro settlement structure of the Late Iron Age (fig. 8, right).

On the basis of the new, substantial empirical material and multifaceted analyses it seems likely that the fixed landscape organization, which still outlines the principle structures of modern rural Denmark, was established around 600 AD. I have further argued, that it was initially a bottom-up response to a centrally initiated top-down reorganization and division of landscapes, as fiscal rights to land would have been introduced as a backbone of central power, in contrast to individual alliances and everchanging relations in the previous period (Hansen 2015; Hansen in prep). As such, Danish land-organization after c.600 AD could be seen in parallel to the Anglo-Saxon tradition, where the *hide*, relative in size, constituted an internal measure of duties and obligations within each vill (Campbell 1990: 59; Ryan 2011), and the *vills* constituted the smallest fiscal and administrative unit which included formal obligations pertaining to the upkeep of bridges, roads and forts, the levying of men in times of war, and also simple food-rents of grain and livestock (Ault 1982: 188; Hansen 2015: 157-172).

Local village assemblies appear to be quite clearly defined structural entities in the late Iron Age and the medieval period. These, however, did not seem to form direct part of a central administration (Meyer 1949: 28). Rather, as a stable division of land organization, vills would have been very suitable for assessing a fixed geographical framework closely related to certain obligations. From an administrative point of view, this is an oversimplification compared to the labile settlement structure of the late Roman and early Germanic period.

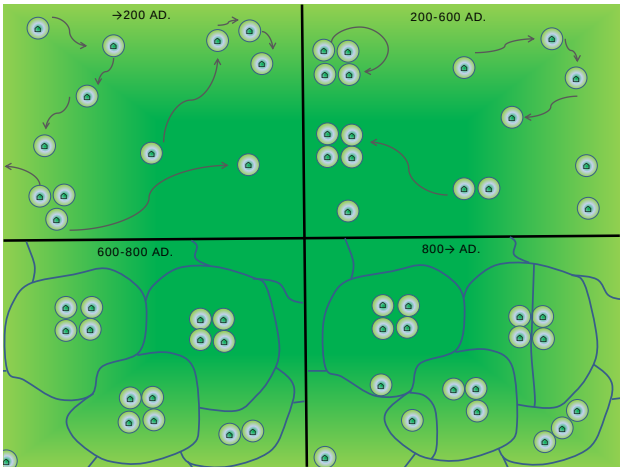


Fig. 9: Model describing the general development of settlement organization from 200 AD onwards (Hansen 2015).

The development of the settlement-organization leading up to the time of King Cnut IV can be summed up in a simplified model and described in four steps (fig. 9).

Until the third century, settlement organization was characterized by unfixed and small 'jurisdictional' units primarily organized as single farms or, alternatively, small villages typically consisting of 3-4 farm units. This organization does not reveal any fixed long-lasting geographic borders corresponding to modern cadastral maps/vills. Settlement organization reflects a loose structure, where the geographic jurisdiction seems to have been closely connected to the individual settlement. This leaves plenty of geographic and organizational space for moving around, resulting in an ever-changing economic structure which would have been difficult to control centrally. From the third to the sixth century, village organizations can be generally perceived to have been similar to that of preceding centuries. However, significantly larger settlements emerge in this period, and these centuries are characterized by general growth and diversity in terms of settlement size.

In the seventh and eighth centuries, settlement organization is marked by significant change. Initially, this is reflected by farms moving together, centrally placed within fixed geographic structures defined by the vills, a structure which is still visible to some extent on historical cadastral maps. In the course of these two centuries, ordinary single farms appear to be almost absent, and the jurisdictional units of the settlements appear to be centred on the villages, thus making the village the primary organizational entity. In large parts of Funen, the landscape was fully divided into vills. This organizational system counteracts the previously dominant unfixed and farm-based settlement structure, and at the same time supports the possibility of exercising long-term administration of land and resources due to its stability.

From the ninth century onwards, including King Cnut's reign (1080-1086), the archaeological record once again displays single farms, and the settlement organization is characterized by expansion, leading to a wide range of adjustments. In this process, thorps and magnate farms were outparcelled from existing villages, while yet other villages could be divided. This process was, however, restrained by the basic geographic structure established around 600 AD.

Keeping in mind the development of historical settlements outlined above, let us turn to King Cnut's 1085 donation letter and contextualize this within a framework comprised of simple duties bound to vills as the smallest fiscal units in Viking Age and early medieval Denmark. This will hopefully shed light on the research potential regarding the administrative system which has hitherto not been utilized.

Contextualizing King Cnut's donation letter

The following contextualization of the donation letter within the outlined model of settlement history is, as mentioned, based on a variety of data. Aside from the donation letter and the archaeological model describing the basics of the development of settlement organization, this contextualization implements the regional Danish landscape laws (the Scanian law, the Zealandic law, the Jutlandic law) from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, a hypothetical early *mansus* assessment, and the better known twelfth-century gold assessment as described by the historian Annette Hoff. In addition, it also implements the geographic spread and dating of the place name element -thorp and -thorps mentioned in the Falster List (c.1250 related to King Valdemar II's Land Register). In this discussion, it is the connection to a *thing*-system contemporary to the donation letter which is in focus, while the donation letter's connection to the king and the church is of less importance.

A working hypothesis

My working hypothesis for the analytical contextualization of King Cnut's donation letter is to consider it as related to and arranged in accordance with contemporary legal structures and procedures.

According to the somewhat later Jutlandic Law of 1241, the *thing*-system functions as follows (1§37, my translation): "On the *thing* you shall register rights to land and not elsewhere, that is to say on the hundred-*thing* in which the land is situated, or on the county-*thing* or on the land-*thing*, or before the king, for the *thing*-witness is so binding, that there cannot be given evidence against it." And the Scanian Law states that registration of land conducted locally, had less legal effect than registration of land carried out at the *things* (Skautrup 1933; Meyer 1957).

As the 1085 donation letter was written and functioned within an old geographic landscape organization that reached back to c.600 AD, and as the letter addresses lands under multiple jurisdictions, it seems reasonable to suggest that the donation letter, when it was drafted, was in fact documenting completed (South-western Scania) as well as planned

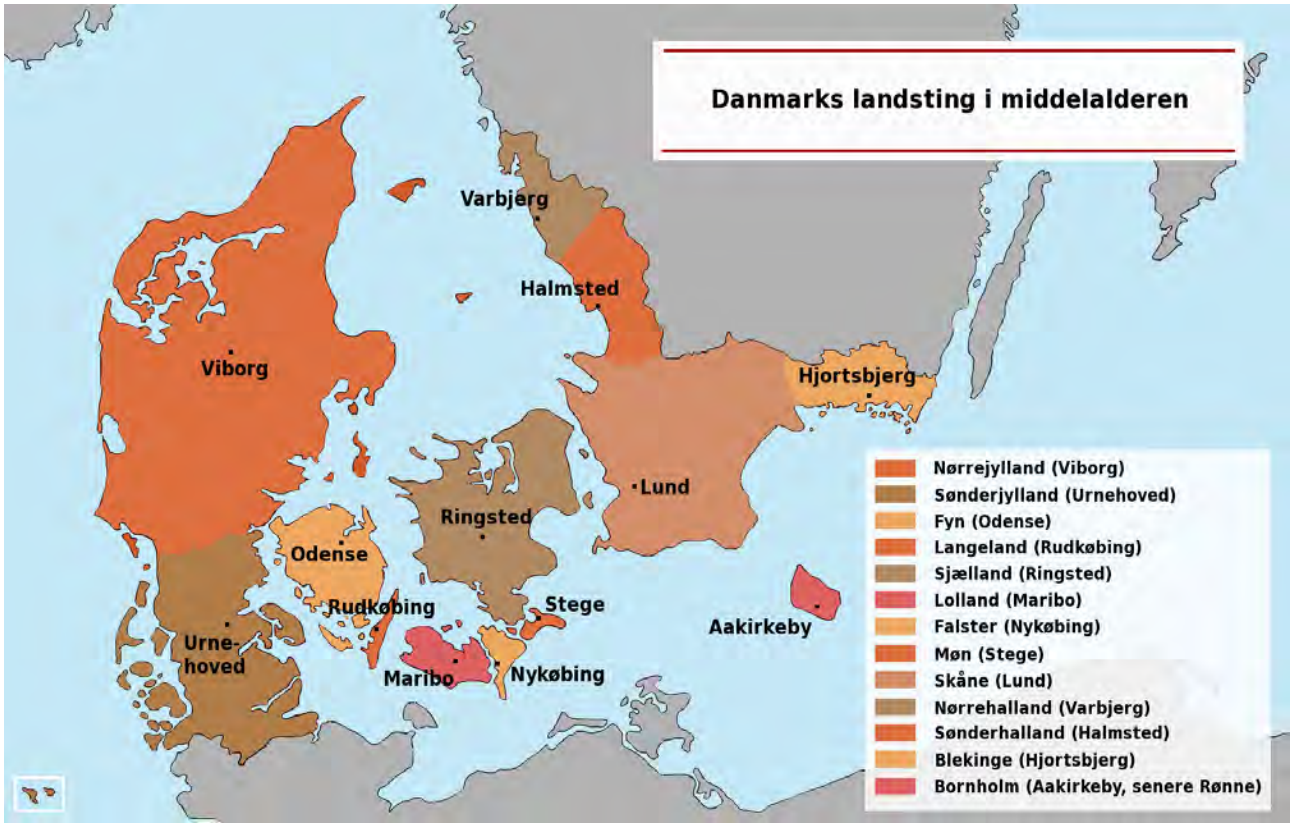


Fig. 10: The thirteen medieval land-things in Denmark and their jurisdiction. In Eastern Denmark Lund and Ringsted (representing Scania and Zealand) are considered the most important. All thirteen lands have constituted their own jurisdictions, where the customary principles have allowed some variation (e.g. differences in medieval landscape laws), while conversely, a few legal principles (laws) directly related to the king are supposed to have been under the joint influence of the king (directly or indirectly), across the entire kingdom. The land(-things) are seen by many as having emerged in prehistoric times (Rosén 1965; Jørgensen 1969: 18, 238; map © Wikimedia Commons).

(Zealand, Amager and North-eastern Scania) transfers of land, systematically oriented in accordance with a contemporary *thing*-system '…in which the land is situated…', consistent with the 1241 Jutlandic Law. As a consequence, the listed land-*thing* and hundred-*thing*, e.g. Zealand in Ramsø Hundred, is to be explained from a systematic *thing*-orientation rather than in terms of linear geographical closeness as previously suggested (e.g. Fenger 1989: 77ff). In other words, the document refers explicitly to the *things* outside the jurisdiction of the *land-thing* in Lund, Scania. This is done to effectuate King Cnut's donation by pinpointing the *things* needed for conducting the *thing*-witness legally required to consolidate the right to a specific tract of land. In Lund itself, all changes related to Scanian land could/would be rightfully and legally conducted at the land-*thing*, but further action elsewhere was necessary at the specific *things* mentioned (fig. 10).

Some irregularities and analytical challenges

In order to meet the theory of a strict *thing* orientation of the donation letter, we have to address some irregularities regarding this interpretation. I am here particularly referring to the omitted designating *thing*- and hundred-names in the case of Smørhem minore (Smørumnedre), Insula Amacum Sundby (Sundbyvester), and Brundby (Brøndby), as well as the existence of two designating names in Scania, namely 'A Geri. In Winistadum' (Venestad in Gärd) and 'A Guthisbo. In Sandby' (Sandby in Göinge), both of which are known to have formed actual hundreds in historic times (see table 1). Before addressing these seeming irregularities, it is important to emphasize some of the challenges of analysing the content of King Cnut's donation letter.

The original document was known only until 1696, but is now lost. Our knowledge of Cnut's donation letter and its content is therefore based on three transcripts, all of which are believed to have been

produced on the basis of the original document. The oldest transcript is that of *Necrologium Lundense* from 1123 (fig. 1) (Weibull 1925: 105ff). The two remaining transcripts are considerably younger, dated to 1494 and 1662 respectively (Weibull 1925: 105). It is important to bear in mind that modern knowledge of King Cnut's donation letter does not rely on the original document, but rather on the collective information of three transcripts. This affects how we engage with the donation letter as a source, since in the period in which these transcripts were produced, a span of c.540 years, the text of the original donation letter might easily have been subject to various interpretations, additions, or changes. Traditionally, the 1494 and 1662 transcripts are considered by scholars to be closest to the original (Weibull 1925: 106, DRB 1.2:21). However, it is important to state that all three versions differ from one another on several points. These differences can be ascribed to scribal errors, misprints, or deliberate manipulation or change of the original text, possibly for the text to better represent changes in the administrative reality since the time of Cnut, such as new assessments of land, outparcelling of thorps, or implementation of parishes as administrative units from c.1135-1215 (Jørgensen 1980: 33ff; Kieffer-Olsen 2018: 42). Of course, when using the transcripts in research, the lack of the original document entails a fundamental uncertainty of interpretation concerning the content of the letter, some of which has a bearing on the present paper, and this uncertainty will be dealt with in the following.

To interpret the content of the donation letter within a framework of settlement history contemporary to the donation of 1085 is difficult, and to prove a direct and consequent relationship to a defined *thing*-system even more so. Nevertheless, in the exploration of such a relationship, the specific connections between the geographic hides and the listed/named hides becomes a core issue, as that precise link is what represents the fundamental character of the donation letter vis-à-vis a systematic geographic *thing*-structure. However, the attempt to establish unequivocal connections between the listed hides[*mansi*]/place names and well-known geographical locations is, in several cases, challenging. The challenge lies in the list not being particularly specific, and preserved documents that can provide comparative evidence are few. Medieval documents, such as those of Lund listed below, simply mention quantities of property within specific vills. Attempts to substantiate the designation of the mentioned vills from the donation letter can, however, be carried out through systematic studies of later land registers and other documents, thus trying to follow the designation of property. In that respect, Lund cathedral offers good data from the land registers from 1570 and 1650 (Paulsson & Skansjö 2017).

Paulsson and Skansjö have demonstrated possible connections between hides mentioned in the donation letter and the Uppåkra hides listed in the land registers (*bona prepositurœ*) from 1570 and 1650 (Paulsson & Skansjö 2017: 24). Systematic historical studies of all hides mentioned in the donation letter would be preferable for a study of settlement history, as some of the place names mentioned are not unique to Scania or Zealand (e.g. Hildeshøj, Håsted, Vindinge, Brøndby etc.). To my knowledge, no such systematic study has been undertaken, and therefore the map presented by Fenger represents only one possible suggestion out of many. (fig. 2) Yet another challenge consists of pinpointing the exact connection between *mansi* listed in the donation letter of 1085 and *mansi* listed in the land registers of 1570 and 1650 or documents in general not contemporary with King Cnut's letter. This is because by the end of the medieval period, almost one in ten of all Scanian tithe-paying farms was owned by the church in Lund (Paulsson & Skansjö 2017: 26). Nevertheless, possible convergences between the donation letter of 1085 and the later registers of land will, in my opinion, strengthen an argument for a similar convergence between the mentioned farms. This notion is of particular relevance to the mention of *Brundby*, as will be outlined later.

A Geri and A Guthisbo

When dealing with the irregularities in the text related to 'A Geri' and 'A Guthisbo', and trying to explain why designating place names are used only in these two Scanian instances, at least two perspectives can be addressed. First, within a system based on geographically organized *thing*-witness, it seems relevant to look for administrative changes of the Scanian lands around the time of the donation letter. Secondly, it also seems relevant to look for inconsistencies after 1085 that would appear when comparing the 1123 document to the younger versions.

Regarding the idea of administrative changes, these must be seen in light of political events earlier in the eleventh century. Unrest in the 1020s meant that in 1026 Cnut the Great – Cnut IV's granduncle – had to go to Denmark to secure his continued political rule in the North Sea world (DRB 1.1:422; Saxo

10.16). According to Saxo, the Swedes continuously intruded Scania and Cnut's journey resulted in large battles at Stangbjærg and at Helgåen near Åhus, and despite the results of the battles his position as king appears to have been strengthened, both politically as well as territorially (ibid.). In 1027, Cnut the Great announced that in addition to being king of England and Denmark, he was also king of the Norwegians and part of the land of the Swedes (DRB 1.1:422). It is unclear which part of Sweden was being referred to. If we take as a starting point the location of the battle at Helgå, we might consider the north-eastern part of Scania (later known as Villand, Gärd, Gudesbo[Göinge] and perhaps Albo hundred) and the Blekinge area, which the traveller and trader, Wulfstan, at the end of the eighth century attributed to the Swedes (Christensen 1969: 28), as being that part of Sweden to which Cnut the Great referred in 1027.

At the beginning of Svend Estridsen's reign twenty years later (1047-1074), Denmark was divided into only a few dioceses, but in 1060 Svend divided the diocese of Roskilde into three, Roskilde, Lund and Dalby (Weibull 1923: 112ff). The exact boundary between the dioceses of Lund and Dalby is unclear, but some suggestions have been summarized by Weibull (1923: 115, n. 3). The bishop of Dalby "should take care of the eastern part [of Scania] / as well as that under Blekinge" as Arild Huitfeldt notes in his ecclesiastical history, *Den geistlige histori*, from 1604 (1604, my translation). A similar division also appeared as a cultural and geographical border in the Late Iron Age and the Viking Age, which separated north-eastern Scania (coinciding with Villand, Gärd, Gudesbo and Albo hundred) and Blekinge from southwestern Scania (Fabech 1993; Fabech et al. 2017: 78). However, in ecclesiastical matters, the division of Scania, Halland and Blekinge into the dioceses of Lund and Dalby became a short-lived affair, and after Bishop Henrik died c.1066, the lands were gathered under the diocese of Lund with the former Dalby bishop, Egino, as its bishop (fig. 3). Egino died in 1072, and his successor, Rikvald (bishop 1072-1089), appears as a witness in Cnut IV's donation letter from 1085, according to which Cnut proclaimed the cathedral church of Lund "forever to be a bride of the lamb that carries the sin of the world" (Huitfeld 1604). At that time, the diocese of Lund stood out as particularly powerful among the dioceses of Denmark, and it included territory from all three Scania lands (Scania, Halland and Blekinge), in addition to the island of Bornholm.

The donation letter was thus written in a geographical and political context where the administrative superstructures had undergone significant changes over the course of half a century. Within a *thing*-system, based on *thing*-witness as the legal prerequisite for making claims of land, such administrative changes do very well explain the need for designation of the North-eastern Scanian hides in the vills in 'A Geri' and 'A Guthisbo', as done in 1085. Gärd and Gudesbo were located outside the historical Scanian heartland, and in an area which historically, geographically and administratively had not been fully integrated into the traditional Danish part of the Scanian heartland (before 1027). Consequently, this area had not been subordinated to the formal jurisdiction of the land-*thing* in Lund in matters concerning claims to land. The same explanation clarifies the parallel use of designating geography in a similar letter dated January the 6th 1135, documenting King Erik II Emune's donation of hides in specific vills under the jurisdiction of Gärd, Villand and the island of Amager, given to the Church of St Laurentius, Lund (Appendix 2 and DRB 1.2:63; Dipl.Dan 1.2:63).

Yet another feature is worth a brief remark when looking at all three transcriptions of the donation letter together. Attention must be drawn to the fact that 'A Geri. In Winistadum' does not figure in the 1123 transcription of *Necrologium Lundense* (fig. 1, p. 1, ln. 18). This could of course be explained as a flaw in the 1123 transcription, but an alternative interpretation would be that 'A Geri. In Winistadum. unus mansus' was not actually part of the 1085 donation letter and had been added to the text sometime after 1123. Such an explanation would likewise mean that the Scanian part of the list is a coherent list, which is followed in the end by a single designation of the remote 'A Guthisbo. In Sandby. unus mansus'.

Following "A Guthisbo. In Sandby" in Scania, the document turns to Zealand. As already mentioned, the document is very coherent and lists the gifts under the jurisdiction of the land-*thing* of Zealand, systematically subdivided into hundreds and specific vills, e.g. "In Hornsherathi Sculdalef. unus mansus" (see appendix 1).

Smørhem minore

In the donation letter, "Smørhem minore" is listed third after Hornsherati, following the vills 'Sculdalef' and 'in Othense'. Smørhem minore is interpreted as the still existing Smørumnedre (DS: Smørumnedre) in Smørum herred, as no village called *Smørum minore* is known to have existed in Hornsherati/

Hornsherred. As such, a missing designating hundred related to Smørhem minore stands out as an irregularity. Whether the coinciding name for a vill (Smørum) and a hundred (Smørum) could cause the irregularity in the listing, as the designating name of the hundred was implicit, is a possibility worth considering.

Another matter worth consideration pertains to a defunct hundred just south of Smørhem. The hundred existed until the late seventeenth century and was named 'lidlæ', small, or in Latin 'minore'. A royal letter of privilege from 1145 represents the earliest evidence of that hundred which, in conjunction with Smørum hundred, constitutes an area where the hundred-structure has been subject to quite some changes (Dipl.Dan. 1.2:91; Trap 1960: 985).

When speaking of Smørhem minore, I find the first explanation for why the donation letter does not provide a designating hundred for Smørhem to be the most plausible one. However, either of the circumstances mentioned above could explain why the designating hundred name appears to be missing for Smørhem minore in all the three transcripts of the donation letter. As we will see in the case of Brundby, other circumstances might provide some further explanation.

Insula Amacum Sundby

Insula Amacum Sundby follows the listing of the hides of Zealand, and as such 'Insula Amacum' seems to function as a designation in the same way as the hundreds, although we do not know of any Insula Amacum hundred (or land) and it is not likely to have ever existed.

However, in cases where it was desirable for administrative or practical reasons (e.g. remoteness), additional jurisdictions, called *birk*, were established with their own *thing*, *Birke-thing* (Lerdam 2004: 27). The institution of the *birk* is considered to be as old as the hundred-institution, and we know from King Valdemar II's Land Register (1231) that Insula Amacum [Amakæ] constituted such a *birk* as part of Sokkelund hundred [Støfnæsheret] (Lerdam 2004: 27, 93, 132; Vjb. 1.2 20, 2.1 157).

This would explain the missing designating hundred name, as Insula Amacum had its own *thing* in jurisdictional matters. As a consequence, the designation of Insula Amacum is in line with the proposed idea of systematic references to the *thing*-system in King Cnut's donation letter.

Brundby

Following the listing of Insula Amacum, the donation letter mentions 'In Brundby tres mansi'. Traditionally, Brundby is interpreted as the Zealandic Brøndby in Smørum hundred (e.g. Madsen 1863: 197; Fenger 1989; DS: Brøndby). However, the text does not contain any designating hundred name that would unequivocally support this specific interpretation. We must however note that the place name Brundby is not unique and that other villages named Brundby exist (DS: Brundby). Of special interest in this context is the onomastically identical Brunnby in Luggude herred, Scania.

The fact that 'Brundby' is listed in continuation of the series of vills on Zealand and the nearby island of Amager, has led to the traditional, and seemingly unquestioned, interpretation of this being the Brundby of Zealand. Yet at the same time we must bear in mind that the place names which are listed after Brundby in the donation letter are all Scanian, namely Helsingborg, Lomma and Lund. Furthermore, listings in comparable documents are known to shift back and forth between different regions/lands. This is exemplified in a donation letter from 1135, where the listing of the donations given by Peder, Hemming, Jørgen and their mother shifts back and forth between Zealand, Møn and Falster (DRB 1.2:64; Dipl.Dan 1.2:64). This principle stands in contrast to the syntax related to vills within specific hundreds, as these always seem to be listed consecutively (e.g. appendix 2).

Aside from the missing designating name of the corresponding hundred, what seems to further contradict the interpretation of the listed Brundby as representing a vill at Zealand, is the case of 'Smøhem minore', if this is to be interpreted as Smørumnedre. Smørumnedre and the Zealandic Brøndby are both part of Smørum hundred. If we follow the pattern of listing which is general to the donation letter as well as to other comparable documents from the same time (e.g. DRB 1.2:63-64), we would expect all gifts from one particular hundred to be listed one after the other (e.g. 'In Hornsherathi Sculdalef. unus mansus. In Othense unus mansus'), but Smørumnedre and Brøndby are not listed together. This can be seen as an indication of the two vills not belonging to the same hundred-*thing*, i.e. that the 'Brundby' mentioned in the donation letter is not the one on Zealand.

Summarizing the indications which pertain to Brundby's missing organizational relationship with Smørhem minore, the fact that Brundby has no designating hundred name, and that all following men-

Fig. 11: Hundred-economic/ Häradsekonomisk map (1910-15) depicting the Scanian Brunnby [Brundby?] and nearby thorps, i.e. Smedstorp, Fjälastorp, Flundrarp and Stubbarp, © Lantmäteriet.

tions in the list are Scanian, makes it tempting to look more closely at matters concerning Brunnby in Luggude hundred in Scania. Could this actually be the Brundby mentioned in the donation letter? If so, the document then displays a list of place names organised strictly according to the *thing* structure.

As already stated, because there are very few descriptive details in the written documents, it is almost impossible to demonstrate indisputable connections between the donation letter and the later lists of the possessions of Lund cathedral. When we add to that the possible further alterations in the organizational structure (e.g. establishing of parishes and adjustments of the hundreds), re-assessing the lands during medieval period, and a potential use of new administrative place names due to outparcelling of thorps and manors from 800 AD onwards, it becomes even harder to connect specific property with information found in different written documents.

Based on the model of settlement history (fig. 8) and administrative alterations and updates during the centuries, we ought to expect that at least some hides, *mansi*, will be called by various names in the documents, in accordance with changes of administrative place names, even though the hide itself would remain the same throughout the period in question. This means that a specific hide related to a contemporary primary-vill in the early Viking Age, could at a later time be related to another administrative place name due to an outparcelling of a thorp into a new independent vill. After the introduction of the parish structure, that same hide could even be designated within the name of the parish, thus once again representing a possibility of change in the designating administrative place name. Of course, this adds quite a few challenges in attempting to follow specific hides through time and in written documents, but we need to take this into account when examining the structure of the 1085 donation letter.

When dealing with the reference 'in Brundby', it seems obvious to search in medieval documents for connections between the Lund cathedral and hides which, at a point before the establishing of parishes and outparcelling of thorps and manors, would have been part of a larger primary-vill (Brundby, Luggude hundred) in Scania. As such, attention should be paid to the neighbouring thorps, i.e. Stubbarp, Smedstorp, Flundrarp, Fjälastorp/Lindeknävel and Bräcke, as any one of these could in principle have been part of Brundby in 1085 and simply outparcelled hereafter (fig. 9 & fig. 11).

Examining different land registers of Lund cathedral (i.e. *Necrologium Lundense, Liber daticus Lundensis vetustior, Liber daticus Lundensis recentior* and the Land Registers of 1570 and 1650), we see that connections to Fjälastorp/Lindeknävel, Bräcke, Smidstorp [Smedstorp] and Södåkra did exist in medieval time (Weeke 1889: 256, 263; Paulsson & Skansjö 2017: 175, 180, 377). However, most of these relations are regarded of limited interest, as they seem to represent donations later than 1085.

Of even greater interest is, of course, any direct relation to medieval Brunnby itself. I have not found

any mention of hides in the land registers, but a 1344 letter from Pope Clement VI pinpoints a relation, as the church in Brunnby (built in the mid-twelfth century and so after the donation letter) at that time was related to Lund Cathedral (DRB 3.2:19, Dipl. Dan. 3.2:18, Dahlerup 1976). As such, it is worth a thought whether the church in Brunnby does in fact somehow represent a connection to the three hides mentioned in King Cnut's donation letter of 1085.

All indications taken together, I find it most likely that the Brundby mentioned in the donation letter is in fact the Scanian Brunnby in Luggude hundred and not Brøndby in Smørum hundred on Zealand as hitherto interpreted.

To address irregularities systematically

As stated above, there are good reason to challenge some of the traditional interpretations of the donation letter from 1085. Accepting the above suggestions frames the donation letter as strictly and systematically organised according to the thing-system as known from the medieval period. Moreover, it can also be seen to consistently correspond to the judicial principles known from the twelfth- and thirteenth-century landscape laws, as already mentioned: "On the thing you shall register rights to land and not elsewhere, that is to say on the hundred-thing in which the land is situated, or on the county-thing or on the land-thing, or before the king, for the thing-witness is so binding, that there cannot be given evidence against it." (see table 2 and fig. 12). As such, awareness of the geographical origin of the setting down of donation letters (in terms of the related land-thing jurisdiction within which it was produced) is of great importance, as further designations at lower hierarchical levels (i.e. hundred or birk) were in such cases superfluous.

In the case of King Cnut's donation letter from Lund, the above-mentioned principle of designation would lead to a structure of the letter, where all hides as part of vills under the jurisdiction of the land-thing

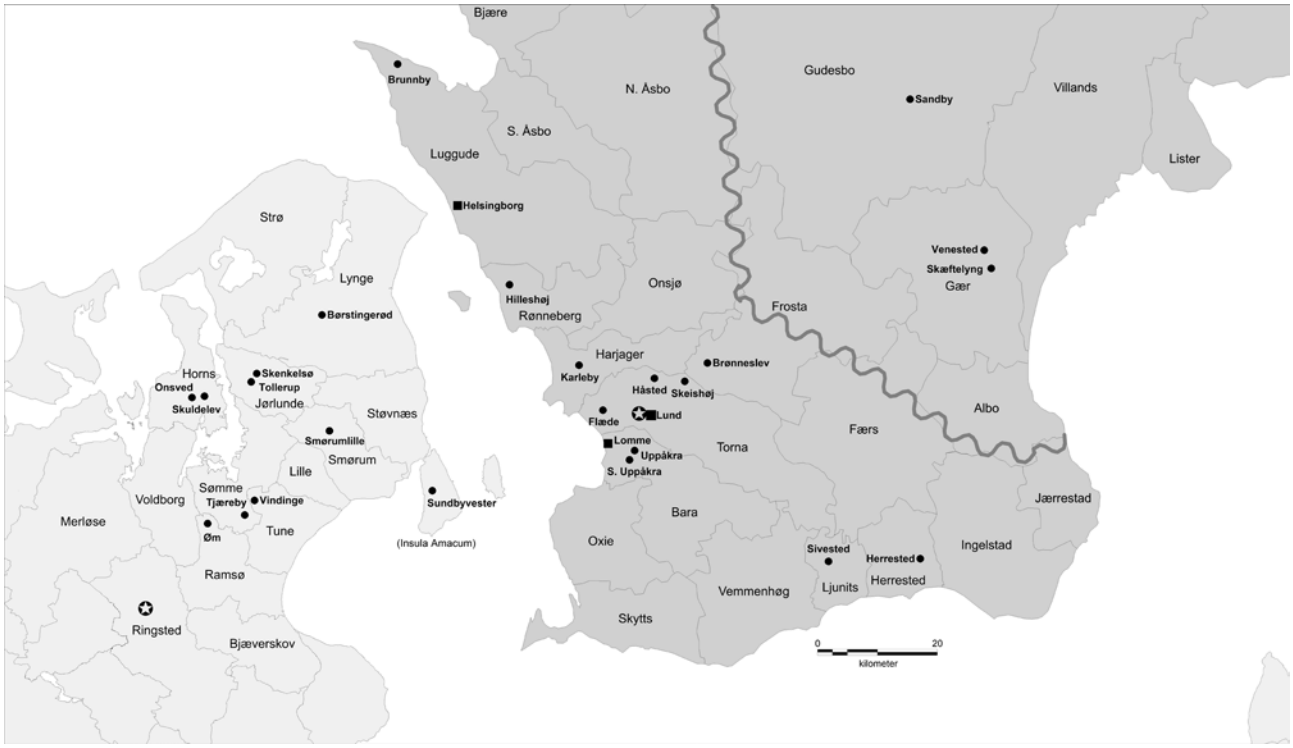


Fig. 12: Map illustrating the vills (●) listed in King Cnut´s donation letter and the geographic-judicial principle underlying the use of designating things (land, hundred, birk), resulting specifically from the geographical origin of the set down of the letter. As King Cnut's letter originates from Lund and thus Scania, the jurisdiction of the land-thing in Lund is implicit and legal requirements are/can be fulfilled. Consequently, all hides belonging to vills from the Scanian heartland (southwest) are systematically stated without a designating hundred[-thing]. Conversely, all hides in the remote vills from the north-eastern part of Scania, outside the old Scanian heartland, are consistently listed with designations representing hundred-things or birke-things, as is also the case for all hides related to the Zealandic vills. Note the reinterpretation regarding Brundby, as the map depicts the Scanian vill Brunnby in Luggude Hundred, and not the Zealandic Brøndby in Smørum Hundred, as is traditionally done.

Vill	Designation	Jurisdiction	Geography	Vill	Designation	Jurisdiction	Geography
	Lund				Zealand		
Lilla Uppåkra		Lund, implicit	Scania, primary	Øm	Ramsø Hundred	Ramsø Hundred	Zealand, primary
Uppåkra		Lund, implicit	Scania, primary	Tjæreby	Sømme Hundred	Sømme Hundred	Zealand, primary
Herrestad		Lund, implicit	Scania, primary	Vindinge	Tune hundred	Tune Hundred	Zealand, primary
Skälshög		Lund, implicit	Scania, primary	Skuldelev	Horns Hundred	Horns Hundred	Zealand, primary
Flädie		Lund, implicit	Scania, primary	Onsved		Horns Hundred	Zealand, primary
Hilleshög		Lund, implicit	Scania, primary	Smørumnedre	→→→→→→→→→→	Smørum Hundred	Zealand, primary
Håstad		Lund, implicit	Scania, primary	Børstingerød	Lynge Hundred	Lynge Hundred	Zealand, primary
Venestad	Gärd	Gärd	Scania, secundary	Tollerup	Jørlunde Hundred	Jørlunde Hundred	Zealand, primary
Skättiljunga		Gärd	Scania, secundary	Skenkelsø		Jørlunde Hundred	Zealand, primary
Sövestad		Lund, implicit	Scania, primary	Sundbyvester	Amager island	Amager island (birk)	Zealand, secundary
Karlaby		Lund, implicit	Scania, primary	Brunnby		Lund, implicit	Scania, primary
Brönneslöv		Lund, implicit	Scania, primary	Lomma*			
Sandby	Göinge [Guthisbo]	Göinge [Guthisbo]	Scania, secundary	Helsingborg*			
				Lund*			

Tab. 2: The vills and designating hundreds/areas are arranged as listed in King Cnut's donation letter of 1085. In addition, my interpretation of the relevant jurisdictions, as well as the geographic location, is listed. Scania is divided into two areas (primary and secondary) in accordance with the text above. The document is said to have been publicly affirmed in Lund, and all hides/vills within the jurisdiction of the land-thing in Lund, is listed as such implicitly. (*) represents money given annually from plots.

in Lund/Scania are implicit and therefore not to be listed, unlike all the others which should be carefully noted. This is exactly what characterizes the document.

In order to indicate that the demonstrated structure and principle of designation represents a regular judicial practice, I have examined some further donation letters from 1135 onwards (see appendix 2). These represent donations from the king as well as commoners, and they clearly follow the very same principle of designation of vills related to the thing-structure (See also Fenger 1989: 126). From around 1145, the structure of donation letters becomes a little more complex and varied, as explicitly assessed taxation begins to supplement the listing of transfers of hides (e.g. DRB 1.2:88; Dipl.Dan. 1.2:88; DRB 1.2:160; Dipl.Dan. 1.2:160). Nevertheless, the examples clearly demonstrate that everyone was subject to what was considered law – whether king, clergy or commoner (see also Jørgensen 1969: 18).

The hundreds in a 1085 perspective

If we follow the above analysis, we dismantle the use of regionally based differences in King Cnut's donation letter (i.e. the designation of hundreds) as an argument for claiming the Danish hundreds in Scania to be younger than those on Zealand (except for the hundreds of Northeastern Scania, i.e. Gärd, Guthisbo, Villand and Albo). Rather than to use the inconsistent references to hundreds as an argument for Denmark as being administratively young and heterogeneous by 1085, I instead interpret King Cnut's letter to represent a systematic, well-functioning and well-consolidated judicial structure across the entire kingdom (e.g. Zealand and Scania), and without any signs of it being new. This was a system which, in terms of the fundamental (settlement-) organization and related judicial matters, seems to have been structured interregionally by capable kings (e.g. Cnut IV, as Ole Fenger has previously emphasised, 1989). At the same time, this system allowed for regional differences to exist and evolve, as is evident from the archaeological findings and apparent in the later regional landscape laws (Skansjö & Sundström 1989: 126; Hansen 2015: 273; Hansen in prep).

Therefore, I suggest that the origin of the hundreds are best studied by analysing the organization and division of land (i.e. vills and hundreds) on a regional scale combining archaeology with place name studies. As far as I see, there are no strong arguments that contradict the hundred-structure to be as old as the general reorganization of settlements that led to establishing of the primary-vills around 600 AD. Rather, the evidence indicates that the hundred-structure had its origin in the time of this general reorganization (Rasmussen 1961; Hansen 2015: 177-182, 273; Hansen in prep). Consequently, I hypothesize that the impact of the thing-system (land, hundred and birk), and the concomitant introduction of simple duties and rights bound to land at different levels (e.g. hundreds, vills and hides), was the primary reason for the stable vill-structure to emerge from about 600, which is still apparent today.

Many scholars have argued for connecting an early thing-structure (hundred and land) to different kinds of military obligations, such as warfare [leding], building of fortifications and so on (Hoff 1997, Hansen 2015). As such, we should probably imagine a quite simple administrative system when compared to later periods. Nevertheless, implementing the above-mentioned administrative principle based on

land resources would naturally require some form of land assessment on quite a big scale. But how could that come about in Viking Age Denmark?

The donation letter and land assessment

Scholars have long debated how far back in time land assessments can be indicated in Denmark. Positions vary from the seventh and eighth centuries to the mid-eleventh century (Hoff 1997:104; Venge 2002:173; Nielsen & Dalgaard 2009:190; Nielsen 2010:140; Poulsen 2011; Svensson 2015). Naturally, the few surviving written documents that indirectly indicate the existence of such fundamental administrative initiatives cannot be expected to mark the introduction of such a system. A similar case can be found in late-eleventh-century England concerning the 1085/1086 Domesday Book. As Campbell puts it: "Indeed, to the extent that Domesday is a survey for tax, with the whole land assessed in hides or carucates, it describes a fiscal machine whose existence might, without Domesday, have been asserted but hardly demonstrated" (Campbell 2000: xi).

I will argue that King Cnut's donation letter is not to be seen as an assessment in itself, but rather that its content is arranged and denoted in direct relation to an assessment structure. To claim that such administrative efforts could realistically be conducted by Danish kings prior to 1085 seems, in my opinion, reasonable when compared with the Domesday survey commissioned by King William the Conqueror that same year, which covered large parts of England. This largescale administrative survey intended to provide a survey of William's possessions of land and fiscal rights was systematically conducted within a year (Campbell 2000).

If we return to Denmark, we see, as already mentioned, that Anette Hoff operates with two land assessments at different points in time: an early mansus assessment which Hoff dates to the Viking Age, and a later gold assessment taking place in the first half of the twelfth century (Hoff 1997: 103ff). The latter was used in King Valdemar II's Land Register from the mid-thirteenth century, but not new at that time (Ibid.). The mansus assessment is much more difficult to place in time, but must, according to Hoff, still have been valid at the time of King Cnut in the late eleventh century. In any case, administrative implementation of new assessments, even though taking place within a very limited and primitive administration in the Viking Age, must be perceived as a radical change, and not as an incremental adaption.

However, a radically implemented assessment means that a fiscal structure, including entities of units and place-names, would be fixed at the time of the assessment itself. However, this does not mean that the development of settlements within the units would be fixed in a similar manner. Here we must see the two contexts individually, i.e. on the one hand the administration of duties bound to relatively large areas of land, and on the other hand the internal development of village organization.

Based on this theory of assessments, there is an inherent inconsistency between the place names recorded in the legal records (here illustrated by the donation letter from 1085) and the corpus of place names actually used, exemplified by the place name element -thorp, which must have been highly productive in 1085 (productive meaning, that newly outparcelled units were extensively named as -thorp). This inconsistency is due to the development of settlements and place names (e.g. splitting of villages, establishing of new thorps etc.) being first reflected in the fiscal system when a new assessment took place. Therefore, the older the land assessment is by the time a legal document is created (a document containing duties bound to the administrative system e.g. duties of war and so forth), the greater the inconsistency between the place names listed in the document and the corpus of actual names will be, at least within a settlement structure which is characterized by outparcelling. This means, in turn, that such historical documents only invariably provide a representative sample of the corpus of actual place names at the time the document is written. However, it is also this delay and inconsistency between the actual usage of place names and the implementation of those names in legal documents which theoretically can be used to qualify an estimation of the age of the actual land assessment to which a given document is subject (fig. 13).

When only one out of twenty-nine settlements contains the place name element -thorp in King Cnut's donation letter of 1085, compared to the fifty-one out of hundred-and-eight such names in in the Falster list from c.1250 (Hoff 1997: 123), this discrepancy should not be used uncritically as an indicator of the -thorp-process in Eastern Denmark, as primarily having taken place after 1085. Rather, I would suggest that what we see in the 1085 donation letter is an administrative list that refers to the geographic representation of fiscal structures from an earlier assess-

Fig. 13: Model depicting the relationship between settlement structure, place name, documents and assessments (after Hansen 2015).

ment, here called the mansus assessment. Similarly, the Falster List has been recorded on the basis of the later gold assessment, dated to the twelfth century.

I interpret the low frequency of the place name element -thorp in the 1085 donation letter as indicating that the assessment which the letter represents may be an assessment from an early stage in the primary thorp expansion (-thorp phase). As the settlement analysis based on the Funen material has shown, the beginning of the archaeological -thorp phase must be dated to the period after 800 AD, since no single farms from the previous three centuries have been excavated. Within this period, from early Viking Age until the turn of the millennium, it is difficult to assess when the -thorp phase intensified. However, I suggest that this happened in the latter part of the period. Whether the proposed mansus assessment have older layers, perhaps even going all the way back to the major restructuring around 600 AD, will probably remain unanswered due to the lack of written documents. However, both the archaeological material from Denmark and comparable documents from England, suggest that such a hypothesis should not be rejected on the basis of missing Danish documents corresponding to King Cnut's 1085 donation letter.

Conclusion

In the present study, I have tried to interpret the structure of the content of King Cnut's donation letter in light of new results from archaeological studies and vice versa. Special focus has been on the potential of the 1085 donation letter in light of research on the existence and nature of obligations pertaining to land in Denmark in the Viking Age, such as levies in times of war, and the building and maintenance of defences and infrastructure. My investigation combines archaeological data with a number of historical sources, and with brief comparisons to contemporary England. As demonstrated, there is a basis for reading the donation letter as being structured in close alignment with contemporary judicial realities, concretized by a thing-system which is known in greater detail from the twelfth- and thirteenth-century landscape laws.

The study has also outlined some challenges for diachronic analyses based on the place names listed in the donation letter. At the same time, it has been found that analysing the place names in the donation letter permits an estimation of the age of the theoretical mansus assessment which serves as a foundation for the listed hides in 1085. My conclusion is that the tenth century seems to be the most likely period of such an assessment.

Clearly, there is a great deal of interpretations of relationships which, as standalone arguments, are not strong enough to prove such essential settlement organizational and administrative superstructures and large-scale assessments. To strengthen research on the judicial anchoring of hides, vills and land in Denmark in the Viking Age, it will be necessary to conduct studies based on all hides, vills and administrative / judicial entities that appear in the text.

However, I am of the opinion that the combined evidence from King Cnut´s donation letter and the archaeological analyses of settlements makes a strong case for the above theory, knowing that a definitive proof of assessed obligations bound to land in a proto-historical and premonetary period is difficult to find.

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Appendix 1

King Cnut´s Donation Letter, 1085 (transcription)

Latin (Dipl. Dan. 1.2:21). Notable differences between the three transcriptions are pointed out in the footnotes. Differences in the spelling of place names have not been included in the notes.

In nomine sanctę et indiuiduę Trinitatis. patris et filii et spiritus sancti. Notum omnibus in Christo fidelibus esse cupimus. qualiter ego Cnvto. quartus Magni regis filius. post susceptum paternę hereditatis regnum. ęcclesiam sancti Lavrentii. quę sita est Lundę. licet nondum perfectam dotaui. ut illius agni tollit peccata mundi sit perpetim. sponsa. sancta sancti. Immaculata immaculati. digna digni. Desponsale autem huius ęcclesię qoud uel quale sit patefecimus. et sub his testibus. Ricvvalo. Svenone. Sivvardo. espiscopis. Haqvino duce. presbiteris. Arnoldo. Theoderico. Heinrico. Godescalco. stabulariis. Allone. Haqvino. Petro. Suenone. Ascero Akonis filio. Deo preside. ratum et ęternaliter. stabilitum desideramus. Est igitur terra illa quam Œpi filius Thorbiorn in Lunde pro pace sua emendauit. In Upaccri australi. quattuor mansi. et dimidius. In altero Upaccri. totidem mansi. In Heruestadum octo mansi. In Scialshoge. duo mansi. In Flatoige. quinque mansi et dimidius quem dedit Hacon regi. In Hildeshoge. dimidius. In Hastathum. unus mansus. A Geri.[1] *In Winistadum. unus mansus. In Scæfteliungum. dimidius mansus. In Seuestathum dimidius mansus.*[2] *quem persoluebat pro pace sua. Scora. Et dimidius mansus in Karlæbiu quem dedit idem Scora regi pro pace sua. In Bruneslef. dimidius quem soluebat rex a Thurgislu filio Gunstens. A Guthisbo. In Sandby. unus mansus. In Selandia. In Ramseherathi Oem. duo mansi. In Semaherathi Tiarby. duo mansi. In Tuna herathi Winningavve duo mansi. In Hornsherathi Sculdalef. unus mansus. In Othense unus mansus. In Smørhem minore. duo mansi. In Liunga herathi Broestingarythi duo mansi. In Iurlunga herathi Tollathorp. unus mansus. In Scenkilsio unus mansus. In insula Amacum. Sundby occidentali quinsus. In Brundby tres mansi. De annuali pecunia quę datur pro areis in Lumaby tres marce. De eadem pecunia in Helsingaburg tres marc. De areis Lunde. xx. marce et. i. Si quis prepotens. nobilis. uel ignobilis. natus uel non natus. contumaci inflatus audacia contra sanctę religionis propositum. huius pacti decretum uiolare studuerit. sit anathema Maranatha. sit supplicio deputatus ęterno. ubi uermis non moritur. et ignis non extinguitur.*[3]

Fiat mensa eius coram ipso in laqueum et in retributiones et in scandalum. Cum eis qui dixerunt dominio Deo recede a nobis. scienciam uiarum tuarum nolumus.[4] *Quod autem ad regiam pertinet iusticiam ex quacunque causa fiat de prenominata terra. in potestate sit prepositi et cęterorum fratrum in hoc loco Deo seruiencium. Tribus culpis exceptis.*[5] *Si extra pacem positus fuerit. emat pacem a rege [quis illud emendetur]*[6]*. substanciam illius tollat prepositus et fratres. Si expedicionem neglexerit. erga regem*[7] *emendet. Reddarios equos non dent. nisi cum rex ipse uenerit. Actum Lundi duodecimo kalendas Iunii. Anno incarnacionis dominice. octogesimo quinto indiccione viii epac xxii Concur. ii Anno regni domini Kanuti regis. quinto. Predictis presentibus episcopis et confirmatibus Auctore domino nostro Ihesu Christo.*[8] *Qui est benedictus in secula seculorum. Amen.*

Notes

[1] Rendered as “Ageri” in the 1494 transcription. See Weibull 1925: 106.

[2] 1494: “vnus mansus”; 1662: dimidium mansus”. See Weibull 1925: 106.

[3] Mark 9:43.

[4] Job 21:14.

[5] In Necrologium Lundense, the text “Tribus cultis exceptis” is mostly lost to an erasure, and has been reconstructed from the other transcriptions. Weibull remarks that underneath the erasure can be seen “trib”, “lp”, “x”, and “ptis”. See Weibull 1925: 107.

[6] Only in the 1123 transcription. These three words are written upon an erasure (Weibull 1925: 107) and might therefore not be a part of the original, now lost, document, but rather an emendation made in Lund.

[7] 1123 and 1662: “erga regum eius” (Weibull 1925: 107). For the practice of giving horses to the royal carriage in medieval Denmark, see Lund 2015.

[8] 1123: Actum lunde. XII. Kal. Junij. Indictione nona. Jncarnationis dominicę. anno. millesimo. octogesimo quinto. Regni autem dominj CNVTONIS anno quitno. predictis episcopis presentibus et confirmantibus (Weibull 1925: 107).

Appendix 2

DRB 1.2 n. 63; Dipl.Dan. 1.2 n.63 (original document) Document created in Lund, Jurisdiction of Scania lands-thing. Donated by King Erik Emune, 1135			
Vill	**Designation**	**Jurisdiction**	**Geography**
Västra Vram	Gärd	Gärd	Scania, secundary
Maglehem		Gärd	Scania, secundary
Hovby		Gärd	Scania, secundary
Yngsjö		Gärd	Scania, secundary
Härlöv		Gärd	Scania, secundary
Fjälkinge	Villand	Villand	Scania, secundary
Tømmerup	Amager island	Amager island (birk)	Zealand, secundary
Tårnby		Amager island (birk)	Zealand, secundary

DRB 1.2 n.64; Dipl.Dan. 1.2 n.64 Negotiated in Næstved (jurisdiction of Zealand lands-thing, Ringsted) Donated by Peder Bodilsen, his brothers Hemming and Jørgen and their mother, 1135.			
Vill	**Designation**	**Jurisdiction**	**Geography**
Ladby		Zealand	Zealand, primary
Bukkerup		Zealand	Zealand, primary
Faksinge Ore		Zealand	Zealand, primary
Keldby	Møn Island	Møn island	Møn
Ålbæk		Møn island	Møn
Gedesby	Falster Island	Falster island	Falster
Skelby		Falster island	Falster
Vålse		Falster island	Falster
Lille Næstved		Zealand	Zealand, primary
Ladby Ore		Zealand	Zealand, primary
Torpet		Zealand	Zealand, primary
[Store] Næstved		Zealand	Zealand, primary

DRB 1.2 n.65; Dipl.Dan 1.2 n.65 Negotiated in Ringsted (Jurisdiction of Zealand lands-thing, Ringsted) Donated by King Erik Emune, 1135			
Vill	**Designation**	**Jurisdiction**	**Geography**
Ringsted*			Zealand, primary
Bjerge			Zealand, primary
	Amager island	Amager island (birk)	Zealand, secundary
Ejby			Zealand, primary
Almstofte			Zealand, primary

DRB 1.2 n.156; Dipl.Dan. 1.2 n.156 Document created in Zealand, Ringsted lands-thing Donated by King Valdemar I, 1164			
Vill	**Designation**	**Jurisdiction**	**Geography**
Ringsted*			Zealand, primary
Bjerge			Zealand, primary
	Amager island	Amager island (birk)	Zealand, secundary
Ejby			Zealand, primary
Almstofte/Ringsted Skov			Zealand, primary
Thislund Skov			Zealand, primary
Ringsted*			Zealand, primary
Lynge			Zealand, primary
Bjerge			Zealand, primary
Asnæs			Zealand, primary
Benløse			Zealand, primary
	Møn island	Møn island	Møn island

Notes

[1] Hundred is used as equivalent to the Nordic herred/härad (Rasmussen 1961).

[2] Thing is the term for judicial assemblies with jurisdiction related to specific geographic regions (birk, hundred, land) in the Late Iron Age, the Viking Age and the Middle Ages.

[3] The term hide is used as equivalent to the Latin term mansus used in the donation letter, and the Danish term bol, representing parts of the vill [i.e. fields, meadows for grazing, forest] as well as the duties and rights related to the land. In the Danish context, the term does not represent any known exact measure of land. It is as such seen as a relative term when comparing between vills but at the same time consistent within the individual vill (Rasmussen 1957). The term bol is used in the Danish Landscape Laws from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

[4] The term ”designating (hundreds)” is used in a meaning as an extra layer of addressing the individual vill (see below) e.g. In Lynge Hundred in Børstingerød. Lynge Hundred designates the vill Børstingerød.

[5] The vill represents an Anglo-Saxon tradition equivalent to the early Danish ejerlav. In early medieval times the vill constituted a rural village of some size including all its land (field, forest etc.). The vills were often characterized by an agrarian community. The vills also constituted the basis for the levying of men in times of war and the workforce for building and maintaining infrastructure and fortresses. The vills were represented at the hundred-thing. See Ault for the English vill (1982: 188), and Hansen for the Danish equivalent during Late Iron Age and Viking Age/European Early Middle Ages (2015: 157-172).

[6] The principle and value of stable management is also regarded a driving force of innovation in parts of the Carolingian world ”the primary aim of ecclesiastical and royal estatemanagement was the creation of a stable and predictable flow of goods and rent, not at what we would recognize as economic growth.” (Costambeys et al. 2011: 260).

[7] The terms Mansus Assessment and Gold Assessment are my own translations of the Danish ‘bolvurdering’ (Viking Age) and ‘skyld-/mark-/guldvurdering’ (c. mid-twelfth century) as used by the historian Annette Hoff (1997: 102ff).

[8] ”A thingi scilæ mæn iorth scøtæ. oc æi ant stath. thæt ær a thæt hæræz thing thær iorth liggær i. æth sysæl thing. æth landz thing. æth for kunung. for thy at things witnæ ær swo stærk. at gen things witnæ skal ængi logh giuæs (Skautrup 1933: 89-90). Translated to modern Danish by Fenger & Jansen (1991). I have used the term County-thing as the equivalent of the Danish ‘Sysselting’ (my translation). The syssel was primarily used in Jutland as a jurisdictional level between land and hundred.

[9] The listings from Liber daticus Lundensis vetustior (c.1135) and Liber daticus Lundensis recentior (fourteenth century) are not so relevant here, as they represent gifts donated after 1135 (Weeke 1989).

[10] The exact location of the battle is a contested issue. Both the border region between Scania and Blekinge in southern Villand hundred and, alternatively, the Mälaren area have been mentioned as possibilities (see Gräslund 1986; Moberg 1987). However, there is general support for the interpretation of the battle associated with Helgeå in Scania/Blekinge. See also Anglert (1995: 49).

[11] ”Den anden udi Dalby, ved nafn Henrich [Egino], skulde paavare den østre Part, oc det under Bleginde.” (Huitfeld 1604: 48).

[12] Weibull has emphasized how changes and deletions have been continuously made in significant numbers in the documents, and for many different reasons, i.e. adjustments, manipulations etc. (Weibull 1925).

[13] In several ways, Insula Amacum (Amager island) fits in the document as a land-thing in line with the small islands Møn and Falster just south of Zealand and Samsø East of Jutland (not depicted on the map fig. 10). These are precisely characterized by their, in this context, very small jurisdictions where the land-thing and the hundred-thing can coincide (Jørgensen 1969: 238). Since there is no evidence for the interpretation of the island of Amager as a land(-thing), the significance of Amager as a birke-thing is preferred. However, the possibility should in my opinion not be completely rejected, given the general historical development of jurisdictions, which over time resulted in three main juridical areas (Jutland / Funen, Zealand and Skåne), which are also reflected in the landscape laws for the same areas (Jørgensen 1969: 238). Insula Amacum is also consequently noted as designation of specific vills and hides in the prebend list from Necrologium Lundense (Lunds Universitetsbibliotek, ALVIN: Necrologium Lundense).

[14] Professor Emeritus Bent Jørgensen is thanked for information that Brøndby (Zealand) and Brunnby (Scania) are onomastically alike.

[15] Of course, it is important to bear in mind the change of donation occurring between Brundby and Lomma, shifting from regular hides in the vills to money given from plots of land in the towns.

[16] Peder [Bodilsen] was one of the leading men of the time and with great interest in the development of the church (Ulsig 1968: 22).

[17] ”…illud prestes siue quod tu parrocchialem ecclesiam Brundby Lundensis diocesis et quondam perpetuam uicariam in ecclesia Lundensi quarum fructus redditus et prouentus quadraginta florenorum auri de Florentia secundum taxationem decime ualorem annuum sicut asseritur non excedunt nosceris obtinere. (Dipl. Dan. 3.3:18). Brunnby Church’s earliest history of establishment and patronage are somehow unclear. However, some medieval sources refer to such matters (cf. Schalling 1936: 121-123, 175; Åstrand 1972; Kieffer-Olsen 2018: 580, 592-593). For a broad discussion of the challenges of bringing late medieval proclamation of initiation and ownership all the way back to the church’s original establishment in the early medieval period, reference is made to the latest work by Jakob Kieffer-Olsen (2018: 507-664).

[18] As such, it seems as if the principle of regular taxation, already well known from the plots in the towns, as clearly demonstrated by King Cnut’s collect of money given each year from the plots in Lomma, Helsingborg and Lund, is also implemented in the rural context from that time on.

[19] On basis of further studies, it would might even be possible to suggest to narrow down the time of the gold assessment due to the recorded changes apparent in the letters of donation between 1135 and 1145 from the reigns of Erik II Emune and Erik III Lam, as mentioned earlier.

Erik Ejegod's International Connections and the Beginnings of the Cult of Cnut

By Paul Gazzoli

The recent millennium of the accession of Cnut the Great (1016–35) has given occasion to reflect on the international nature of his reign, not only as a king who controlled England, Denmark and (for a time) Norway, but also as a king who was active on the political map in a far wider area than this (already extensive) empire: his voyage to Rome in 1027 led to important contacts at the highest level, namely with the Pope and Emperor Conrad II. Not long afterwards, Cnut's daughter was engaged to Conrad's son, the future Henry III. Cnut had transformed the Danish dynasty from a recently-Christianised family on the peripheries of Europe into a central player on the European stage.

Cnut's 'Empire' crumbled shortly after his death, and although its legacy as an idea remained powerful for Danish and Norwegian kings in the eleventh century (and even later: see Heebøll-Holm 2015), it was never re-assembled. But the legacy of Cnut's international connections had left its mark as well: his nephew Svend Estridsen (1047–76) had contacts to the courts of England, Sweden and the Empire, as well as the Archbishopric of Hamburg-Bremen and Rome itself, and very likely elsewhere. The first of his sons to follow him as king, Harald Hen (1076–80), also received papal letters. Cnut IV (1080–6), the focus of this volume, famously intended to conquer England, and allied himself to Robert the Frisian, Count of Flanders, through marriage to his daughter.

Against this background, it should come as no surprise that the fourth of Svend's sons to succeed him, Erik Ejegod (1095–1103) managed to make his short period on the throne one full of international connections. Here I would like to review these before seeing if there is anything else to add: as I have already argued elsewhere (Gazzoli 2013), I believe that among his travels, Erik visited England, specifically Durham. I would like to expand on this argument by examining the possible company Erik kept while on this voyage and the effects of his exposure to the cult of St Cuthbert and the Benedictines at Durham.

The sources

The most comprehensive and (probably) earliest source for Erik's travels is contained in the commemorative poem *Eiríksdrápa*, composed by the Icelander Markús Skeggjason sometime after Erik's death in 1103 and before his own in 1107, preserved chiefly in the thirteenth-century *Knýtlinga saga* and seemingly also used as a source by Saxo (Carroll 2009: 432). *Knýtlinga saga* may have been informed by Óláfr hvítaskáld Þórðarson, who was said to have got his information from Valdemar II Sejr (1202–41; *Knýtlinga saga* 127, ed. Bjarni Guðnason 1982: 315). According to the *Eiríksdrápa*, Erik knew many languages (*Eiríksdrápa* 7, ed. Carroll 2009: 439) and received gifts from the French King Philip I and the Emperor Henry IV, who also gave him an armed following with guides who led him to Constantinople (*Eiríksdrápa* 24, ed. Carroll 2009: 453–4). By contrast, Saxo claims that Erik took the eastern route to Constantinople, through Rus' (*Gesta Danorum* xii.7.1, ed. Friis-Jensen 2015: II, 886); although Markús account contradicts this, he does also say that Eirik had visited the princes of *Garðar*, or Rus' (*Eiríksdrápa* 3, ed. Carroll 2009: 435–6). In Italy, we hear of Erik visiting Venice, Bari and most importantly Rome (*Eiríksdrápa* 8–10, ed. Carroll 2009: 439–42), as well as his intention to set out for Jerusalem in the journey on which he ultimately died (*Eiríksdrápa* 26, ed. Carroll 2009: 455–6). The *Roskilde Chronicle*, completed in 1138 but probably the product of several years' work (Gelting 2002: 40), also reports his death in Cyprus on the way to Jerusalem together with his wife Bodil, but is generally critical of his reign, saying he made many unjust laws and that many people wrongly attributed the plenty of the years of his reign (that followed the famine of the reign of Oluf) to him (*Chronicon Roskildense* 12, ed. Gertz 1917–18: I, 25). Svend Aggesen deals with his reign in only four sentences, mentioning his trip to Jerusalem, death on Cyprus and his progeny (*Brevis historia* 12, ed. Gertz 1917–18: I, 128–31).

Aelnoth, although he was present in Denmark during Erik's reign, given that he seems to have written between 1110 and 1113, at which time he says he had been in Denmark for twenty-four years (*Gesta Swenomagni*, Prologue 1, ed. Gertz 1908–12: 77; Gelting 2011: 38–9): says little about the king. Although he mentions that Erik was with Cnut when he was martyred in Odense and the return of plenty to Denmark when he assumed the throne (*Gesta Swenomagni* 25, 32, ed. Gertz 1908–12: 113, 130), there is nothing about how he got away or what he did in the meantime; Saxo says he fled to Sweden, where his wife Bodil had family (*Gesta Danorum* xii.1.1, ed. Friis-Jensen 2015: II, 865). Although *Knýtlinga* saga says that he was Jarl of Sjælland during Oluf's reign, *Eiríksdrápa*'s description of Erik's visit to Rus' and arrival in Denmark from the east (*Eiríksdrápa* 3–4, ed. Carroll 2009: 435–7) suggests he may have been in exile there. *Knýtlinga saga*'s description of him plundering pagans in the east but leaving Christians in peace (*Knýtlinga saga* 70, ed. Bjarni Guðnason 1982: 212–13) possibly reflects a later Crusading ideology of Danish behaviour in the area rather than actual eleventh-century activity.

Erik on the international stage

Erik's career thus represented a continuation of the international involvement of Svend Estridsen and Cnut the Great before him, in that he was in contact with the western Emperor and the Papacy. His travels to the Mediterranean and Constantinople, although probably considerably embellished by Saxo (*Gesta Danorum* xii.7.1–6, ed. Friis-Jensen 2015: II, 886–92), nonetheless also reflect a continuity with the past of a different sort, namely one that recalls the career of the Norwegian King Harald Sigurðarson (or Harald Hardrada, 1046–66) who had travelled to Byzantium via Rus' and had a celebrated career as a soldier there, as recorded in Old Icelandic, Greek and Latin sources (e.g. *Gesta pontificum* iii.13, ed. Schmeidler 1917: 153–4).

His relationship with the Slavs (Wends) between the Elbe and the Oder is another area of continuity: the connection between the Danish royal dynasty and the Slavs extends back to the days of Harald Bluetooth in the mid-tenth century, and most likely longer still. However, the emphasis on violence and dominance in this relationship may represent something of a shift towards a more violent policy towards the Slavs, as previous Danish involvement had been heavily diplomatic, though not always devoid of violence, such as with Cnut the Great's campaign of 1019 (Henry of Huntingdon, *Historia Anglorum* vi.15, ed. Greenway 1996: 362–4; Gazzoli Forthcoming). But Skaldic verse is a form that lends itself to the celebration of violent deeds, and simply speaking of 'the Slavs/Wends' disguises the fact that this covers a considerable number of different groupings from the shores of the Elbe along the Baltic Coast. The poem specifically invokes the former dominance of a Svend in the region; this could be a reference to Svend Estridsen, who had numerous contacts with the area. As Svend's daughter was married to the Abodrite Prince Gottschalk (Gazzoli Forthcoming), this could have been interpreted as a form of dominance. Alternatively, Svend Tveskæg is recorded to have had conflicts with the Slavs, which, despite Adam and Thietmar's record of his defeat and capture at their hands, may ultimately have resulted in something that could be interpreted as a victory on his part. In addition, as I have argued elsewhere, Svend Tveskæg's daughter married a Slavic prince who may have been Pribignew Uto, prince of the Abodrites; again, this could have been interpreted as Danish dominance (this marriage probably took place sometime in the early- to mid-1010s, as the daughter born of the union is recorded as being married in 1029; it may well have been before Svend's death in 1013: see Gazzoli Forthcoming).

Erik in England – and his followers?

Against this background, it would hardly have been uncharacteristic of Erik to have paid a visit to England as well. I have argued that just such a visit did take place, and that it may have been linked to the early phases of Cnut's cult in Odense. As Erik and Bodil both appear in the *Liber vitae Dunelmensis*, the confraternity book of Durham, I believe this probably indicates a visit to England on their part.

According to the *Constitutions of Lanfranc*, receiving confraternity (i.e. being prayed for as if one were a member of a community) required personal presence. This rule could be bent on occasion, but I believe the situation at Durham in the final decades of the eleventh century suggests that it would have been strictly enforced. The old Community of Cuthbert had been replaced by Benedictines in 1083, with the justification that standards had declined and there was a need to reintroduce proper monasticism. Lanfranc's *Constitutions* had only recently been written,

and Durham possessed (and still possesses) one of the earliest manuscripts of them, written between 1090 and 1095 (Durham Cathedral Library, B.IV.24, fos. 47r–71v; Knowles and Brooke 2002: xliv). And as Erik is described as *rex Danorum*, he must have visited after 1095 when he became king, and thus it seems likely that the *Constitutions* would have been known and in effect at the time.

Bodil's presence poses no problems: not only do the *Constitutions* make provisions for women to receive confraternity in person as well (Knowles and Brooke 2002: 170), the *Roskilde Chronicle*, as mentioned above, reports that she travelled with Erik on his final journey towards Jerusalem (and Saxo follows this), showing that she was no stranger to travel herself (*Chronicon Roskildense* 12, ed. Gertz 1917–18: I, 25; *Gesta Danorum* xii.6.5, xii.7.6, ed. Friis-Jensen 2015: II, 884, 892).

Here I would like to move beyond my previous argument and look more closely at the Durham *Liber vitae* itself. The names are at the top of what is now folio 55v, at the beginning of what was originally a new page – although it is now a *verso*, it was clearly originally bound as a *recto* – and the names are entered in a hand consistent with the end of the eleventh century. Following them there is a group of names that appear to be in the same ink and hand, with a mark at the end, after which a new hand begins. Later entries are crowded around in the margins. Thus, these names seem to form a distinct group.

Can they thus all be associated with Erik? We cannot say for certain; but a sufficient number of the names look Danish enough for this to be a reasonable conclusion. Another, perhaps more interesting question, is the non-Danish names: could these realistically be associated with Erik, or should we assume they received confraternity either on the same occasion for different reasons, or not long after Erik? The marker after the end of this group of names before the second hand begins makes it extremely tempting to look at these names as a group, and that is what I would like to examine here.

The list is as follows: *Eiric rex danorum. Botild regina. Toui. Modera uxor Tuoi. Alf. Sunawas. Anander. Toui uel Siward muntokes sune. Vlf dust. Torkitell muli. Osbern. Eoltkill. Askill. Turkill. Walecho. Gerbrun.* (Fig.1)

Of these, Tovi and his wife Modera are good Old Danish names, as is Alf; Sunawas is unknown, but may be somehow related to the name Sunniva, a name loaned into Norse from English. It is tempting to speculate on some connection to Hákon Sunnifunson, or Hákon the Norwegian, mentioned in *Knýtlinga saga* as Erik's son-in-law (*Knýtlinga saga* 78, ed. Bjarni Guðnason 1982: 231; cf. *Gesta Danorum* xiii.7.4, ed. Friis-Jensen 2015: II, 943). Anander again looks like a Norse name. As for 'Thor' or Siward Muntokes son, the name Thor on its own rather than compounded with another element is more typical of Anglo-Scandinavian naming patterns than ones from Scandinavia proper. Ulf Dust could be either, while Torkitell Muli looks definitely Anglo-Scandinavian, as the conservative ending in –ketill is typical of Norse names loaned into English in the ninth century, before the form in use in Scandinavia became shortened to –kel/-kil. Thus, after Osbern (again a Danish-looking name), we have a group of names in this ending, Eoltkill, Askill and Turkill, which suggests origins in Scandinavia itself. Finally, we have two continental Germanic names: Walecho (male) and Gerbrun (female) (on all these names, see the linguistic and prosopographical commentary in Piper *et. al.* 2007).

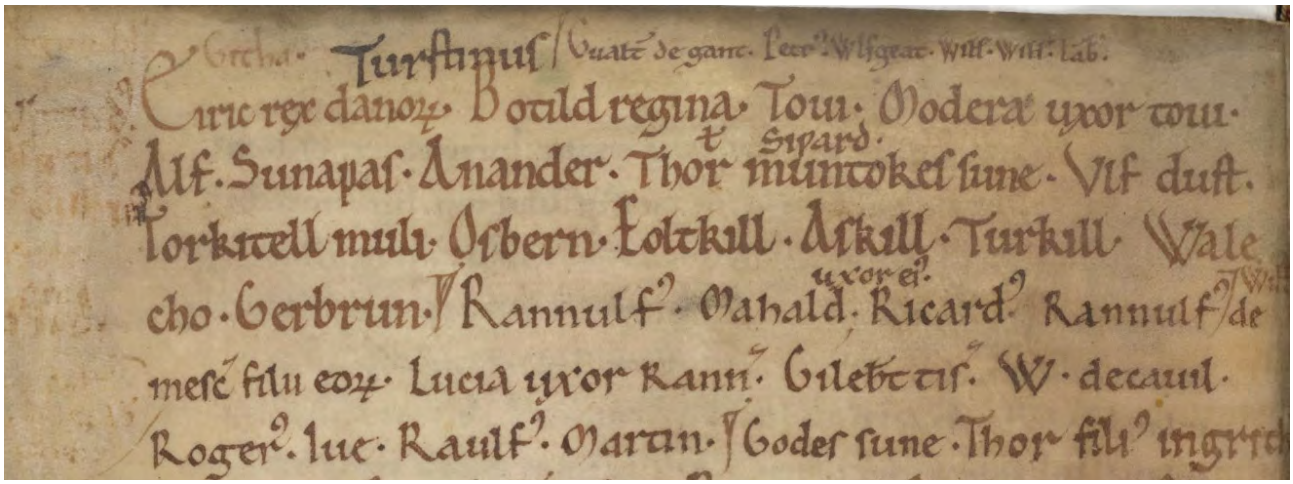

Fig. 1: Durham Liber vitae: London, British Library, MS Cotton Domitian A.VII, f.55v. Photo: British Library.

Although personal names are not always a reliable guide to the ethnicity or origins of persons, in the case of this group it seems safe to describe this group of people as consisting of some individuals from Scandinavia (and not necessarily only Denmark: for example, if the potential link between *Sunawas* and Knýtlinga saga's Hákon Sunnifuson 'the Norwegian' is correct), others from Scandinavian-settled regions of England and two from the European mainland. If they form a single group, which seems likely from the physical characteristics of the entry, we can then see Erik travelling in England in a multi-ethnic cohort, consisting of people who had travelled with him from Scandinavia, others who had joined him in England – perhaps as local guides – or had possibly migrated from England to Denmark, as others (such as, for example, Aelnoth of Canterbury) had done after the Norman Conquest and entered his service there.

Nor is there any reason why figures with continental Germanic names, and probably origins somewhere on the northwest of the European mainland, could not also have been associated with Erik. It has already been noted that *Eiríksdrápa* refers to the Emperor Henry IV providing Erik with guides to take him to Constantinople: I am not suggesting that Walecho and Gerbrun were among these, but this shows just one instance where persons potentially of similar origins would have been attached to Erik's retinue. Moreover, this list does presumably not include everyone who travelled with Erik, but only the higher-status individuals. And in addition to Bodil, Modera wife of Tovi and Gerbrun show that women were part of the company as well.

Erik, Durham and the cult of Cnut

Eiríksdrápa describes Erik's interest in seeking out holy places in Rome associated with the saints and their relics, adorning their shrines with rich gifts (*Eiríksdrápa* 10, ed. Carroll 2009: 442); Saxo claims that what he most desired in Constantinople was relics, and that he received a fragment of the Cross, and the bones of St Nicholas (*Gesta Danorum* xii.7.4, ed. Friis-Jensen 2015: II, 890). And of course his decision to set out for Jerusalem also shows an enthusiasm for visiting holy places. He thus would presumably also have been drawn by the fame of the shrine of St Cuthbert, to which his predecessor Cnut the Great had also made a pilgrimage.

Many of the monks who had 're-founded' Durham in the late eleventh century had come from Wearmouth, which in its turn had been re-founded by Evesham as part of a drive to re-monasticise Northern England. It was also monks from Evesham who founded Odense Cathedral Priory. Given these connections, it is tempting to see Erik's visit to Durham in the context of his brother's cult: it was a point on a network in a vigorous culture of Benedictine colonisation, and it may have been there that he got the idea for a Benedictine settlement in Denmark to foster the cult of the first native saint, much as the Benedictines at Durham protected and promoted the cult of Cuthbert. Durham, however, as a fairly new foundation itself, would most likely have referred him back to the central point of the network, Evesham. According to later medieval tradition, the monks from Evesham went to Odense in the time of Abbot Robert, who died in 1096 (Gelting 2011: 36–7, n. 7; Gazzoli 2013: 72), so the arrangement – and Erik's trip to Durham – must have been in 1095 (before which point Erik would not have been able to be listed as *rex danorum*) or 1096.

Thus, although the textual evidence suggests that the earliest phases of Cnut's cult owed their origins to clerical rather than royal initiative, I believe that nonetheless we can see Erik taking an important step in promoting his brother's cult (see also Poulsen in this volume). A story in *Knýtlinga saga* tells of a priest from St Alban's church in Odense, where Cnut had been martyred, approaching Cnut's brother, Oluf, and telling him of the signs of Cnut's sanctity. Oluf rejects the idea that Cnut could be a saint and forbids anyone from saying such things in his presence, on pain of death (*Knýtlinga saga* 66, ed. Bjarni Guðnason 1982: 204–5). But once Erik had been king *litla hríð* (for a little while), the same priest came to him and Erik asked him about Cnut. As the priest and many other honest men bore witness to the efficacy of calling on his name for help, knowledge of his sanctity spread throughout the land (*Knýtlinga saga* 72, ed. Bjarni Guðnason 1982: 215), and Erik called together the wisest men of his kingdom to investigate Cnut's sanctity, as a result of which Cnut's relics were tested and placed in a shrine (*Knýtlinga saga* 77, ed. Bjarni Guðnason 1982: 227–9). Although this is probably not the case – it is contradicted by the earliest account, the anonymous *Passio* of Cnut, which places the elevation while Oluf was still king, and furthermore makes his death a result of Cnut's translation (*Passio* 9, ed. Gertz 1908–12: 71) – it does illustrate the difference that royal sup-

port could make in the fortunes of a cult (even the Cult of St Olav was promoted in Norway by Cnut and his son Svend: Townend 2005; see also Ekroll in this volume). Even if it did not originate with him, Erik's support for the cult – particularly in the establishment of the Benedictine community at Odense – was no small factor in its development.

Summary and conclusion

The Danish kings had been strongly international in their perspective since at least the days of Harald Bluetooth, and this was only reinforced by the legacy of Cnut the Great's control over Denmark, Norway and England, and his connections to Piast Poland (as a close relative of the ruling dynasty), the Emperor (through his attendance in a prominent role at the imperial coronation of Conrad II) and the Pope. Svend Estridsen and his sons all continued this tradition in various ways.

With Erik, we see a very pronounced international element in his career, stretching from Rus', Constantinople and Cyprus up through Italy all the way, as I would argue, into the north of England, where he travelled with a retinue that consisted of men and women of Scandinavian, Anglo-Scandinavian (or English bearing names of Scandinavian origin) and mainland European origin.

Drawn by the fame of St Cuthbert, Erik was clearly impressed by what he saw, and hoped the Benedictines could serve his brother just as well, which ultimately led to his contact with Evesham – a central point on the network of Benedictine colonisation that Durham was part of – and through that, the establishment of Odense Cathedral Priory. Although the earliest evidence suggests the initial steps in the creation of the cult of Cnut were taken by the clergy of St Alban's in Odense, Erik thus seems to have played an important role in its development and promotion.

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Notes

[1] Aside from the more obscure Thøger of Vestervig, who was supposedly sent by St Olav of Norway to preach in the northwest of Denmark and died in 1065. It is far from clear that his cult originated immediately after this, however, and it was initially only local in its focus. See Gertz 1908–12: 4–26.

[2] Erik is named (and referred to as sapientissimus rex) in the Evesham charter relating to the foundation of Odense. The original is lost, but text appears twice in the earliest copy (BL Cotton Vespasian B xxiv), first at fo. 22, again at fo. 48: the former gives three witnesses, namely Danish bishops whose dates give us a range of 1135×1139, but this seems to be a subsequent copy from when the charter was renewed by King Valdemar I, as is attested by a separate document copied on fo. 19 (DD I:2, 67). No liber vitae survives from Odense, so we have no way of knowing whether Erik entered into confraternity there as well.

From Cnut the Great to Cnut the Holy: England and Denmark in the Eleventh Century

By Marie Bønløkke Missuno

At the elevation of the relics of Cnut IV in Odense on the 31st of March 1095 the martyred king's bones were tested by fire in a ritual that is likely to have entered Denmark from England (Esmark 2010). Present at the event was the anonymous author of the *Passio Sancti Kanuti regis et martiris* who describes the ritual. Along with the *Gesta Swenomagni regis et filiorum eius et Passio gloriosissimi Canuti regis et martyris* by Aelnoth, *c.* 1109-1122, this text provides a clear testimony to the presence of Englishmen in Denmark (Abrams 2004). Similarly, the *Tabula Othiniensis*, an epitaph interred with Cnut's relics in Odense in 1095, should be counted as part of and English Odense tradition (Geertz 1912: 60-62; see Petersen in this volume). The inscription lists the names of Cnut's companions at the time of his martyrdom, and though the names are Danish some are spelled according to Anglo-Saxon phonetics; the scribe, then, is likely to have been of English origin (Leach 1921: 78).

Connections across the North Sea throughout the early medieval period are well-documented. From the late eighth century, Viking raiders from Scandinavia regularly ravaged the English coastline, and from the mid-ninth century Scandinavian settlement in England created a set of new opportunities for cultural transmission across the North Sea (see for example Hadley *et al.* 2000; Adams *et al.* 2004; Abrams 2012; Missuno 2017). The culmination of these connections was the conquest of England by Cnut the Great in 1016 and the subsequent establishment of an Anglo-Danish Empire which further strengthened the transfer of people, artefacts, knowledge and ideas across the North Sea (Pedersen, 2004; Roesdahl 2007; Spejlborg 2016). On the basis of primarily written evidence, this paper seeks to explore some of these connections which laid the foundation for the English presence and influence evident at the translation of the relics of Cnut IV.

Connections between England and Denmark in the time of Cnut the Great

The conquest of England opened a direct corridor of contact between England and Denmark, which resulted in a significant movement of people, goods, technologies and ideas between the two kingdoms. Perhaps surprisingly, this is a period in which only few individual travellers outside the royal sphere can be identified on the basis of the historical sources, but it is possible to reconstruct parts of the network that surrounded the establishment of a North Sea Empire which came to include Denmark, England, Norway, parts of Sweden, and an overlordship of Scotland.

The time from the conquest of England by Cnut the Great in 1016 to the collapse of the Anglo-Danish kingdom with the death of his son Harthacnut in 1042 was the most intense period for English contacts in Denmark. Here, a variety of people travelled between England and Denmark.

First, the members of Cnut's conquest army returned to Scandinavia after the successful campaign. Many of these had spent years in England and returned to Scandinavia with, we must assume, part of the tribute payed by the English, as well as foreign, and particularly English, experience. Second, many of the highest-ranking men who had taken part in the conquest were rewarded with earldoms or other important positions in England. But many, including Thorkell the Tall, who had received the earldom of East Anglia and Erik Hakonson of Norway, who had been named to the earldom of Northumbria, continued to hold interests (and in some cases also land, positions and other commitments) in Scandinavia. The travels of many of these individuals would have included the movement of other people (wives, retinues, servants and more), thus expanding the net-

work of people active on both sides of the North Sea. Third, similar suppositions can be made for the journeys of Cnut himself; we must assume that his retinue included people of varying status and different functions, from the royal priest to the housecarl and the craftsman (Spejlborg 2016: 100-134). Excavations at Viborg Søndersø support this picture and demonstrate that even a relatively short stay by the Anglo-Danish monarch could have significant influence on a local area (Iversen *et al*. 2005). Fourth, this period saw the intensification of some of the connections that had been initiated already during the reign of Cnut's father, Svend Forkbeard. These include specifically the employment of English moneyers and ecclesiastics in Denmark (Roesdahl 2007; see Poulsen in this volume). By placing English experts at the top of institutions such as the Church and the mint in a period when these were still in their formative years, Cnut created the possibility of a lasting English influence in these areas. Consequently, the reign of Cnut laid the foundation for contacts and relations of later periods.

The Anglo-Danish elite in the mid-eleventh century

Contacts between England and Denmark continued beyond the collapse of the Anglo-Danish Empire. Throughout the reign of Edward the Confessor (1042-1066) and beyond the time of the Norman Conquest in 1066, Danes still arrived in England and people of Danish origin remained active in English politics. At the same time people of significant English experience or of English origin continued to arrive in Denmark (Spejlborg 2016). These connections are most visible among people of high elite status and the links across the North Sea are often of a close personal nature (Spejlborg *in print*). The family of the English Earl Godwine is the most striking and well-documented example of this type of Anglo-Danish connection.

The Godwinsons

During the early years of Cnut the Great's English rule, the king married off his sister, Estrith, to the Danish magnate Ulf. Ulf's sister, Gytha, was married to Godwine and their family became the most prominent force in Anglo-Danish relations in the mid-eleventh century (Schmeidler 1917: 114-115) (fig. 1). It

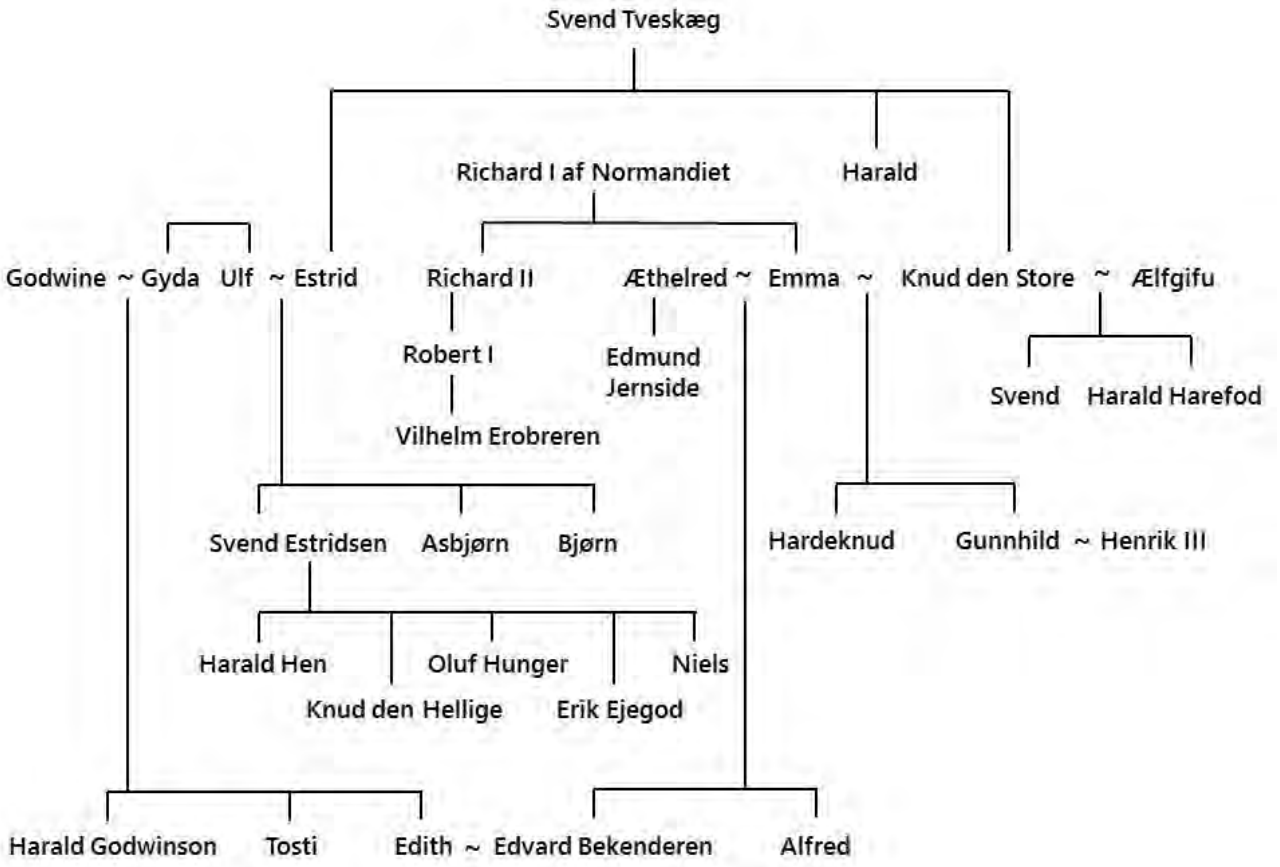

Fig. 1: Anglo-Danish familial connections in the eleventh century including the Godwinsons.
Illustration: Marie Bønløkke Missuno

was their son, Harold Godwinson, who ascended to the English throne following the death of Edward the Confessor in 1066, and who was killed at the Battle of Hastings when William the Conqueror invaded England with his Norman army later the same year. However, Godwine and his descendants were not the only ones active on both sides of the North Sea.

The exile of Osgod Clapa

In 1046 the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle relates the exile of one Osgod Clapa: "In this same year Osgod Clapa was outlawed before Christmas" (Whitelock 1961: 109). No additional information on the origin and identity of Osgod is given in the entry, but he is traceable in a number of other eleventh-century sources. In the period from 1026 to 1042, during the reigns of Cnut the Great and Harthacnut, his name appears on the attestation of royal charters. Between 1042 and 1046 he attested charters under Edward the Confessor. Osgod's power seems to have centred on London and East Anglia. He was commemorated in the *Liber Vitae* of Thorney Abbey and in the early 1040s he witnessed the will of Thurstan, Lustwine's son, as a member of the shire-court of Norfolk (Sawyer 1968: 1531).

In the entry of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* MS D ,which deals with his exile, he is titled *stallere* (Whitelock 1961: 109). Individuals of this position were of thegnly rank, but the role of the stallers and the title itself, sometimes associated with the office of marshal and translated thus, have not been satisfactorily explained. Traditionally, it has been viewed as an honorific title introduced by Cnut, but the stallers of Edward the Confessor – during whose reign the mention of stallers in the sources becomes prominent – do share certain characteristics (Larson 1904: 146-152). They all had extensive landholdings and great wealth, and often seem to have acted as non-committal officials in close service of the king (Mack 1986: 123-134). Hermann's *De miraculis sancti Eadmundi* (*c.* 1100) refers to Osgod as *major domus*, a title used in Merovingian France to describe the manager of the royal household (Liebermann 1879: 8). The implications in late Anglo-Saxon England were almost certainly different, but likely still denoted an official position at the court.

Furthermore, Osgod held at least one estate near London and may have had some administrative authority in eastern England (Bolton 2009: 62-64). There can be no doubt that Osgod was a man of high standing with royal connections. It was at the wedding of his daughter, Gytha, to Tofi the Proud (another staller, prominent Dane and an associate of Osgod) that Harthacnut had died in 1042 (Darlington *et al.* 1995: 532-535).

It is often argued that Osgod was one of the Danes who had come to England with Cnut or during the early part of his reign, but Ann Williams has proposed the alternative hypothesis that he was instead of East-Midland origin and a descendant of Osgod, son of Eadulf, a kinsman of Bishop Theodred of London in the mid-tenth century. In the mid-eleventh century, Osgod Clapa held an estate at Pakenham, Suffolk, which had previously been in the hands of Osgod, Eadulf's son (Williams 1989: 333-334). Whatever his origin, the contemporary record leaves no doubt as to Osgod's Danish connections. The name of his daughter, Gytha, supports the notion of a strong link to Denmark.

Upon his banishment from the English kingdom in 1046, it is likely, then, that Osgod went to Denmark, but Flanders is also a possibility. In 1049, three years after his exile, Osgod attempted a return to England. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* writes: "Then the king was informed that Osgod was at Wulpe with thirty-nine ships, and the king sent for all the ships he could summon from among those which had gone home. And Osgod placed his wife at Bruges, and they went back again with six ships, and the others went to Sussex to *Eadulfesness*, and they did damage there and then returned to the ships, and then a strong wind overtook them so that they were all lost except for four that were killed overseas" (Whitelock 1961: 113).

The chronicle of John of Worcester (d.1140) contains a slightly different account. It asserts that Osgod came to England with twenty-nine instead of thirty-nine ships, and that only two ships, not four, survived the storm and were taken. In addition, Osgod's movements in relation to his wife differ from those given by the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. John of Worcester writes: "However, Osgod, having taken back his wife, whom he had left at Bruges, returned to Denmark with six ships." (Darlington *et al.* 1995: 548-549).

Dorothy Whitelock has suggested that the discrepancies may be explained by a misunderstanding of the Old English version, but we cannot exclude that the Worcester chronicler may have had other sources at his disposal (Whitelock 1961: 113, n. 4). John of Worcester's specification that when Osgod left England with his six ships it was to Denmark that he returned also strengthens the suggestion that this is the place he retreated to when he was first exiled,

and that it was there he assembled his twenty-nine or thirty-nine ships and their crews.

Associated with Osgod Clapa's exile from England is, if we follow John of Worcester's account, the staller's wife and thus probably a large part of his household. Many of these would have spent a long time in England – if not their whole lives – and built up a significant knowledge and experience of English culture and society.

It is uncertain, however, whether Osgod stayed in Denmark or returned to England. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* relates that he died suddenly in his bed in 1054, but does not specify on which side of the North Sea (Whitelock 1961: 129). The fact that the chronicler knows of his death suggests that he might have returned to England, but no other evidence exists to support this impression. If he had stayed in Denmark and died there, the entry of his death into the chronicle would suggests a high degree of contact and knowledge and news exchange between Denmark and England at this point in the mid-eleventh century.

The story of the exile of Osgod Clapa is not unique. The mid-1040s saw the expulsion of a number of Danes from England and the demotion of others with known Danish loyalties while Norman magnates were given positions at Edward's court (Barlow 1970: 93-94; Spejlborg 2016) - a precursor to the events that followed the Norman invasion of England about two decades later.

Again, the movements of the Godwinsons provide a well-documented example of these events. Gytha, the Danish wife of Earl Godwine, had gone with him and other members of the family into exile to Flanders in 1051 but returned to England the following year (Whitelock 1961: 119-121). After the Norman Invasion and the death of her son Harold Godwinson at the Battle of Hastings, she departed from England to Flatholme in 1068 and later crossed the sea to St Omer in Flanders. According to the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, she was accompanied by many distinguished men's wives (Whitelock 1961: 148). Here sources cease to mention Gytha but she is very likely to have continued soon after to Denmark along with her daughter Gunnhild and possibly her granddaughter Gytha (Bolton 2005).

The sons of Harold Godwinson are also recorded to have made their way to Denmark in the aftermath of 1066. Following the death of their father, they went first to Ireland to assemble a fleet (McGurk 1998: 6-9). Later, two of the sons sought refuge at the court of their father's cousin, Svend Estridsen along with their sister, Gytha (Friis-Jensen *et al.* 2005: 16-17). Timothy Bolton has studied the movement of the Godwinsons and other English refugees at the court of Svend Estridsen around 1070, and counts both landholders and ecclesiastics among them (Bolton 2005).

Common to all of these movements is a shared network of Anglo-Scandinavian connections that were activated and called upon in an event such as exile. Within this network one set of contacts could lead to further connections, thus creating multiple links between England and Denmark as well as between the links created during the time of Cnut the Great and contacts utilized in the aftermath of the Norman Conquest.

It is important to note that the connections to Denmark among the English and Anglo-Danish magnates in England were not unilateral, but also created opportunities in England for members of the Danish elite. In the late 1060s this becomes evident with the dispatchment of Danish fleets to England to participate in the battles for power that followed the Norman Conquest and in which the later Cnut IV took part.

Cnut IV in England

The Norman conquest of England and the unrest that followed did not only facilitate movement of English exiles to Denmark, it also renewed Danish royal interest in England. Late in the summer of 1069 a Danish army under the leadership of Earl Asbjørn and three of Svend Estridsen's sons arrived in England (Whitelock 1961: 149). Two of the sons can be identified as Cnut and Harald (McGurk 1998: 8-9), the third remains unknown but could be either of the later kings Olaf or Erik.

On arrival, the Danes were met by the Northumbrians, including the earls Gospatric and Waltheof, and Edgar *Ætheling*. This type of alliance was made possible in part by the existence of previous contacts and relations. The Danes first proceeded to York where the Norman defenders set fire to the city in order to prevent the Danes from taking the castle. According to the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, the Danes stormed and destroyed the castle, captured the Norman treasure in it, and killed many hundreds and took many others hostage (Whitelock 1961: 149-150). According to John of Worcester, William the Conqueror then hurried north and managed to pay off Asbjørn. The agreement reached stipulated that the Danes would leave England the following spring but had permission until then to ravage freely along the

coast. The Danish fleet spent the winter between the River Ouse and the River Trent while William harried the north (McGurk 1998: 8-9; Whitelock 1961: 149-150).

From there the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* and John of Worcester are in disagreement. John asserts that the Danish fleet did leave as promised and that the Danish King Svend outlawed his brother Asbjørn for having accepted the payment and submitted to William (McGurk 1998: 10-11). John, however, seems to be in error here. According to the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, the Danes did not leave as agreed. Instead a second Danish fleet, now under the command of Svend Estridsen himself, arrived in the River Humber, but it did not join forces with the earlier fleet, and so there could be some truth in John's account of Asbjørn's banishment. Asbjørns's force went south to the Fenlands where they supported the local resistance against Norman rule (Whitelock 1961: 150-153).

The sack of Peterborough

The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* MS E (Oxford Bodleian Library MS Laud 636), also known as the Peterborough Chronicle, gives a lengthy account of the sack of Peterborough by the English rebels under Hereward the Wake, assisted by the Danes, and deserves to be reviewed in full: "Then forthwith in the morning all the outlaws came with many ships, and wanted to enter the monastery, and the monks withstood them so that they could not get in. Then they set fire to it and burnt down all the monks' houses and all the town except one house. Then they got in by means of fire at Bolhithe Gate, and the monks came towards them and asked them for a truce, but they paid no attention, and went into the church, climbed up to the Holy Rood and took the crown off our Lord's head – all of pure gold – and then took the foot-rest that was underneath his feet, which was all of red gold. They climbed up to the steeple, brought down the altar-frontal that was hidden there – it was all of gold and silver – and took there two golden shrines and nine of silver, and they took fifteen great crucifixes, of both gold and silver. They took there so much gold and silver, and so many treasures in money and vestments and books, that no man can reckon it up to another. They said they did it out of loyalty to the monastery. Then they went on board ship and proceeded to Ely, where they deposited all the treasure. The Danes expected that they were going to overcome the Frenchmen. […] Then the Danes proceeded out of Ely with all the above-mentioned treasures, and took them with them. When they were in the middle of the sea there came a great storm, and scattered all the ships carrying the treasures – some went to Norway, some to Ireland, some to Denmark and all that reached there was the altar-frontal and some shrines and some crosses and much of the other treasure, and they brought it to a royal town called [*gap in MS*] and then put it all in the church. Then afterwards through their carelessness and drunkenness the church was burnt one night with everything that was in it. Thus was the monastery of Peterborough burnt down and plundered. Almighty God have pity on it through his great mercy!" (Whitelock 1961: 151-153).

The account of the sack of the monastery of Peterborough is a later interpolation to the *Chronicle* added in the first half of the twelfth century, but it nevertheless raises some interesting points. The composition and size of the treasure taken from the monastery is clearly described, but the inventory should be treated with caution; and it is unclear whether everything taken from the monastery came to the Danes or whether some of it stayed with the Anglo-Saxon rebels. Nevertheless, the account gives an indication of the variety of artefacts which could have entered Denmark from England - remembered from an English point of view. The account of how the treasure was lost is likely fictitious, and destruction through shipwreck and carelessness is not an uncommon motif in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (e.g. Whitelock 1961: 95-96).

Judging by the accounts of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* such as the above, significant amounts of English artefacts, including church fittings, could have reached Denmark during the eleventh century. Yet this is not clearly reflected in the archaeological record despite an increase in metal-detector finds, including artefacts of insular origin, in recent years (Beck *et al.* 2019.; Baastrup & Vang Petersen 2010; Baastrup 2014a; Pedersen 2004: 43-67). A number of the more recent finds are dated to the early Viking period and throw new light on Anglo-Scandinavian connections and the effects of the Viking raids across the North Sea in this period (Beck *et al.* 2019). For the later Viking period and early Middle Ages the Anglo-Saxon cloisonné enamel brooches attracts some attention. The group is stylistically dated to the late 900s and the eleventh century, and a rare example of a brooch of this type discovered in a datable context has been found in a well in Odense, dendrochronologically dated to 1117 (fig. 2) (Baastrup 2009: 224-226). These exclusive dress-fittings are of

Fig. 2: Cloisonné enamel brooch found in Odense. Photo: Asger Kjærgaard.

a style associated with East Anglia and South East England, and we may wonder whether these were trading objects or whether they arrived in Denmark on the clothes of a traveller. Alternatively, they may have been objects of trade catering to the taste of an Anglo-Danish elite in Denmark.

Baastrup has demonstrated a close link between insular imports from the Viking Age and sites or areas associated with the elite and its activities (Baastrup 2014a: 357, 2014b: 61-62). This opens the possibility of a connection to the movements of magnates and other members of the Anglo-Danish elite discussed above. However, the difficulty of precisely dating artefacts found through metal-detecting complicates any direct association between specific finds and people in this context. That being said, we must recognise that artefacts such as the cloisonné enamel brooches are likely to have arrived in Denmark through movements and contacts of people similar to those witnessed in the written sources.

The absence of a higher degree of English imports in Denmark in the eleventh century might partly be explained by the fact that we are dealing with a rather limited set of elite relations. Furthermore, from the mid-eleventh century many of these connections were partly broken with the end of the North Sea Empire of Cnut the Great and his sons, and later with the Norman invasion. These contacts are consequently less likely to have left a clear imprint on the archaeological record (Baastrup 2014b: 62).

Further clue to the absence of late Viking Age and early medieval insular imports – especially imports similar to those described in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*'s account of the sack of Peterborough – may be found in the routes taken by the Danish fleets to and from England. In 1075, we learn, the fleet of Cnut IV went to Denmark by way of Flanders (Whitelock 1961: 157-158). For the year 1000 the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* states that the Danish fleet had gone to Normandy (Whitelock 1961: 85). The reason behind these Continental stop-overs can be glimpsed in a treaty between King *Æthelred* and the Norman duke Richard I, dated 991, the terms of which are reported in a letter from Pope John XV, preserved in the *Gesta regum anglorum* of William of Malmesbury: that neither ruler shall receive the enemy of the other (Mynors *et al.* 1998: 166). This can only be a reference to the Viking fleets and their ability to safely harbour and sell the results of their plunder in Normandy. The possibility that much of the English loot was sold and exchanged to coin on the Continent before the raiding fleets returned to Denmark can help explain why so few items seems to have made their way to Denmark. It may also go some way to account for the mixed nature of many late Viking and early medieval hoards (Moesgaard 2006). Some ecclesiastic artefacts of English origin, however, did make their way to Denmark. The relics of Saints Alban and Oswald in Odense provide the most obvious example.

The relics of St Oswald

The anonymous *Passio Sancti Kanuti regis et martiris* written in Odense 1095×1100 tells the story of how Cnut IV was martyred in the church dedicated

to the Virgin Mary and St Alban. It further relates how Cnut loved St Alban above all others and that he himself had had the relics of this saint translated to Odense from the land of the English (Gertz 1912: 68-69; see also Hope in this volume). Aelnoth's *Gesta* adds a little more detail about the relics in relation to the assault on the Danish king: "Then as the bravest heroes dislodged the hostile troops from the church door, these turned to the eastern part of the sanctuary where they had seen the pious prince devoted in prayers, and with their swords and axes they set on the posts cutting and destroying, and the falling post knocked down the chests containing the relics of the worthy martyrs Alban and Oswald along with the sacred cross that stood between them onto the lowest ground." (My translation, based on Gertz 1912: 120-123.)

The relics of the English saint cannot have been sizable since they could be stored in *capsulae*, literally 'small cases' small enough to be knocked off the altar when the post crashed down on it. Cnut certainly did not bring home the entire St Oswald. Relics of St Oswald are known to have been at both Peterborough and York (Blair 2002: 549-550), and Cnut is likely to have been present at both locations as a member of Asbjørn's fleet. Although the relics are not mentioned explicitly, the sack of Peterborough presents a fitting context for the removal of St Oswald's relics to Denmark. Small pieces of this particular saint, England's first royal saint, could also have arrived in Denmark, not through plunder but through diplomacy (Antonsson 2005: 61-62) (Fig. 3).

Cnut IV made a second journey to England before he came to the Danish throne. According to the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, Cnut arrived in England with a fleet in 1075, presumably to assist a group of English rebel earls in a revolt against the Norman rule. But the rebellion was crushed before that Danes arrived and the Danish fleet resorted to plunder before they returned home by way of Flanders (Whitelock 1961: 157-158).

The timing of the arrival of the Danish fleet with an Anglo-Saxon uprising exemplifies the way in which the Danish campaigns in England of the mid-eleventh century were based on knowledge, links and claims on (royal) power created during the reign of Cnut the Great (and earlier) and kept alive by the movements and aspirations of people like Osgod Clapa and the Godwinsons.

Fig. 3: The relics of St Alban and St Oswald in Odense are now lost. But in the nearby village church of Sanderum this collection of relics has survived. The parchment labels attribute one of the relics to St Oswald and it could be a fragment of the Odense relics. Photo: Jens G. Aagaard.

The martyrdom of Cnut IV

Cnut IV planned one final campaign for the conquest of England in 1085, but the king was detained by trouble on his southern border and unable to join the fleet that had already assembled in the Limfjord. The delay and subsequent fines imposed by the king led to a revolt that spread across the Jutland peninsula (see Gazzoli and Poulsen in this volume). The king fled to Odense on the island of Funen, where he was killed in the church dedicated to the English St Alban on the 10th of July 1086 (Fenger 1989: 65-59). Thus, this last Danish attempt at restoring the double kingdom of Cnut the Great never came to be. But connections between the English and the Danes continued to exist after the death of Cnut IV, as is evident from the rituals surrounding his elevation and translation.

Sometime before 1100 an English bishop by the name of Hubald was appointed to Odense. It was probably during his pontificate that the Benedictine cathedral priory of Odense was founded. A monastic cathedral chapter such as this was very unusual outside England and must be a result of English influence (King 1966: 1). Around 1095 twelve monks had arrived in Odense on the invitation of the Danish king Erik Ejegod to form a daughter house of the monastery of Evesham (King 1962: 149; see Gazzoli in this volume). The scheme had the patronage of the English king, William Rufus, and the choice of Evesham as origin for the new monastic centre in Odense may have its roots in the time of Cnut the Great (Knowles 1963: 163-164). The Anglo-Danish king had been among the benefactors of the abbey, and its abbot in the period 1014-1040, Ælfweard, had been a relative of Cnut, probably through his first wife, Ælfgifu of Northampton (King 1962: 149). The Danish king Erik held further links with the English Church, and he and his queen Bothild were commemorated in the Durham *Liber Vitae*. According to Gazzoli, the acquisition of confraternity at the Benedictine community at Durham would have required Erik's personal presence (Gazzoli 2011: 147). The Odense community maintained its links to its mother house and also fostered connections with St Mary's Abbey in York (*DiplDan*, vol. I.2, 24, 66, and 67 and vol. 1.3, 48 and 171).

None of the clerics who arrived from Evesham on the invitation of King Erik, however, are likely to be the author of the *Passio Sancti Kanuti regis et martiris.* The anonymous writer claims to have been present at the elevation of Cnut, which took place in the spring of 1095, before the death of King Oluf and the ascension of Erik to the throne. We are consequently dealing with not only one, but two or more influxes of English clerics to Denmark – and Odense – in the late eleventh century. It is possible that the author of the *Passio* had arrived with or in connection with the relics of the Saints Oswald or Alban. In any case, some interpersonal contact and communication with England in general, and Evesham in particular, would have been in place already before the arrival of the twelve Evesham monks under Erik (Esmark 2010: 187-200; Nyberg 2000: 56). There is no reason that this contact could not, in part, have been instigated or led by an existing Anglo-Saxon presence in Denmark.

The English-influenced Odense literature also include the already cited *Gesta et Passio* of Aelnoth. In his preface to his work Aelnoth informs us that he was born in Canterbury but had been in Denmark twenty-four years (Gertz 1912: 77). He was, in his own account, present at the translation of the body of St Cnut in 1000×1001, and so must have arrived before then. He could have come at the time of the establishment of the monastery in Odense, but an earlier date is possible as well. There is no secure evidence that Aelnoth was a monk or that he was permanently established at Odense. He might instead have been attached to the royal court (Gelting 2011: 40), and his animosity against the William the Conqueror, evident in his work (e.g. Gertz 1912: 98-99), could indicate that he, as other English clerics, had left as a consequence of Norman rule. He is, however, unlikely to have arrived in Denmark prior to 1086 (Gelting 2011: 39). Aelnoth's *Gesta et Passio* was dedicated to King Niels who, like his predecessors, employed English men in central positions. For example, Arnketil, a monk from St Albans, goldsmith, treasurer and moneyer, was employed at the early twelfth-century Danish court (Mørkholm 1989: 2).

Conclusion

The Anglo-Danish links of the late eleventh century represent the last phase of connections first created during the reign of Cnut the Great and his father Svend Forkbeard. They led to English influence on the formation of the Danish Church and monetary economy as well as in other less visible areas, and one of the final larger effects of these connections was the English influence in the establishment of the cult of Cnut the Holy.

The Anglo-Danish network exceeded the aggregate sum of the individual journeys recorded and

discussed here. Through participation in this network, people who had arrived in Denmark from England were able to keep in touch with events and developments on the other side of the North Sea without necessarily having to set out on a journey themselves. The English connections brought the Scandinavian elites into contact with a culture and society in which supranational institutions were firmly established in a way which was not the case in Scandinavia, and this provided an opportunity for the transfer of new ideas, models, and technologies. The network facilitated these flows of communication and meant that the connections established in the first half of the eleventh century had impact and relevance into the latter half of the century—including in Odense.

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Notes

[1] Date after Gertz 1912: 30, who stresses this as a hypothetical date and gives the 7th of April as the latest alternative.

[2] Fortissimis igitur heroibus hostiles acies a foribus basilice deturbantibus, ad ori-entem sanctuarii, ubi principem deuotissimum precibus insistentem introspexerant, uersi gladiis et securibus postibus secandis et diruendis insistunt capsulasque reliq-uiarum preciosorum martyrum, Albani scilicet necnon et Oswaldi, cum cruce sacra interposita, poste ad ima uergente solo deiciunt.

The Odense literature and the early liturgy of St Cnut Rex

By Steffen Hope

Introduction

Cnut IV of Denmark died in Odense in 1086 at the hands of rebellious Danes, as the climax of an insurrection that had spread from the north of Denmark, and which began with the attack on the royal manor at Børglum. The king was killed on the 10th of July in the Church of St Alban, a wooden church to which he, his brother Benedict and seventeen men from his retinue had fled when the insurrectionists had marched on the king's manor in Odense (see also Christensen *et.al*. and Bjerregaard in this volume). When Cnut, his brother Benedikt, and his men were killed, they were buried in the earthen floor of the church, and there the king lay until his remains were unearthed following a synod of all the Danish bishops in 1095. At this synod, the Danish bishops translated the relics of Cnut, and in so doing declared him to be a saint. His bones were interred in the crypt of a limestone church, the building of which had probably been initiated by Cnut himself.[1]

When the new stone church was commissioned, it appears to have been intended as a new church dedicated to St Alban, as it was customary in eleventh-century Denmark to replace wooden churches with new buildings in stone (Krongaard Kristensen and Poulsen 2016: 63ff). When the crypt became the resting-place of the newly declared saint, the stone church was instead consecrated to Cnut and became the centre of his cult. In the first few years, the church was tended to by secular clerics, most likely brought over from England. A few years later, in 1095, Cnut's brother Erik Ejegod became king upon the death of Olaf, Erik's brother and Cnut's successor. King Erik established a monastic community at St Cnut's Church in Odense with monks invited from Evesham (cf. Gazzoli 2013: 72; and Gazzoli in this volume). Erik also sought to amplify the fame of his sainted brother by sending a delegation to the pope for the enrolment of Cnut into the canon of saints commemorated by the papacy, i.e. a canonization. The delegation met with success, according to Aelnoth of Canterbury, and Cnut was canonized in 1100 or 1101. This was uncommon at the time, since in order to be proclaimed a saint it was usually sufficient with the authority of a local episcopal synod (Kemp 1948: 70ff).

In the first decades following the declaration of his sainthood, i.e. the translation of his relics on the 19th of April in 1095, St Cnut was the subject of several texts in which his life, his characteristics, his death, and the miracles associated with him were expounded. These are texts which can be called hagiographical or saint-biographical, as their purpose was to extol the qualities and the holiness of the saint. In the same period there was also composed at least one liturgical office for the celebration of St Cnut's feast-day, his *dies natalis*. This output of cult material testifies to a cult that underwent an evolution in how St Cnut was understood and formulated by the custodians of his shrine at the church in Odense.

The present article aims to follow the development of these texts from the beginning of Cnut's cult to the waning of his popularity towards the beginning of the 1130s. I wish to demonstrate how the formulation of St Cnut, and indeed the story about St Cnut, evolved and changed in the course of the first few decades during which his cult was at its peak in terms of textual and liturgical output. I will discuss the texts produced in this period, and see how the presentation of St Cnut develops as new texts are written and as the story is adapted from the saint-biographical texts and into the framework of the liturgical office, whose formal constraints and whose performative setting put demands on how the story of Cnut was to be presented that differed from the demands of the saint-biographical texts.

In this article, I begin with the inception of Cnut's cult in 1095 until the end of the 1120s, after which dynastic strife and the civil war following the murder of Cnut Lavard, St Cnut's nephew, resulted in a decline in the popularity of St Cnut, henceforth called Cnut Rex to separate him from Cnut Dux, his nephew (see Petersen in this volume). It is precisely

because of this relatively short timeframe that we can properly understand how rapidly the formulation of Cnut Rex developed. In my discussion of this development, I will be talking about textual images, by which I mean how the saint's story and characteristics are formulated in texts in order to present the saint-figure in a coherent and authoritative way, in accordance with how the saint was understood and addressed by those who ministered the cult and were the highest authorities of the saint's cult centre. In the case of Cnut Rex, these were the priests and then the monks and abbot of St Cnut's Church in Odense. This image of the saint that was formulated at the cult centre was put together in order to present the saint in a way that the authorities at the cult centre deemed to be the correct one. It was in accordance with the features of this image that the priests and, shortly after, the monks addressed their patron saint during the liturgical office. Since the liturgical office was the mystical highpoint of the year in the saint's cult, it was during the performance of this office that the saint's community turned to him or her with their supplications as one communal unit (as opposed to individual supplications that could be asked for privately at any time). Due to the solemnity of the occasion, it was important that the community addressed the saint in terms that the saint would respond to, and so in the case of Cnut Rex he was addressed with those titles and epithets that his supplicants believed to be most accurate and respectful. It is, therefore, in the changes, additions and omissions of characteristics and details in the description of the saint that we can come to understand how the cult, and the understanding of Cnut Rex, developed in our period.

Overview of the sources

The present analysis is centred on five textual sources, three of which will be of primary importance. These texts are, in tentative chronological order, *Passio Kanuti*, *Tabula Othoniensis*, *Epitaphium Kanuti*, *Gesta Swenomagni* (collectively referred to as the Odense literature), and the liturgical office. Aside from *Gesta Swenomagni*, which was composed by the English monk Aelnoth of Canterbury sometime between 1110-1117 (Gelting 2011: 38-39), we do not know who wrote the texts for St Cnut Rex. I argue that these five sources comprise four different stages in the development of the image of Cnut Rex, and my analysis will be organized in accordance with this four-fold division of the cult's textual trajectory. My argument about the four stages is founded on a close-reading of the textual iconography of each source, and this will be fleshed out throughout the analysis.

Before I present the sources in greater detail, I would like to point the reader's attention to one aspect of my tentative chronology of these sources. Traditionally, the scholarship on the literature of the cult of St Cnut Rex has operated on the supposition that *Tabula Othoniensis* was the first textual testimony of his martyrdom. This source was a plaque of unspecified material which was discovered in Cnut's casket on January 22nd 1582, but has since been lost (see Bjerregaard in this volume). Its text has, however, been transcribed and printed in several works. The traditional outline of the *Tabula*'s history is that it was placed in the stone sarcophagus into which Cnut was placed at his translation in 1095, and that its text was based on sketches that had been recorded by the clerks at St Alban's Church shortly after Cnut's martyrdom (Gertz 1912: 31-33).

While this hypothetical outline is completely plausible, a close-reading of *Tabula Othoniensis* in comparison with the other sources suggests that the *Tabula* is not the first written testimony of the death of St Cnut (and consequently the trajectory hypothesized by Gertz is no longer tenable). The first to challenge the chronology of the Odense literature was Professor Nils Holger Petersen, who drew the conclusion that *Tabula Othoniensis* cannot be the oldest of the texts of Cnut Rex after a reading of my analysis of the sources in my PhD thesis. I have since come to fully subscribe to Petersen's interpretation, and the outline of the present analysis is shaped around this.[2] The arguments for this reinterpretation will be presented shortly.

The four stages of the textual development of the cult of Cnut Rex is as follows: The first stage consists of *Passio Kanuti*, the second stage of *Tabula Othoniensis*, the third of *Epitaphium Kanuti* and *Gesta Swenomagni*, while the fourth and final stage consists of the liturgical office. In the following, I will give a brief presentation of each source, before embarking on an examination of the textual iconography of each of the four stages.

Passio Sancti Kanuti Regis et Martiris

This *vita* survives in one single manuscript, Köln Stadtarchiv Handschrift 203 GB quarto, fol.39r-44v, from the beginning of the sixteenth century.[3] The title is provided in the manuscript, but we do not know whether this title was used prior to the early sixteenth century. The manuscript itself, a collection of saints'

lives, shows a strong interest in the holy history of the archbishoprics of both Köln and Hamburg-Bremen. Based on the account itself, Gertz concluded that this *vita* was likely written by an eyewitness to the translation of Cnut's relics in 1095, i.e. one of the English clerks at St Alban's that Cnut Rex had brought to Odense, and that it was written before the establishment of a monastic community at Odense by Erik Ejegod (Gertz 1912: 34-35; see also Missuno in this volume). Aidan Conti has suggested 1100 as the *terminus ante quem* (2010: 190) while Gertz suggests 1101, since *Passio Kanuti* does not mention the papal canonization of Cnut in 1100/01 (Gertz 1912: 34-36). I agree with these assessments, and I find it likely that the *vita* was composed very close to the translation itself, possibly already within the first year.

Passio Kanuti was composed by an author well-versed in the textual category of saints' *vitae*, and it shows a typical presentation of its holy protagonist's life, characteristics, death, and related miracles. It is a relatively brief account, and its focus is on the insurrection against Cnut and Cnut's death in Odense, the details of which will be treated in the next section. The *vita* was most likely written with the purpose of providing material for the liturgical readings for Cnut's *dies natalis*. This led Gertz to divide the text into nine parts to correspond with the nine readings of a secular office for Matins (since *Passio Kanuti* was written before the establishment of a monastic community). While practical from an analytical viewpoint, this division is entirely hypothetical (see also Sønnesyn 2016 for this issue).

Tabula Othoniensis

The *Tabula* was, as described above, a plaque of unspecified material placed in the shrine of St Cnut Rex, and its text is very short. It is likely to draw on eyewitness accounts of the martyrdom, but these are more likely to have been oral accounts than the hypothetical sketches suggested by Gertz. As will be argued more thoroughly in the next section, the *Tabula* was most likely written after the composition of *Passio Kanuti*. However, we do not know the relationship between these texts, and it is not certain that the text of *Passio Kanuti* was consulted for the writing of the *Tabula*, although we should expect that whoever wrote the text of *Tabula Othoniensis* had come to learn the story of Cnut Rex in part from the reading or listening to *Passio Kanuti*. We cannot say with any certainty when *Tabula Othoniensis* was written, but it is likely to have occurred after the writing of *Passio Kanuti* and before the writing of *Gesta Swenomagni*, which suggests a timeframe of c.1096-c.1110 at its most careful. For reasons to be elaborated upon later, I believe that the text of *Tabula Othoniensis* was written before the papal canonization.

Epitaphium Kanuti

Epitaphium Kanuti is a poem comprised of nine lines of Leonine hexameter. The poem was inscribed on a plaque of unspecified material and discovered in Cnut's casket in 1582 along with *Tabula Othoniensis*. This poem was placed in the casket during the translation of his relics in 1101, as is recorded by Aelnoth of Canterbury in *Gesta Swenomagni*. Aelnoth refers to it as an *epitaphio*, hence its modern title. He also provides a transcription of the poem, so we can be certain of this identification. It has moreover been suggested by Gertz that it was Aelnoth who composed the verse (Gertz 1912: 38-39). Although we know that Aelnoth composed poetry based on the verses of his own composition which he included in *Gesta Swenomagni*, we can never prove this hypothesis. Nonetheless, due to the shared textual iconography between *Epitaphium Kanuti* and *Gesta Swenomagni*, to be elucidated in the next section, I consider these two texts to belong to the same stage in the development of the cult of St Cnut Rex, as suggested above.

Gesta Swenomagni Regis et Filiorum eius et Passio gloriosissimi Canuti Regis et Martyris

The oldest sources of this *vita* are two manuscripts from Flanders, both of which are dated to the last quarter of the twelfth century (Myking 2019: 123-24, n.33).[4] One manuscript is Saint-Omer Bibliothèque municipale 716, Tomus II, fol.60r-71r (Gertz 1912: 46; Dolbeau 1981: 400; 447), while the other is Bruges Bibliothèque Publique MS 403, fol.74r-83r (Gertz 1912: 46). These manuscripts are part of the monumental *Legendarium Flandrense*, and in MS 403 the account by Aelnoth is placed before Walter of Thérouanne's *vita* of Cnut's son, Charles the Good, count of Flanders, who died in 1127.[5] This also explains why the *vita* of Cnut Rex is included in MS 403, a manuscript containing the saints celebrated in the period January the 28th to April the 4th (De Witte 2009: 179), when Cnut's feast-day is July the 10th

Aelnoth's account is the longest text in the Odense literature, and the story of Cnut Rex is preceded by an overview of the reigns of Sven Estridsen and

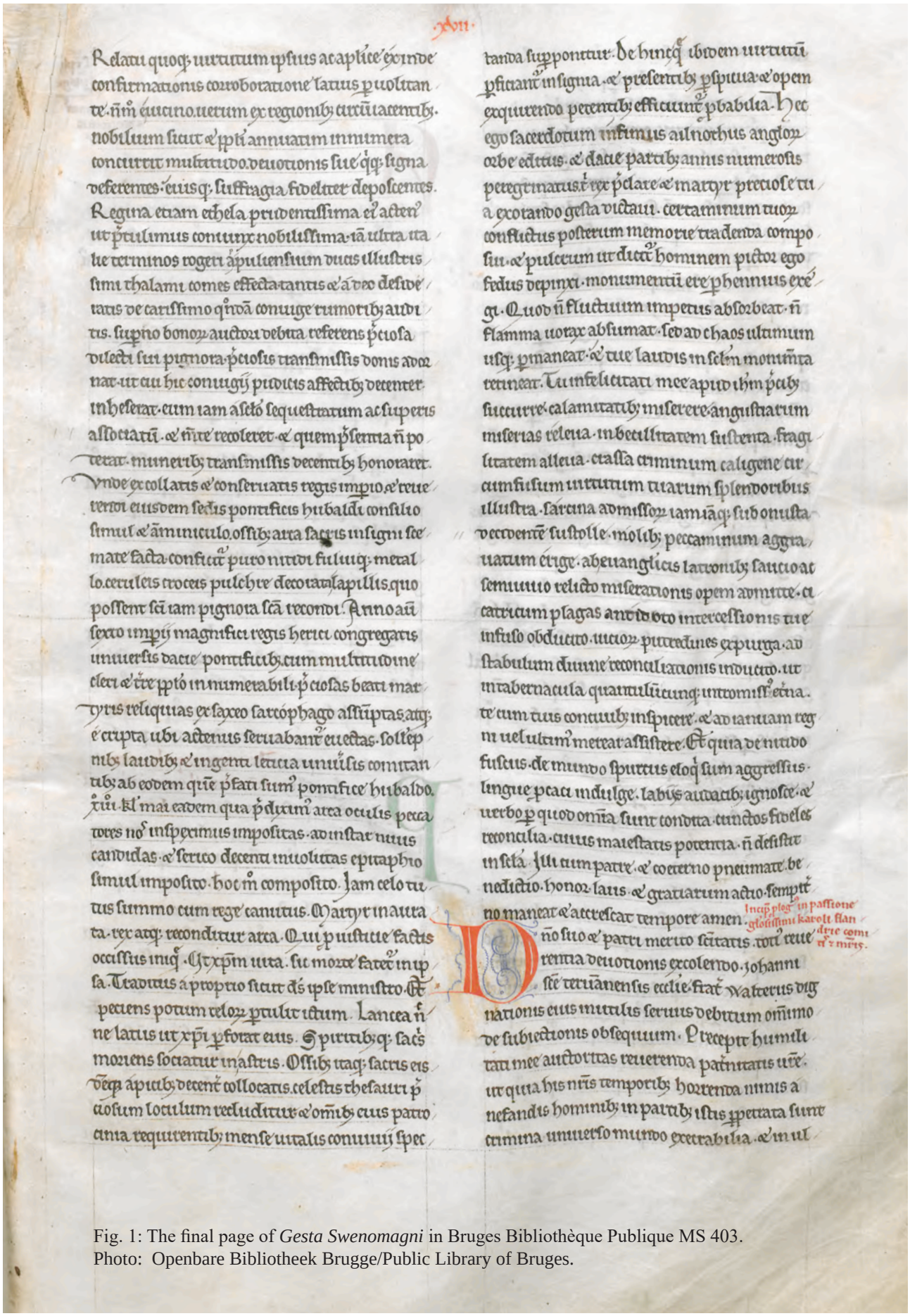

Fig. 1: The final page of *Gesta Swenomagni* in Bruges Bibliothèque Publique MS 403.
Photo: Openbare Bibliotheek Brugge/Public Library of Bruges.

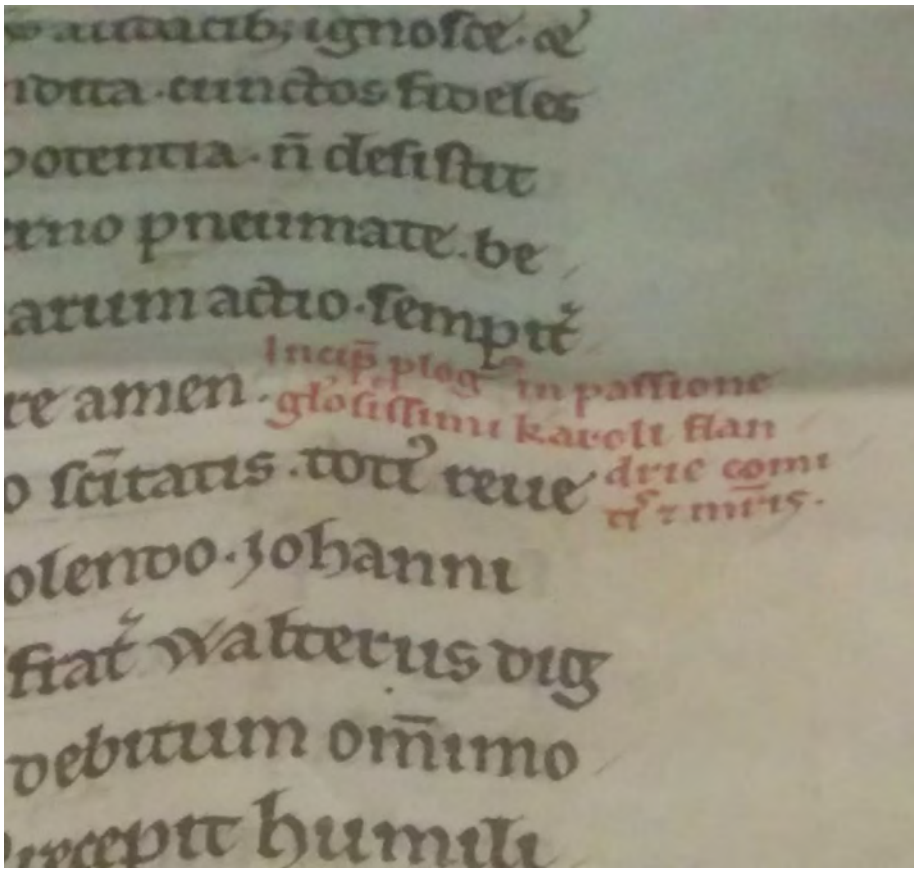

Fig. 2: Opening of Walter of Therouanne's life of Charles the Good in Bruges Bibliothèque Publique MS 403. The rubricated text reads: Incipit prologus in passione gloriosissimi karoli flandrie comitis et martyris (here begins the prologue of the passion of the most glorious Charles, count of Flanders and martyr). Photo: Steffen Hope.

Harald Hen, Cnut's father and brother, respectively. This overview serves as a historical prologue to the story of Cnut Rex. Such a prologue is a relatively common feature in saint-biography, and can also be found in *Passio Sancti Eadmundi* by Abbo of Fleury, a text from which Aelnoth appears to have borrowed in his own work (Hoffmann 1975: 119; Hope 2017: 206, n.585). *Gesta Swenomagni* is also notable for its several classical allusions (cf. Winterbottom 2016), and it is clear from the aforementioned use of *Passio Eadmundi* that its author was familiar with saint-biographical literature. About Aelnoth, we only know what he himself tells us in the *vita*, namely that he was an English clerk, formerly of Canterbury, who had lived in Denmark for twenty-four years by the time he wrote *Gesta Swenomagni*. He does not provide us with his rank but merely states that he is the lowest of the attendants of the divine offices, *diuini officii ministrorum infimus* (Gertz 1912: 77). This might be a form of the humility *topos* common to medieval authors. Judging from the length of time Aelnoth has spent in Denmark, however, it is likely that he was among the English clerics who were in Odense prior to the establishment of the monastic community. This establishment was a reformation of the community of secular clergy, which means that the secular priests were not replaced but had their status changed from priests to monks.

Gesta Swenomagni is dedicated to King Niels, Cnut's brother, and consequently the timeframe within which the *vita* was written is Niels' reign, 1104-34. Gertz and Albrectsen have argued for 1122 as the date of composition (Albrectsen 1984: 15), but more recently, as mentioned above, Michael Gelting has suggested 1110-1117 as the most likely timeframe and I follow this estimate (2011: 38-39).

Historia Sancti Kanuti

The title *Historia Sancti Kanuti* signifies the liturgical office for Matins that was performed around three in the morning on the feast-day of St Cnut Rex, and in which the saint's *historia* was recounted, i.e. the saint's life and death, as well as characteristics. As for the miracles which God worked for the saint, these were predominantly addressed in the chants for Laudes, performed three hours after Matins, i.e. usually around six in the morning. The hours of Matins and Laudes, and also Vespers which was celebrated around six in the afternoon, were the three most important hours in the daily round of eight services that together comprised the divine office, *officium diuinum*, to which Aelnoth alludes in the description of himself in the prefatory letter of *Gesta Swenomagni*. In my analysis of the liturgy, I will draw on chants

from the entire surviving office cycle, not only the chants for Matins, but also from Vesper and Lauds, where appropriate.

The service of Matins was the most important service, because it was the longest and was therefore the mystical apex of the saint's feast-day. It was then that the community of clerics, and later the community of monks, gathered by the saint's shrine and performed chants and readings, as well as psalms, in the saint's honour. As mentioned above, the purpose of this service was for the monks, as a community, to beseech the saint for his intercession before God, so that God would work miracles for them through the saint. During the service of Matins, and throughout the night, laypeople would gather in St Cnut's Church to participate in the vigil, where they would pray for the saint's intercession and in some form witness the performance of the service of Matins (though they themselves were not part of the liturgy and could be physically separated from the ministrant monks by a rood screen).

Matins consisted of three parts called nocturnes, and each nocturne was divided into the performance of psalms, chants and lessons. The length and form of each nocturne depended on whether the cult centre was a monastic community or a community of secular clerics. A secular office consisted of nine readings, each with a chanted responsory taking up the main theme of the lesson, and nine antiphons which are chants performed in relation to psalms and potentially the theme of the related psalm. A monastic office, on the other hand, consisted of twelve readings and twelve antiphons. While the community at St Cnut's Church was still comprised of secular clerics, and before their reform by Benedictine monks from England, it is likely that they performed a liturgical office on the 10th of July. The chants for this early office were, however, most likely taken from the common of martyrs, as was standard practice for any newly established saint's cult. After the establishment of the Benedictine monastic community in Odense, the monks composed an office whose texts were specifically expounding the story of Cnut Rex, i.e. *historia Sancti Kanuti*, what is called a proper office, i.e. an office whose texts are dealing with the story of the saint rather than being based on the common of martyrs or any other part of the *commune sanctorum*. As will be shown in greater detail in the next section, the chants for this office are based on Aelnoth's *Gesta Swenomagni*. It is likely that this was also the case for the readings.

The dating for the office is necessarily speculative, because our only sources to the chants and the readings come from fifteenth-century sources. What is probably the oldest surviving source is a manuscript fragment of an antiphoner (i.e. a book of antiphons) of uncertain provenance, which is now kept at Riksarkivet in Stockholm as MPO Fr 29700. This fragment contains some chants for the feast of Cnut Rex, and these have been treated by Roman Hankeln (2015: 175ff). However, due to the surviving chants' reliance on *Gesta Swenomagni* and due to their old-fashioned scansion, and also due to the period of cultic decline and civil unrest later in the twelfth century, I consider it most likely that the office was composed in Odense in the early 1120s.

Aside from the singular, fragmentary survival expounded by Hankeln, the chants and the readings survive in printed breviaries in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century. A comprehensive overview of these breviaries can be found in Hankeln 2015. For the analysis of this article, however, I have relied only on the breviary used in Odense, *Breviarium Othoniense*, which was printed three times in the late medieval period. The first printing of the *Breviarium* was in Odense, c.1482 (København Kgl. Bibliotek LN 29 quarto), and chants and readings can be found for three feasts: *In feriis quintis* (i.e. on Thursdays, fol.286v-289r), *Translatio* (fol. 289r-v), and *Passio* (fol.289v). In the first printing, folio 288 is left completely blank. The second printing took place in Lübeck in 1497 (København Kgl. Bibliotek LN 30), which also contains *In feriis quintis* (fol.262r-264r), *Translatio* (fol.264v-265r), and *Passio* (fol.265r-267). The first two printings are in agreement regarding the office for Cnut's *dies natalis*, i.e. the *Passio* feast, and accordingly I will refer to these two printings of the breviary collectively as *Breviarium Othoniense*. The third and last printing of the breviary took place in 1510, possibly in Basel (København Kgl. Bibliotek LN 31). It also contains *In feriis quintis* (fol.196r), *Translatio* (f.198v), and *Passio* (f.199v). The opening of the office, fol.196, is missing, and I have accordingly not relied on this third printing for my analysis of the chants.

Although the sources for the liturgical material are rather late, there are good reasons for accepting that the chants of *Breviarium Othoniense* are taken from the first proper office for St Cnut Rex that was composed in the early twelfth century. In part, this is because liturgical chant is a very stable form of tonally performed text, and it is unlikely that the first office would be replaced unless there was a particular impetus for doing so. Considering that the cult

of Cnut Rex on the one hand remained popular in Odense, but on the other hand seems to have become relatively neglected throughout the rest of Denmark, there is little reason to think that there would be such an impetus, as the cult seems to have developed steadily on its own without facing encroachment onto its own cult centre. In short, the chants of the breviaries are most likely the chants that were composed shortly after Aelnoth's completion of *Gesta Swenomagni*, and I follow Roman Hankeln in his suggestion that the office "was in existence at least shortly after 1120" (2015: 165). This argument is further strengthened by the two styles of liturgical composition found in these chants, namely in traditional hexameter form and in syllable counting, rhymed verse, the latter form emerging in the twelfth century (Hankeln 2015: 161).

In the *Breviarium*, the chants are organized in the secular order with only nine lessons and nine antiphons, but by drawing on the other printed breviaries from the period, Roman Hankeln has ascertained that these chants were originally part of a monastic office. The reason why *Breviarium Othoniense* contains a secular office is because the monastic community at St Cnut's Church was transformed into a secular cathedral chapter upon the dissolution of the Odense monastery in 1474 by King Christian I (Bergsagel 1980: 154; Hankeln 2015: 166).

A final point to be made here before moving on to the next section of the article, is that while we can be reasonably certain that the chants of *Breviarium Othoniense* come from the original, early-twelfth-century office cycle, we cannot be equally certain with regards to the readings. While chants are more durable in part because the combination of music and text requires time, effort and talent to replace – and as mentioned above, an impetus to do so – the readings are easier to replace or to change. Because the chants are based on *Gesta Swenomagni*, we can be quite sure that the readings were also drawn from this saint-biography. However, as I have demonstrated elsewhere, readings for Matins could be altered in various degrees that had significance for how they present the saint in question (Hope 2017: 84ff). Accordingly, I have not included the readings from *Breviarium Othoniense* in my analysis, simply because I cannot be certain that these readings have retained the form that they had in the twelfth century.

Fig. 3: St Cnut Rex. Woodcut from Syddansk Universitetsbibliotek RARA M 15, the collection of saints' lives *Das leuend der hÿlghen*, Lübeck, 1492.[7] Photo: Steffen Hope.

The changing images of St Cnut Rex

The five sources in question all present the same basic narrative: Cnut's brother Harald was elected king in 1076 but Cnut did not challenge his brother's right. Upon Harald's death in 1080, Cnut was elected as king, and proceeded to do many good works for the poor, to fortify the position of the church in Denmark, and to protect the priests and pilgrims. He was a very pious and just king. Eventually, in 1085-86, he prepared a large-scale attack on England – the motivation for which differs according to the source in question – but it was delayed and came to nothing. Because the attack was not carried out, discontentment about the king grew until it erupted into full-blown insurrection. The king was chased from royal manor to royal manor until he came to Odense, where he left the manor to seek refuge in St Alban's Church, which came to be the place of his martyrdom. After the murder, the body was interred in the church, but nine years later a synod of all the Danish bishops gathered in Odense to deliberate on whether Cnut was indeed a holy man. Miracles occurred, the bones were elevated and translated to the crypt of the unfinished stone church that came to be consecrated in his name, and so the cult began.

This is the foundation for all the five sources. Naturally, because the sources have different frameworks for telling this story, not all the aspects are included in every source. Moreover, because the understanding of the figure of Cnut Rex changed within the timeframe of the present article, the sources interpret or present the narrative and its details in different ways. Moreover, because the image of Cnut changed throughout the period in question, the sources have different emphasis regarding what features and what qualities of Cnut Rex they are more concerned with. Furthermore, since describing a saint practically always involves comparing him or her with other saints or with figures from biblical, classical or Christian history, an important question will also be on which figures the different sources rely in their respective formulation of the figure of St Cnut Rex. It should also be stated that because *Gesta Swenomagni* is a more elaborate account and covers a wider historical scope, it also contains several new details that embellish the foundational narrative, the most important of which will be treated in the relevant subsection below. In the following analysis, therefore, I aim to present the development of these changes.

Stage 1 – the image of St Cnut Rex in Passio Kanuti

As the first saint-biography of Cnut Rex, *Passio Kanuti* presents the basic narratives on which all later sources are founded. The author begins with a reflection on the veneration of martyrs and their relics, and he presents the purpose of the book. It is noted that the celebration of the feasts of the saints is common to all churches throughout the world, *per totius orbis ecclesias*, and that this is done in order to praise the martyr's victory and imitate their lives and histories (Gertz 1912: 62-63). In this way, the author states that the community at St Cnut's in Odense – by that time probably still a secular community – is a member of the worldwide community of Christendom.

After this introduction, the narrative continues to Cnut's childhood and a description of his qualities: He was of a royal bloodline, he was educated in Christian religion, and he showed a precocious talent for studies (which the author inscribed partly through innate brilliance, partly through the encouragement of his father King Svend). He also displayed great prudence in his youth. This presentation of Cnut Rex is very typical of saint-biographies, and it is noteworthy that his precociousness in studies and his prudence contribute to present him as the *puer senex*, i.e. the young man with the mindset and wisdom of an old and experienced man. This was often seen as a sign of sanctity.

The author furthermore states that it was because of the devil's interference that Cnut did not achieve the throne of the kingdom. Cnut then leaves Denmark for Sweden, and the author of *Passio Kanuti* describes this as an exile similar to when Joseph and Jacob went into exile in Egypt. In this way, Cnut Rex is described as a patriarchal figure. Moreover, the *topos* of exile – which also invokes Christ's exile in Egypt which in turn was the antitype of the exiles of Joseph and Jacob – is a common detail in saint-biographies and serves as a form of *imitatio Christi*.[6] When Cnut does become king, however, the anonymous author states that he was elected as king, and Cnut put his trust in the Lord in the manner of King David (cf. Psalm 10, *In Domino confido*) and accepted the throne. Cnut's kingship is marked by his good deeds which are all typical of the *rex iustus*, the ideal king based on the good kings of the Old Testament (including David). In other words, Cnut Rex supports the poor, he cares for and protects the clergy, and he commissions the buildings of churches, with particular references to the churches of Roskilde,

Dalby and Lund (Gertz 1912: 64-65). Cnut also tries to inspire his countrymen to zeal for the Christian religion, but this proves to be very difficult. According to the author, the difficulty was founded on the stubbornness and the pride of the Danes, and Cnut Rex therefore decided to invade England in order to expose the Danes to the horrors of war and thus break their pride and turn them to God. The invasion was cancelled, and Cnut's brother Olaf began stirring up resentment. Out of prudence Cnut sought to stop his brother, but out of fraternal love he sent Olaf into exile in Flanders instead of killing him.

We are then told the passion story. It begins with the insurrection and concludes with Cnut's escape from the royal manor and subsequent death in the church. The anonymous author describes this church as an *ecclesia* jointly dedicated to the Virgin Mary and Alban (cf. Christensen *et.al.* in this volume). The author furthermore emphasizes that Cnut had himself, out of a particular devotion to him, brought St Alban's relics to Odense not long before. This is a reference to a raid on England in 1069-70 led by Cnut's uncle Asbjørn, during which Cnut absconded with the relics in question (Gertz 1912: 69; see Missuno in this volume).

Before his death, Cnut takes confession and receives the Eucharist. The death itself is described as an imitation of the death of Christ: He is pierced in the side with a lance and he dies before the altar of St Alban with his arms outstretched like a cross, like the crucified Christ. In his description of Cnut's passion story, the anonymous author extols Cnut's piety, his love of justice and religion, his patience, his seeking for martyrdom, his rejection of earthly glories, and his calm (which is contrasted with the fury of the mob). Cnut is furthermore described as the leader and glory of the Danes, *[d]ux et gloria Danorum* (Gertz 1912: 69). As the final detail of the passion narrative, the date and year of the martyrdom are provided.

The author then launches into a diatribe against the scandalous nature of regicide and God's punishment which resulted in storms, deadly plague, famine, and a shortage of basic necessities. Eventually, however, there occurred several visions, and it was decided to unearth the bones of Cnut Rex because God's punishment indicated he was a saint. A synod of Danish bishops and clerics was convened, and after a three-day fast with singing and almsgiving, the dead were reburied. The author then invokes three miracles as proof of God's favour to Cnut and the dead king's holiness: First, during the translation of his relics, Cnut's bones were put to the test by fire but were unharmed; secondly, at the time of Cnut's death in 1086 his brother Olaf was set free from his imprisonment in Flanders, a kind of divinely ordained synchronicity that seems to invoke the miracle of the liberation of prisoners on behalf of the saint; and thirdly, during the preparation for the *translatio* of Cnut's relics the clouds threatened to spoil the occasion by raining, but eventually the sun emerged and this was understood as a miraculous, and symbolic, dispelling of the dark.

This is the story as it is conveyed in *Passio Kanuti*, and a few details warrant further comment. Cnut Rex is described as a very typical saint king, namely a *rex iustus* of great faith who gave up earthly riches in favour of the heavenly reward of the martyr. His kingship is of great importance to the author, as can be seen both in the elaborate description of his government and his qualities as a king, but also in the comparison with David and also the patriarchs Joseph and Jacob, as well as the author's emphasis on Cnut's dual role as both king and martyr. It is also significant to note that the author establishes from the beginning that through its celebration of St Cnut, the community of clerics in Odense has proved its membership within the Christian church. Due to the details concerning the elevation of Cnut's relics in 1095, it is likely that the author was an eyewitness, and what we have here is the first formulation of Cnut as a saint, and also the first formulation of the events of his reign, his martyrdom, and his earliest cult.

Stage 2 - the image of St Cnut Rex in Tabula Othoniensis

While the first stage of the cult of St Cnut can be delimited to the first years following his *translatio*, it is more difficult to provide a reasonable timeframe for the writing of *Tabula Othoniense*, at least based on its own content. However, as mentioned above, we can propose that the text of *Tabula Othoniensis* was composed in time for the second *translatio* of Cnut's relics in 1100/01, as we learn from Aelnoth's testimony that *Epitaphium Kanuti* was placed in Cnut's shrine and it is likely that this is also the context for placing *Tabula Othoniensis* in that shrine. Be that as it may, I argue that the *Tabula* presents us with a second stage in the evolution of the image of Cnut Rex. The formulation of Cnut's image in *Tabula* is evidently based on *Passio Kanuti*, but there are some important differences which lead me to suggest that

1) the author(s) of the text was not the same as the author of *Passio*, and 2) that the image and understanding of Cnut as a saint had, by the writing of the text of *Tabula Othoniensis*, become more elaborate within the community of clerics at St Cnut's Church in Odense.

First of all, however, it is necessary to emphasize that *Tabula* and *Passio* have very different formal constrictions in their presentation of the narrative. *Passio Kanuti* is a saint-biography that follows the traditional outline of this textual category. *Tabula Othoniensis*, on the other hand, is a brief commemorative plaque consisting of just a few lines. Naturally, there are significant differences in what the two texts convey, so the important part is to note how the texts treat those features that are shared between them.

The text of the *Tabula* can be divided into two parts: The first summarises the martyrdom and the figure of St Cnut Rex, while the second part lists the names of his brother Benedict and the seventeen soldiers who died with him. The second part is not of any particular concern in the present discussion, although it is noteworthy that while they are treated as separate from Cnut Rex, they are described as his *commilitones*, fellow-soldiers, a title that suggests that these eighteen men might have been seen as saints as well, albeit of less importance (Gertz 1912: 60-62; see Bjerregaard in this volume). This is one detail that suggests to me that Nils Holger Petersen is right in his hypothesis that *Tabula* is younger than *Passio*. I find it more plausible to think that the names of these soldiers and their possible sanctity were details that were set down after the writing of *Passio Kanuti*, rather than the author of *Passio Kanuti* deliberately omitting these details which had already been committed to writing. To put it differently, I believe that their names, and their status as saints, were discussed and became part of the recollection of these events once the cult was established after the *translatio* of 1095 and when *Passio Kanuti* had already laid the foundation for the story to be disseminated in both writing and speaking.

Since *Tabula Othoniensis* only provides a summary of the martyrdom, the text is restricted to only the basic details: The date of the martyrdom is provided, but with the addition that this took place in the city of Odense, *in ciuitate Othensya*. We are furthermore told that Cnut died for the faith of the Christian religion and the love of just works, and that he died in the Church of St Alban, whose relics he himself had brought from England. Cnut received the confession and the eucharist, and died in front of the – unspecified – altar with his arms outstretched like a cross and with a lance having pierced his side.

The basic narrative remains the same, but a few details are different from the text of *Passio Kanuti*. We should note that the text only mentions that the church was dedicated to Alban, not that it was also dedicated to the Virgin Mary. It might also be significant to note that the church itself is described as a *basilica*, whereas *Passio Kanuti* describes the church as an *ecclesia*. Moreover, in the description of Cnut's transportation of Alban's relics, *Tabula* says *transuecti*, transporting, whereas *Passio* says *aduecti*, bringing. These are small details, but they do suggest that whoever wrote this text was not the author of *Passio Kanuti*.

The big difference between *Tabula* and *Passio*, however, and the detail which led Nils Holger Petersen to challenge the previously accepted chronology of the Odense literature, is the description of Cnut himself. In the opening of the text, *Tabula Othoniensis* describes Cnut as *gloriosus rex et protomartyr Danorum*, the glorious king and protomartyr of the Danes. The title of protomartyr is one of great importance in Christian literature, as it is used to describe St Stephen, whose death in Acts 7 was the first martyrdom in Christian history. With the expansion of Christendom, this term came to be used about the first martyrs of a newly Christianized geography, and the title conferred great venerability upon the saint in question, both as an antitype to St Stephen and as, usually, the first saint of the region.

What is important here is that such an important title, with all the weight it carries, cannot be found in *Passio Kanuti*. Nils Holger Petersen argues that it is more likely that such a title would be added to the image of Cnut at a later point, rather than being removed (which would be the case of *Tabula* was written before *Passio*). I agree with this assessment. What this means, moreover, is that in the period between the writing of *Passio Kanuti* and *Tabula Othoniensis* there had emerged an idea of St Cnut Rex as the first martyr in Denmark among the clerics of St Cnut's Church, and this idea was put into writing. This development is noteworthy also because it contradicts a statement that we find in Adam of Bremen's *Gesta Hamaburgensis Ecclesia Pontificis* (c.1070). In Book 2, Chapter 41 of his historiographical work, Adam states that Denmark has more martyrs than can be fit in one book. While we should probably understand this as Adam boosting the density of holy people within the archdiocese of Hamburg-Bremen, the foundation for this statement is nonetheless to

be taken seriously. The presence of older martyrs in Denmark might also explain why the author of *Passio Kanuti* does not describe Cnut as protomartyr, because he might have known this to be false. With the development of the cult, however, and with the community's active attempt to strengthen the position of its own institution, there emerged the idea that Cnut was indeed the first martyr. This change from *Passio* to *Tabula* is why *Tabula*, despite its brevity, comprises a second stage in the development of the cult of St Cnut Rex.

Stage 3 – Epitaphium Kanuti and Gesta Swenomagni

The *Epitaphium* and Aelnoth of Canterbury's *Gesta Swenomagni* comprise the third and the same stage in the development of the formulation of St Cnut Rex. The *Epitaphium* was, according to Aelnoth, composed after the second translation of Cnut's bones in 1101, following the alleged papal canonization. The poem was quoted in full in *Gesta Swenomagni*, which was written about a decade or a decade and a half later. Despite the gap in time between them, the *Epitaphium* and the *Gesta* belong to the same stage because they both present the same image of St Cnut Rex. Naturally, *Gesta* being the lengthier text by far, the image of Cnut as recorded by Aelnoth is much more expansive and detailed than that of *Epitaphium*. When I still treat them as belonging to the same stage, it is because Aelnoth continues every aspect of the *Epitaphium* that appears there for the first time in the development of Cnut's textual image. Aelnoth does not break with the presentation of Cnut as found in the *Epitaphium* in any way, but instead incorporates it into the narrative and quotes it in its entirety. It should be emphasized that even though *Tabula Othoniensis* and *Epitaphium* are closer in time and both contain the feature of protomartyrdom, they are nonetheless two different stages because *Epitaphium* contains even further additions than *Tabula*, i.e. the Judas figure and the cup.

It is also important to note here that both the *Epitaphium* and the *Gesta* were written after the reformation of St Cnut's Church into a monastic community by Erik Ejegod. These texts are therefore representative of a monastic milieu that is likely to have been influenced in its shaping of Cnut's image by the contingent of English Benedictine monks brought over from Evesham by King Erik. This does not necessarily mean that either of these two texts was composed by members of the new contingent of monks. It is indeed likely that Aelnoth was already in Odense before the community was reformed. In either case, the men responsible for these texts were most likely English, well-versed in saint-biographical literature, and well educated.

The bulk of this section will be dedicated to the image of Cnut as it was presented in *Gesta Swenomagni*, but first it is necessary to address which aspects of *Epitaphium Kanuti* which were novel in the development of Cnut's image. For the most part, the presentation of Cnut in *Epitaphium* follows the established textual iconography, and this is only to be expected. The poet states that he was a king and martyr, that he died for the cause of justice, and that he was pierced in the side by a lance, died before the altar, and that his sacred spirit was taken up among the stars. However, in his description of Cnut's passion, the poet also adds that he was betrayed by one of his own, and the poet overtly likens Cnut to Christ on account of this. Furthermore, in his hour of dying, Cnut asks for a drink but is prevented from drinking because the cup is struck out of his hand. This, in turn, recalls Christ asking for a drink and then, upon being served vinegar on a sponge, refusing to receive it. Because of these two new additions, the *Epitaphium* is an important text: It intensifies the *imitatio Christi* of Cnut's passion by adding these two new features. These two new features are also found in *Gesta Swenomagni*, and Aelnoth continued the poet's elaboration of the Christological dimension of Cnut's death.

Due to the sheer length of *Gesta Swenomagni*, the present article does not allow for a detailed examination of its narrative, and I will therefore have to focus on the key differences between *Gesta* and *Passio Kanuti*, as well as the *Gesta*'s presentation of Cnut. First, however, it is important to emphasize that at its foundation, *Gesta Swenomagni* follows the same narrative structure as had by then been outlined in *Passio Kanuti*. There are, however, several important additions. First of all, Aelnoth provides a description of Denmark's geographical location and a brief outline of its history with an emphasis on the reigns of Svend Estridsen (1047-76) and Harald Hen (1076-80). This is done to establish a history for the reigning dynasty, and we can see this both in Aelnoth's dedication of the book to King Niels, and in the emphasis on the qualities of Svend and Harald, Niels's predecessors and father and brother respectively.

Aelnoth follows the established iconography, and

the young Cnut is described as exhibiting innate prudence, his good works are a monument to himself, he shines like a carbuncle among other gems, he combines prudence with youth (i.e. the *puer senex* topos as seen in *Passio Kanuti*), he is intelligent, he has a face commanding authority, he is skilled in the use of arms, and he is eloquent (Gertz 1912: 92). Moreover, Cnut is elected by God to become his companion in the celestial court, meaning that Cnut's fate was predestined, as is typical of the fate of all saints, drawing on Jeremiah 1:5 where God says to the prophet that God knew him before he was even born (Gertz 1912: 92). Aelnoth also provides a tripartite explanation of Cnut's Latin name, Canutus. This explanation is taken from the story about why Cnut was canonized by the pope, i.e. enrolled in the canon of liturgically celebrated saints, but Aelnoth also includes it in the presentation of Cnut's life, possibly as a foreshadowing of his later canonization. We are told that the name Canutus signifies three things: 1) his *sensus caniciei*, i.e. that Cnut had the wisdom of a grey-haired man; 2) his *candor*, his purity; 3) and that he was *in canone sanctorum connumerandus decernebat*, enrolled in the canon of the saints (Gertz 1912: 92). These are all qualities listed by Aelnoth before the narrative reaches the point where Cnut becomes king, and they are repeated in chapter 33, when describing Cnut's canonization (Gertz 1912: 131).

It should be noted that the etymological details of Cnut's latinized name is an important part of Aelnoth's representation of Cnut's sanctity. First of all, as Aelnoth himself points out in chapter 33, such a changing of the name from Cnut to Canutus is similar to, and thus typologically connected with, God's renaming of the patriarch Abram to Abraham (Genesis 17:4ff). This suggests that Cnut's sanctity rests in part on his qualities as a patriarch of the Danes and chosen by God, just as Abraham became a patriarch of the Israelites. Additionally, as Gertz has noted in his edition, the term *sensus caniciei* might be understood as an echo of Ecclesiasticus 25:6, where judiciousness of grey heads is praised. This would give added typological strength to Cnut's sanctity. This imagery of the biblical patriarch can also be found in *Passio Kanuti* in the form of the anonymous author's allusion to Jacob and Joseph when talking about Cnut's exile.

Secondly, the etymological details are noted because they are thought to prove the existence of these qualities in Cnut. This stems from a belief that names held a key to the person's qualities, and which we see perhaps most clearly expressed in a hagiographical context in Jacobus de Voragine's *Legenda Aurea* from the 1260s. Although Jacobus and Aelnoth wrote more than a century apart, they both considered etymology to be a crucial aspect of mapping someone's sanctity.

The addition of a dynastic history expands the narrative of *Passio Kanuti*, and because the passion story now is placed within a wider dynastic history, Aelnoth needed to interpret one historical episode differently from how it had been interpreted by the author of *Passio Kanuti*. This episode is the election of Harald Hen over Cnut at the assembly of 1076. The author of *Passio Kanuti*, as we saw, ascribed this to the Devil's meddling, and as a consequence Cnut went into exile in Sweden. For Aelnoth, however, this was not an acceptable interpretation, because then the entire reign of Harald – whom Aelnoth lauds as a mild man and an important lawmaker – would be the result of the Devil's interference. Instead, Aelnoth states that Cnut did not challenge the election, despite his disappointment, because he was so intelligent that he knew this would result in a civil war of Theban proportions (Gertz 1912: 90).

After Cnut's accession to the kingship upon the death of Harald, Aelnoth describes him as a *rex iustus* who fed the poor and the hungry, who dressed the naked, who took care of orphans and widows, who supported strangers and pilgrims with money, who respected the clergy, who bestowed gifts to churches, and who attended church daily. These are details also found in *Passio Kanuti*, but Aelnoth is a bit more elaborate. He furthermore states that Cnut was chaste, contrary to many kings such as King Solomon, that like Job he consulted wise men to understand the state of the kingdom, and that he secretly (cf. Matthew 6:3) received corporal punishment by two chaplains in order to punish the flesh and thus undertake a metaphorical crucifixion (cf. 2 Corinthians 4:16; Galatians 5:24). He also only drank water and ate salted bread, while pretending to eat from the lavish spread of the royal table and instead giving the food to the poor. Like the author of *Passio Kanuti*, Aelnoth states that Cnut sought to reform the Danes and turn them to Christ, but that the innate pride of the Danes made this difficult, and Aelnoth likens the Danes to the Jews who refused to accept Christ. In so doing, Aelnoth adds another detail to the Christological feature of Cnut's iconography (Gertz 1912: 94-96).

Gesta Swenomagni also differs from *Passio Kanuti* in the explanation of why he sought to invade England. In *Passio Kanuti* this was done to put the

fear of God into the Danes through the horrors of war. Aelnoth, however, explains that it was on the invitation of English nobles to drive the Normans out of England that Cnut began planning the attack. Cnut, described as most pious hero and excellent prince, agrees to do so, and this makes his kingship a counterpoint to the tyranny of the Normans. However, as the attack does not happen, Aelnoth surmises that God made it so because "he wanted to make a patron out of the prince and a protomartyr out of the king", *de principe patronum, de rege prothomartyrem efficere disponebat* (Gertz 1912: 98).

In his description of the insurrection, Aelnoth adds several details to the narrative as it is presented in *Passio Kanuti*, but retains the important details of Cnut's brother Olaf being a driving force behind the resentment and that the Devil stirred it up further upon Olaf's forced exile in Flanders. Aelnoth also explains that it was Cnut's good deeds that caused resentment in the Danes, whom Aelnoth time and again describes as Jews, Pharisees, and Hebrews. We are told that Cnut sought to increase the piety of the Danes by making royal decrees concerning feasts and fasts, and Cnut also acknowledged the liberty of slaves and the manumitted, he gave foreigners the same rights as the native Danes, and he increased the privileges of the clergy to the detriment of the Danish aristocrats. The breaking point, however, was the abuses performed by the king's officials, and so the insurrection began. Aelnoth describes Cnut's flight throughout Denmark and calls him religious prince, glorious king and famous hero, while emphasising Cnut's Christological features by extensive references to Christ's passion story and by extensive comparisons between the Danes and the Jews (Gertz 1912: 101-10).

In Cnut's passion story, Aelnoth makes significant elaborations on the narrative of *Passio Kanuti*. Drawing on *Epitaphium*, Aelnoth presents Cnut's betrayer, a certain Pipero, who is allowed to dine with Cnut in a Last Supper scene in Cnut's royal manor in Odense. Pipero is described as more evil than Annas, more degenerate than Caiaphas and crueller than Pilate (Gertz 1912: 115). Aelnoth also embellishes the Christological aspects of the siege of the royal manor by describing how the moving of the mob whirled up dust to eclipse the sun and made the earth quake, in imitation of the darkness (Matthew 27:45) and the earthquake (Matthew 27:51) at Christ's passion (Gertz 1912: 115-16).

As for the passion story itself, Aelnoth further elaborates on its details. Cnut is described as praying with the humility of David and not with the deceit of Herod, thus demonstrating the *rex iustus* against a tyrant, and the stones and arrows hurled at Cnut are interpreted typologically: The stones connect Cnut with St Stephen, while the arrows connect him with St Sebastian (Gertz 1912: 119). This latter allusion to Sebastian was part of what made Erich Hoffmann suggest that Aelnoth drew on the *vita* of Edmund of East Anglia, *Passio Sancti Eadmundi*, when describing Cnut's death (1975: 119; 209ff). In addition to Stephen and Sebastian, Aelnoth further expands the collegium of saints to whom Cnut is, explicitly and implicitly, compared, by stating that it was not only St Alban's relics that were kept in the church, but also the relics of St Oswald of Northumbria, a royal saint like Cnut himself (see Missuno in this volume). These relics, moreover, are said to have been knocked over, and Aelnoth compares it with the desecration of the temple described in Psalm 79 (Gertz 1912: 118-19). Aelnoth also gives more space to the men who were together with Cnut in the church, calling them invincible novices and outstanding heroes (Gertz 1912: 119). We are also told about how Cnut asked for a drink, but was prevented from drinking by a spear that knocked it out of his hands, as stated in *Epitaphium*. As for Cnut's death, Aelnoth follows established tradition and describes how Cnut was pierced by a lance and lay with his arms stretched out in the shape of a cross. Aelnoth furthermore says that the blood of Cnut and his fellow martyrs did not desecrate the church space, but rather consecrated it a second time, meaning that they were saints and thus their blood was holy. After Cnut's death, Aelnoth launches into a diatribe in which he likens the Danes once more to the Israelites, compares Cnut as a positive counterexample to tyrants such as Agamemnon, Hannibal, Herod and Nero, and lists the calamities that befell Denmark and explains, with a reference to Lamentations 2:19, that these were God's punishment for the death of Cnut. These calamities continued, Aelnoth claims, until God declared through signs that Cnut was holy, and the enemy of the divine power, Olaf Hunger, had died (Gertz 1912: 121-23).

Aelnoth's embellishment of Cnut's *imitatio Christi* continues also in his description of the aftermath of the martyrdom. This can be seen perhaps most clearly in two important additions: 1) Aelnoth describes how Ethel, Cnut's widow, came to visit her dead husband, buried in the church floor, before leaving Denmark. She found the church bathed in light, and she understood from this that Cnut was a saint. This plays on the Gospels (cf. Matthew 28), in which we

are told that the first witnesses to Christ's resurrection were women, and that an angel of shimmering light guarded the empty tomb (Gertz 1912: 127ff). After this new, first miracle wrought by God, Aelnoth goes on to describe the miracles and the translation of his bones in accordance with *Passio Kanuti*, but he also provides a detailed catalogue of miracles performed by God at Cnut's shrine, including the healing of blind, of lame, of deaf and of leprous people. This echoes the catalogue of healing miracles performed by Christ in the Gospels (Matthew 11:5, drawing on Isaiah 35: 2-6), and thus contributes to the elaboration of Christological imagery (Gertz 1912: 130). We are then told that God performed these miracles to augment Cnut's fame, and we are told how his former persecutors come to beg him forgiveness. As part of this increase in fame, King Erik Ejegod sends a delegation to Rome for canonization – which was highly unusual at this point in history – and Cnut is given a latinized name, symbolically explained by Aelnoth a second time. Aelnoth furthermore likens this to Abraham, who also was given a new name, and Cnut is thus associated with the biblical patriarchs. Cnut's connection to the biblical patriarchs is thus established in a way different from in *Passio Kanuti* (where it is through the exile topos), but the end result is the same. Aelnoth then describes the second translation of Cnut, and praises God for having provided a saintly patron to the distant north, thus making Cnut not only a protomartyr of Denmark and a patron of Denmark, but also of the entire north.

What we see from this overview of *Gesta Swenomagni* is how the narrative of Cnut's story has changed from the writing of *Passio Kanuti* c.1095, and how the image of St Cnut was constructed at the monastic community of St Cnut's Church in the early twelfth century. The most important changes are as follows: 1) the dynastic historical expansion of Cnut's *vita* which results in the omission of the exile topos and a new interpretation of the events surrounding Harald Hen's accession to the throne in 1076; 2) a more elaborate description of the ways in which Cnut's life and passion imitated Christ, including the chastisement of his body, the Danes being described as Jews, the earthquake and darkness at the siege of the royal manor, the Last Supper scene, the elaboration of the Judas figure introduced in *Epitaphium Kanuti*, the description of the cup introduced in *Epitaphium Kanuti*, the light of the first miracle, a woman as the first witness, and the catalogue of cures; 3) the elaboration of Cnut's kingship and its comparison with examples that are both favourable (David) and unfavourable (Agamemnon, Hannibal, Herod and Nero); 4) the expansion of the catalogue of saints with whom Cnut is associated (Stephen, Sebastian, and Oswald); 5) and the locating of Cnut within a wider geographical and religious context which includes Cnut being described as the protomartyr and patron of Denmark, and also a patron of the northern parts of the world, the Danes coming from all corners of the kingdom to seek forgiveness for their sins at Odense, and Cnut being enrolled in the papal catalogue of saints, making the cult truly widely famous.

Stage 4 – Historia Sancti Kanuti

As mentioned above, the surviving office for St Cnut Rex appears to be based on *Gesta Swenomagni*, and there are two main reasons that lead me to this conclusion. First of all, the chants contain elements that are not found in *Passio Kanuti*, but which appear first in the third stage of the development of Cnut's image. These elements are as follows: 1) Cnut is referred to as *athletam dei*, God's athlete, an epithet only found in *Gesta Swenomagni*; 2) Cnut is compared to St Stephen; 3) two of the chants refer to the Judas figure. The second reason why I believe that all the chants are based on *Gesta Swenomagni* is as follows: Even though there are two stylistic forms found in the chants, the old-fashioned hexameter and the modern syllable-counting rhymed verse, chants in both these styles contain elements from *Gesta Swenomagni*. Accordingly, they must all have been based on Aelnoth's work (cf. Hope 2017: 211).

In the development of the image of St Cnut Rex, the liturgical office is the final stage in the cult centre's fashioning of that image. The liturgical office also represents a very different type of text than we have seen in the previous three stages, albeit with certain shared features. Like the earlier texts, the liturgical office also served a commemorative function, and it was also a form of history-writing through which the story and image of Cnut were handed down to future generations. However, the liturgical office had a very specific performative context in that its texts were chanted and read on a specific day of the year within the specific architectural setting of St Cnut's Church. Moreover, that performance was multi-sensorial in that the performance relied on reading, chanted music, the burning of incense, and the dressing of the monks in ritual garments.

Furthermore, the formal constraints of the office differ from those of saints' lives and texts like *Tabula* and *Epitaphium*. Whereas a saint's life is one textual

unit divided into episodes and sometimes numbered chapters, the liturgical office is comprised of several smaller textual units in both prose and verse. Because the chants of the office are subject to formal constraints regarding length, this affects how much information they can contain, and how much of the saint's *historia* they can convey. Consequently, when the *vita* is adapted into a *historia*, there occurs a distillation of material by which the liturgists select only those aspects of the *vita* they deem the most important for inclusion in the chants. This means, in turn, that the fourth stage differs from the preceding three stages in one crucial aspect: While each of the first three stages added something new to the textual image of St Cnut, the fourth stage is instead concerned with selecting that which is of greatest value and then leaving out those details which are less important. Of course, to get the complete picture of this process we need to rely on the lessons, but since we cannot ascertain that the surviving lessons were made at the same time as the chants, as explained above, we have to forego the complete picture and settle for the chants only.

The fourth stage of the image entailed that several of the details of such a voluminous work as *Gesta Swenomagni* had to be left out. Consequently, we cannot rely only on what the chants contain in terms of material, but also on what they do not contain, and I will give a brief overview here (though with the caveat that some of these elements might have been retained in the lessons). The surviving material for the office cycle does not contain any references to the dynastic history which opens *Gesta Swenomagni*. This is only to be expected given that this is rather superfluous to the *historia* since the *historia* is centred on Cnut. Moreover, we do not find any of the several classical references with which Aelnoth embellishes the intertextuality of his account, and neither do we find the reflections on temporal kingship. We also find that some smaller details regarding Cnut's characteristics are omitted, such as him being compared to a carbuncle, a stone of important theological connotations, his chastity, and the chastisement of his body.

What does remain in the liturgical image of St Cnut, however, are the basic outlines of his legend, and the main points of his claim to sanctity. Roman Hankeln identifies three such main points (2015: 169ff), and these are Cnut's kingship, Cnut's martyrdom, and Cnut's *imitatio Christi*. In the following, I will address how these three main points feature in the office cycle.

The kingship of St Cnut is that of the biblical *rex iustus*, as noted above. This is a kingship which entails wisdom, prudence, humility, charity to the sick, munificence to the church, and justice. In the surviving chant material, aspects of Cnut's kingship are mentioned fourteen times. Cnut is referred to by several epithets that outline the quality of his kingship, and these epithets are holy, outstanding or famous (*insignissime*), noble (*regum primate*), pious and devout (*princeps pius*; *rex deuotus*), powerful (*potens*), wise (*sapientem*), and most invincible (*inuictissimus*). Together, these fourteen references demonstrate the importance of Cnut's kingship to the liturgists, and it is worth noting that Cnut's kingship is the point most frequently referred to in the office cycle. Moreover, the epithets invoke aspects of kingship typically adhered to by the *rex iustus*. It is not only that Cnut is holy, but he is also wise, pious and, in addition, powerful. The presentation of Cnut's kingship is moreover bolstered by references to other qualities typical of the *rex iustus*, but where his kingship is not directly invoked. We see that learning and precociousness (three chants), justice (one proper chant), prudence (two chants), charity (two chants), and humility (one chant) are also included in the office cycle.

The martyrdom of St Cnut is invoked in eleven chants. These chants include direct references to his martyrdom (eight chants), and also references to his martyrdom by way of comparison with Stephen Protomartyr (three chants). The references to Stephen entail an invocation of Cnut as the protomartyr of Denmark, since the references to Stephen suggests a typological connection between the two saints. Aside from the chants referring to Stephen, there is only one chant in which Cnut's role as the *protomartyr Danorum* is invoked, and this is a chant of the second Vesper in which Cnut is addressed as *rex et martir dacie*, king and martyr of Denmark. In addition, Cnut's martyrdom is embellished by epithets such as especial (*precipue*), famous (*inclite*), glorious (*gloriosus*), and martyr of God. In addition, two of the eleven chants point to the martyrdom without using the word, one by describing his death and one by reference to the garland of victors typically associated with martyrs. We can also see from these chants that Cnut's martyrdom is often seen in connection with his role as a king.

The *imitatio Christi* of St Cnut is invoked in five chants, all of which are found in the material for Matins. In two of these, Cnut's likeness to Christ is invoked by way of contrast, where he is surrounded

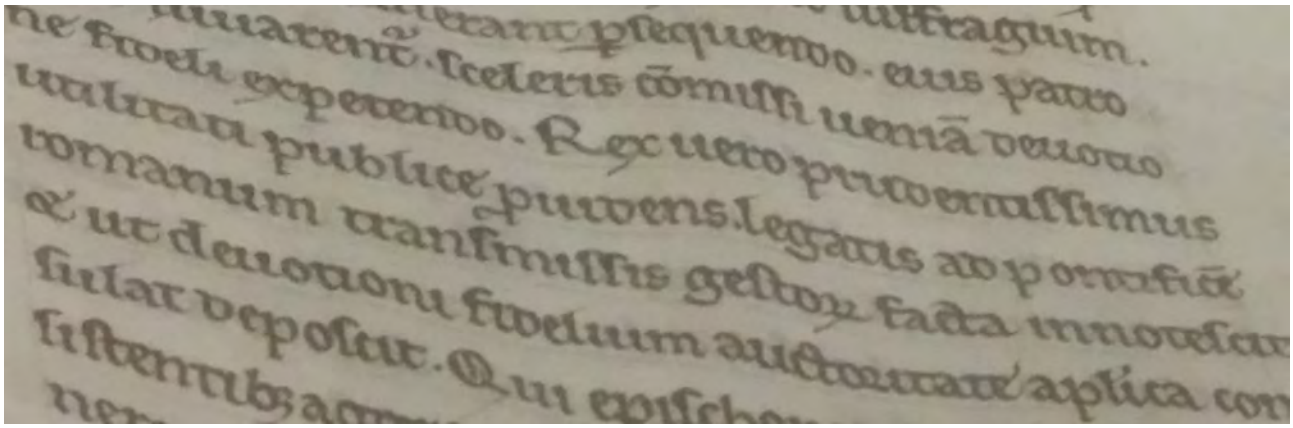

Fig. 4: The description of Erik Ejegod's dispatch of his delegation to the papal court. The text reads: Rex uero prudentissimus utilitati publice providens legatis ad pontificem romanum transmissis gestorum facta innotescit et ut deuotione fidelium auctoritate apostolica consulat deposcit (the truly prudent king, for the usefulness of the people/public affairs, provided for legates to be sent to the Roman pontiff and earnestly ask him, so that the deeds that had been done could become known and be considered – with the zeal of faith – by the apostolic authority (author's translation). Detail from Bruges Bibliothèque Publique MS 403. Photo: Steffen Hope.

by the howling mob and betrayed by Judas, a contrast which serves to cast Cnut's passion in a more clearly Christological mould. The typological connection between Christ and Cnut is further emphasized in one of the chants, the fifth responsory, where the betrayer is called *alter iudas*, a second or a new Judas. These two chants display an *imitatio Christi* of circumstance, where the historical circumstances follow the pattern of Christ's passion. The three remaining chants, however, point to a more active or more direct imitation of Christ, where he is pierced by a lance in the right side (one chant), and where he is standing patiently like Christ amidst stones and arrows with arms outstretched in the form of a crucified man (two chants).

The distillation process that resulted in the liturgical office can clearly be seen in the selection of features addressed in the aforementioned chants. Whoever put together the office and composed its chants drew from the wealth of details recorded by Aelnoth, and reduced and focussed this narrative into three main points: Kingship, martyrdom, and *imitatio Christi*. From this we can surmise that these three aspects were the most important aspects of Cnut's sanctity as it was understood by the monastic community in Odense. In their communication with Cnut during the liturgical celebration, they did not need the classical references, they did not need the negative counterpoints provided by historical tyrants, and they did not think his chastity and chastisement were sufficiently important to include, at least not judging from the surviving material. Moreover, and with the typical caveat that these conclusions are drawn from incomplete material, we also see that certain key episodes in the narrative established by *Passio Kanuti* were also omitted. For instance, there is no reference to Cnut being passed over in favour of his older brother. Instead, the first three antiphons and the first responsory describe his rise to the kingship following smoothly from his childhood and adolescence. Similarly, we see that the insurrection is explained as a reaction to Cnut's piety and ascribed to the Danes being untamed by law. Thus, the liturgical office omits any reference to the planned invasion of England. We might understand this omission in part as glossing over a martial aspect of Cnut's kingship that did not fit well with his role as a *rex iustus* and monkish king, or with the ideals of a Benedictine community such as that of St Cnut's Church. We might also understand this to be an omission made so as not to refer to what was essentially a failure on the part of the king, and that might not be useful to bring up when you are pleading for intercession before the throne of God.

It must again be emphasized that these conclusions are drawn from an incompletely surviving office. In particular, the lessons might contain several of those details that have been omitted from the chants. Even so, their omission from the chants is itself a noteworthy point, and we can therefore expect that the surviving chants represent fairly well the way in which the monastic community at St Cnut's Church in Odense viewed, understood, and formulated their patron by the early 1120s.

Concluding remarks

Through the texts of the so-called Odense literature and the liturgical office, we can map the development of how St Cnut Rex, his sanctity, and his patronage were understood by those who were the overseers of his cult. The material in question covers a period of dramatic change: Beginning with the establishment of the cult itself at the translation of Cnut's relics in 1095, continuing with the reformation of the clerical community to the Benedictine rule, and culminating with the performance of a proper liturgical office on the 10th of July from the early 1120s onwards. Within this period, our access to names and dates is limited, so a careful examination of these texts is necessary to provide as many details as possible in our understanding of the history of the cult of St Cnut Rex. Through this examination we see that there are also changes in how Cnut was addressed and formulated, and we see how the interpretation of various key events – such as the election of Harald Hen and the cancellation of the attack on England – changed with time. We see also that as the cult develops, there is a certain tendency towards elaboration: New details are added at the different stages, the image of Cnut Rex becomes more complex, and even in the case of the liturgical office, where the superfluous material is left out, there is, if not an elaboration then at least a crystallization of the most important issues, namely what kind of king Cnut was, what kind of martyr he was, how his life was in imitation of Christ. By leaving out superfluous details, the important features of Cnut's sanctity are emphasized. We see, however, that certain elements are constant throughout the early history of the cult: Cnut as the *rex iustus*, the Christological iconography of his death, the fundamental narrative. Changes and developments build on these features in tune with how Cnut is understood by the leaders of his cult centre, but the features are always retained.

The cult of St Cnut Rex had its most active period in the years leading up to 1130, when the death of Cnut Lavard caused a dynastic rift that opened into civil war, and the eventual canonization of Cnut Dux, appears to have eclipsed the popularity of Cnut Rex to a significant degree throughout Denmark. In Odense, however, the cult appears to have remained stable, but, as far as we can tell, the cult centre itself did not produce new texts or new liturgical material after the twelfth century. It is only with the conversion of the monastic community into a community of secular clerics in the 1400s that the liturgical repertoire changes, namely by being reduced to a secular office. This is not to say, however, that the cult of Cnut Rex was not observed elsewhere in Denmark outside the bishopric of Odense. As the late-medieval breviaries testify, the material for the feasts of Cnut was available and performed at the most important ecclesiastical centres in the archbishopric (cf. Ellis Nilsson 2015: 73; 270). Even so, it seems safe to say that the cult of Cnut Rex never again reached its creative height of the period 1095-1130.

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Notes

[1] We do not know for certain when the building of the new stone church commenced. The traditional interpretation is that it was initiated by Cnut Rex himself, which fits with his documented patronage of new church buildings elsewhere in Denmark, such as Lund and Dalby, as well as his devotion to St Alban, both of which are features attested to in the Odense literature. That the building of the church had not advanced further than the building of the crypt by 1095 can be explained by the purported crisis of Olaf Hunger's reign, although the cataclysmic proportions of the period 1086-95 is likely to have been exaggerated by Cnut Rex's saint-biographers. Another interpretation is that it was Olaf Hunger who initiated the building of the new church as a form of expiation for his perceived role in the death of his brother and his unpopularity.

[2] While Professor Petersen has himself not published anything regarding his challenge of the established chronology beyond his remarks in his contribution in the present volume, Professor Petersen presented his reinterpretation in the course of the research seminar *Life and Cult of Canute the Holy* on which this volume is based. I have received his permission to work with this reinterpretation in the present analysis.

[3] For a description of the MS, see http://historischesarchivkoeln.de:8080/actaproweb/archive.jsf?id=Vz++++++90002978PPLS#Vz_____90002978PPLS I am indebted to Irene Bischoff of Köln Stadtarchiv for this information. While Gertz was writing *Vitae Sanctorum Danorum*, this manuscript was held in Köln Gymnasialbibliothek, and Gertz dated the manuscript to before 1500 (Gertz 1912: 35-36).

[4] For a discussion of the dating of these manuscripts and the connection between these Flemish institution and Denmark, see Myking 2019. I am indebted to Dr Synnøve Midtbø Myking for sending me her article.

[5] See https://wikihost.uib.no/medieval/index.php/Ailnothus.

[6] For a more detailed discussion of the exile topos in the legends of royal saints, see Hope 2017: 71; 98; 254. See also a discussion on this topos in the legends of Olaf of Norway and Magnus of Orkney in Antonsson 2004.

[7] This incunable was previously catalogued as a translation of *Legenda Aurea* by Jacobus de Voragine. In 2017, Dr. Alastair Matthews identified the work more precisely as being *Das leuend der hÿlghen*, printed by Stephan Arndes.

While the work purports to be a translation of *Legenda Aurea*, and while it certainly is based on it, *Das leuend der hÿlghen* is not organized in the same way, and it contains a number of added saints' lives. These lives demonstrate the Northern European focus of the book, as they include the Nordic saint-kings Olaf, Erik and Cnut Rex. Such adaptations of *Legenda Aurea* for regional tastes were common in the Middle Ages.

Cnut Rex and Cnut Dux - A Comparison of two Danish Medieval Saints' Cults

By Nils Holger Petersen

Introduction

It is more than a coincidence that two of the most important Danish saints in twelfth-century Denmark came from the same royal family; they were both named Cnut (in Latin: *Canutus*). The purpose of this article is to give a brief comparison between these two saints and how they have been portrayed in the hagiographical writings that were the basis for their cults. Although the two Cnut saints were related as uncle and nephew and less than fifty years separate their deaths, they were portrayed in very different ways which, as I argue, has also led to very different reception histories of the two saints in post-medieval times.

Cnut the Holy (in Danish: Cnut den Hellige), or Cnut Rex, was King of Denmark *c.* 1080–1086. He was first made a saint through an episcopal translation within a decade of his death, but a few years later his brother King Erik Ejegod (1095–1103) appealed to the pope for his canonization. This led to yet another translation in 1101 (Hope 2017: 177–80, for general introductions see Hankeln 2015, Hope 2017, and Steffen Hope's article in this volume). The reasons for, and the historicity of, the papal canonization of Cnut Rex have been debated in recent scholarship; papal canonizations were not the general practice for establishing sainthood at this time (Hope 2017: 178–79, Vauchez 2005: 6–7, and Bartlett 2013: 57).

The second St Cnut was the nephew of Cnut Rex, Duke Cnut Lavard (hence Cnut Dux), prince of Denmark (for general introductions, see Dubois and Ingwersen 2008, Bergsagel 2010b, Riis 2010, Petersen 2015, Petersen 2018a). He was the son of King Erik Ejegod, who died on Cyprus en route to Jerusalem on a pilgrimage. After some years, yet another brother, Niels, became king of Denmark. His son Magnus murdered Cnut Lavard in an ambush on 7 January 1131.

From Cnut Rex's predecessor, King Harald, to King Niels, altogether five brothers had become kings of Denmark. They were all sons of King Svend Estridsen (1047–1074/76), who traditionally has been credited with the first serious steps to build up the Latin Church in Denmark, reinforcing the process of establishing bishoprics, struggling to obtain a separate Nordic archbishopric, independent of Hamburg-Bremen. Although this was only achieved by his son Erik Ejegod (and actually established only after Erik's death, in 1104, in Lund in present day Sweden), Svend Estridsen was the first to attempt to form a new power structure for the Danish realm based on two institutions, the Kingship and the Church, as in European Latin Christendom generally (Skovgaard-Petersen 2003: 178–79, Orrman 2003: 426, 429–30).

Cnut Rex and Cnut Dux: Sources and historical knowledge

Cnut Rex

Cnut Rex was killed in a public resurgence in the Church of St Alban in Odense on July the 10th 1086. This did not immediately lead to his canonization, not even, it seems, locally, although a small group of monks and members of the royal family may have arrived at the idea of his sanctity shortly after. Also, the conflict between Cnut and his brother, Olaf, who succeeded him as king (with the negative epithet Hunger), meant that nothing happened with regard to Cnut's status as saint until Olaf's death in 1095. Cnut was then translated into the crypt of the unfinished stone church, and this church was consequently dedicated to Cnut instead of St Alban, who seems to have been the intended dedicatee. Cnut Rex was venerated locally and publicly, it seems, as a saint from the time of Olaf Hunger's death. Olaf was succeeded by King Erik Ejegod, whose application to the pope apparently led to Cnut's canonization and thus, as already mentioned, to his second translation, now to the high altar of the stone church that had been finished in the meantime.

The sources for the early cult of St Cnut Rex, up to and including the twelfth century, consist of the

so-called Odense literature, edited by the Latinist M.Cl. Gertz in the early twentieth century (Gertz 1908–12). Steffen Hope's recent PhD thesis (Hope 2017) discusses the four texts that constitute this literature, and they are also discussed in his article in this volume. The four documents are of very different length and genre. As pointed out by Hope, they were written between c. 1095 (the beginning of the local cult) and c. 1120 by monks at the Benedictine cloister in Odense. Traditionally, the anonymous and very brief *Tabula Othoniensis* (The Tablet of Odense; see further below) has been taken to be the earliest of these documents. Aelnoth of Canterbury's substantial chronicle *Gesta Swenomagni regis et filiorum eius et passio gloriosissimi Canuti Regis et Martyris* (The Deeds of King Sven the Great and his Sons and the Passion of the most glorious King and Martyr Cnut) was written in the early twelfth century. The short anonymous *Passio Sancti Kanuti Regis et Martiris* (The Passion of Saint Cnut, King and Martyr) and the similarly anonymous poem, the *Epitaphium Sancti Kanuti* (The Epitaph of Saint Cnut) have been considered to have been written in between the two first mentioned texts.

In his discussion of the Odense literature, Hope established criteria for the chronology of the four texts, resulting from the characteristic features he found, that would likely be added as the individual texts were composed over time. This has led to a partly new internal chronology of the Odense literature (see Hope's article in this volume) in which the *Tabula* is no longer considered as the earliest of the four texts. The "formulation of Saint Cnut's image" (Hope 2017: 186) that evolved in stages in the Odense literature was taken up in the composed liturgical office, the *historia* of St Cnut Rex (only preserved from printed late-medieval sources, but likely composed in the twelfth century). This "formulation" included both the notion of Cnut as a Danish proto-martyr and various elaborations of Cnut's Christ-likeness. The *historia* of St Cnut Rex is discussed in Hope 2017, in Hope's article in this volume, and also, especially concerning the musical aspects, by Hankeln 2015. Here follows the first (and larger) part of the succinct text of the *Tabula* that describes Cnut's passion before the text briefly ends by mentioning all of the seventeen combatants, who died together with Cnut and his brother Benedict, by name, with my English translation:

> *Anno incarnationis dominice MLXXXVI in ciuitate Othensya gloriosus rex et protomartyr Danorum Canutus pro zelo christiane religionis et iustitie operibus in basilica sancti albani martyris per eum paulo ante de Anglia in Daciam transuecti post confessionem delictorum sacramento munitus dominici corporis ante aram manibus solo tenus expansis in modum crucis latere lanceatus VI Idus Julii et VI feria mortem pro Christo passus requieuit in ipso. Occisi sunt etiam ibidem cum eo frater eius nomine et gratia martyrii Benedictus ac XVII sui commilitones […].* (*Tabvla Othiniensis*, Gertz 1908–12, vol. I: 60-61)

[In the year 1086 after the Lord's incarnation, the glorious king and protomartyr of the Danes, Cnut, through his zealousness for Christianity and his just deeds, in the basilica of the martyr St Alban, whom he shortly before had brought from England to Denmark, suffered death for Christ in front of the altar on the sixth day before mid-July, a Friday, one side pierced with a lance and his hands stretched out in the form of a cross. After confessing wrongdoings, he was strengthened by the sacrament of the Lord's body. He rested in Christ. At the same place, also his brother Benedict, blessed with martyrdom, and seventeen of their fellow combatants were killed with him. […]]

The fuller narrative of St Cnut Rex's martyrdom as found in Aelnoth's chronicle is a complex story of disagreements and fights between Cnut and some of his brothers, of warfare to England, of taxation of the Danes for the sake of the Church, all leading up to a detailed account of Cnut's passion. It is difficult to arrive at a univocal historical understanding of the events leading up to Cnut's death, not least since all preserved narratives are hagiographic, written with the main intention to present Cnut's saintliness. Possibly, the earliest of the texts were written with the intention to help establishing his cult.

Cnut Dux

The narrative of Cnut Lavard's saintliness, and how he was murdered by his cousin, is a very different story altogether. Again, what actually happened historically is difficult to determine in detail, since the available records all are written under the assumption of Cnut Lavard's saintliness. Also, most sources for Cnut Lavard's life and death are further removed from the historical events they record than is the case for the Odense literature: only the early *vita* by Robert of Elgin, which has only been preserved very fragmentarily, was written within the first decade of his death, i.e. in the 1130s. In this case, the text of Pope Alexander III's bull of canonization

(from 1169) has been preserved in copy (Riis 2010: xviii–xix). What is construed as the legend, based on the readings in the early preserved office from the thirteenth century has normally been taken to be earlier than Saxo Grammaticus' account in his *Gesta Danorum* (written around 1200). In addition, there is Helmold's *Chronica slavorum* (from the 1170s). Also the later Knytlinga Saga (thirteenth century) provides different historical details (for discussions of the sources, see Chesnutt 2003, Riis 2010, Riis 2015, Bergsagel 2010b, Bergsagel 2010a, Dubois and Ingwersen 2008, Petersen 2014, Petersen 2015, Petersen 2018a).

Another interesting source, although it only mentions the murder of Cnut Lavard in passing, is the *Roskilde Chronicle*, the main part of which was finished probably in 1141. It gives a favourable account of both Magnus, who killed Cnut, and Cnut Lavard. The chronicle does not sanction the murder but refers to it in passing in a very matter-of-fact way, deploring the deed. A chapter was added to the chronicle much later (probably early thirteenth century) referring briefly to Cnut Lavard as a saint, but, again, in passing (Riis 2010: xxi–xxiv, Gertz 1917–18: 26–33). Interestingly, the oldest copy of the chronicle is found in the same manuscript (of the thirteenth century) as the unique copy of the offices of Cnut Lavard (both for the day of his death, the 7th of January, and the day of his translation, the 25th of June), and even written by the same hand (Riis 2010: xxi). The liturgical texts have recently been published in modern editions (textually in Chesnutt 2003, partly also giving English translations, the offices are edited including musical transcriptions in Bergsagel 2010a; the hagiographical Latin texts were first edited in Gertz 1908–12, vol. II: 171–247. The *Chronicon Roskildense* is edited in Gertz 1917–18: 14–33).

Following the papal canonization, the translation of Cnut Lavard occurred in June 1170 in St Bendt's monastic church in Ringsted, to which his dead body had been brought soon after the murder. It was an important celebration, not only of the canonization, but also of the (relatively) recently re-established Danish kingdom and of the coronation of King Valdemar's seven-year old son as the future King Cnut VI (Riis 2010, Riis 2015, Bergsagel 2010a, Dubois and Ingwersen 2008). The occasion celebrated a new order in the Danish realm, based on Christian norms, after the de-stabilising civil war that to a great extent was a result of the murder, which again, as generally all sources and modern historians agree, was caused by a power struggle for the Danish throne. King Valdemar, Cnut Lavard's son, born a week after the murder, had won the civil war between several pretenders for the throne, all from different parts of the royal family, and had become king of all of Denmark in 1157. The canonization of Cnut Lavard was his work, and it was a way to provide his rule with authority, holiness, and stability, in many ways just in the same overall sense as Erik Ejegod's interest in having Cnut Rex canonized some seven decades earlier. The celebrations in Ringsted also manifested a collaboration between Archbishop Eskil of Lund and the king after years of struggle (the king and the archbishop among other things each supporting different sides in the schism between Pope Victor and Pope Alexander). (fig. 01)

There is no early, briefly summarizing hagiographical text for Cnut Lavard that corresponds to the *Tabula* for Cnut Rex. However, a much later

Fig. 1: The ruins of the chapel (12th cent.) of St Cnut Dux at Haraldsted. Towards the choir and apsis. Watercolour painting from 1884 by A. P. Madsen (1822-1911). National Museum of Denmark.

Latin motto, from the sixteenth-century *Ludus de Sancto Canuto*, copied in the manuscript before the play, which was written in Danish with Latin rubrics, preserved in a unique manuscript dated to c. 1574 (in a different part of the manuscript), has a similarly summarising as well as hagiographical character:

> *Ludus de Sancto Canuto duce, qui fuit filius regis Danorum Erici Eyegod, dux Sleswich:, Slavoniæ et Vandaliæ, nominatus et coronatus Obotritorum rex ab Imperatore Lothario, ob suspicionem regni Danici a patruele suo Magno, filio tum regnantis Danorum regis Nicolai, simulatione secreti amicique colloquij ad Insidias euocatus, 7. die Ianuar: anno Christi 1130. nefarie trucidatur in vicina sylua Haraldstedt, vnde translatus est ad templum Dmi. Benedicti Ringstadien: et relatus est in numerum Sanctorum cultusque et honores diuinos accepit anno 1170; filio Waldemaro primo id petente a pontifice Romano.* (*Ludus de Sancto Canuto duce*, Thott 1409. 4º: fol. 48r.; Smith (ed.) 1868: 1)

[A Play about the holy Duke Cnut, who was the son of Erik Ejegod, who was the king of the Danes, Duke of Slesvig, Slavonia, and the Wends, and was appointed and crowned king of the Obotrites by Emperor Luthair. On account of suspicion from the Danish royal court, Cnut was enticed to an ambush under the pretence of a secret friendly dialogue by his cousin, Magnus, son of the Danes' then reigning King Niels. On the seventh of January, year of our Lord 1130, he was disgracefully butchered in a forest neighbouring Haraldstedt, from which he was conveyed to the holy Bendt's shrine in Ringsted. He was also taken into the host and worship of the saints and canonized in the year 1170, as his son, Valdemar the First, had requested from the Roman pontiff.] (Dubois and Ingwersen 2008: 178).

Altogether, for both Cnut Rex and Cnut Dux, the numerous hagiographical texts as well as the chronicles – it is far from easy to make a clear-cut distinction between the two genres – mean that we have a fairly good, although by no means unequivocal overall historical image of the two Cnut-figures. Of course, these images are based on cultic perceptions of the figures as saints, after their respective canonizations. It is difficult to compare the saints' liturgies, however, because the situations are very different here, especially as concerns the musical settings. For Cnut Rex, only very late printed breviaries, no earlier than the fifteenth century, preserve his office without music. Recently, however, Roman Hankeln found a late-medieval source with musical notation containing some items of the office for Cnut Rex among the liturgical fragments, which were catalogued within the last decades at the State Archives in Stockholm (Hankeln 2015: 160–62). For Cnut Lavard, on the other hand, we have a (unique) fully notated thirteenth-century manuscript (now kept in the university library in Kiel, Germany) containing the offices for his translation as well as his passion, i.e. containing all music for both offices, including the proper of the mass for both. This manuscript was recently edited and transcribed by John Bergsagel (Bergsagel 2010a), who believes it to be a copy of the twelfth-century original made for the translation on the 25th of June 1170, at least for the translation office found in the manuscript (Bergsagel 2010b: xxxi–xxxv). Even though this is a conjecture, and other scholars have proposed different theories of transmission for the Cnut Lavard office (Petersen 2018a: 180, and see n. 14), we have nothing like that for Cnut Rex.

It remains clear, as maintained by Hankeln and discussed and shown in great detail by Hope (going through all the texts of the *historia*, song by song and summing up the picture in the end), that the liturgical proper office for St Cnut Rex, his *historia*, builds on the four early texts, and primarily on Aelnoth's *Gesta Swenomagni*. The image of Cnut Rex primarily emphasises three main features: Cnut Rex as the proto-martyr of Denmark, his Christ-like virtues as a *rex iustus*, a just king, and the way descriptions of him are modelled on Christ. This becomes especially marked in the narrative of his passion (with stretched out arms as a cross, as seen in the quotation from the *Tabula*, above), but also for instance his being betrayed like Christ was betrayed (Hankeln 2015: 169, Hope 2017: 211–29).

The two last themes are clearly found in the office of Cnut Dux as well. Even though Cnut never became king of Denmark, the descriptions of him as a just duke and judge for his dukedom in Southern Denmark were clearly formulated to the same effect as the idea of the *rex iustus*. Also the way he is described as a mild and caring person, slaughtered innocently, emphasises him as Christ-like, not least in the narrative of his passion. The two motives, which can be varied in numerous ways, are, indeed, stock motives for constructing saintly royal figures. Conversely, there can only be one proto-martyr in a particular region (Petersen 2014: 71, 74, 75, 81–82, 86, and 92; for royal saints more generally, see Bartlett 2013: 211–16).

Fig. 2: Cnut Dux enthroned (Detail from Fig. 3). Fresco from c.1300, St Bendt's Church, Ringsted. Photo: Robert Fortuna, 2015. National Museum of Denmark.

Saints' images and the notion of narrative identity

The way saints are "formulated", i.e. their characteristics, becomes more differentiated when the saints are approached not only through epithets and dogmatic notions, but also through the narrative identity they would receive in various narrative accounts. I use the notion of narrative identity as it was developed by Paul Ricoeur in his monumental *Time and Narrative* (Ricoeur 1990). The underlying concern has to do with the question of the constancy of a personal identity. The notion may be applied to literary fiction, but also to historical persons and narratives about their lives. If we are to talk about an image of a person in a narrative text, in which, of course, the narrative proceeds from a beginning over various incidents and actions to an end, then the question of what constitutes the identity of the protagonist comes up. How is a personal identity constructed in such a case?

For Ricoeur, the name of the person should be seen as the agent of the identity. But, "what is the basis for the permanence of this proper name? What justifies our taking the subject of an action, so designated by his, her, or its proper name, as the same throughout a life that stretches from birth to death? The answer has to be narrative" (Ricoeur 1990, vol. III: 246). By reference to Hannah Arendt, Ricoeur claims that the answer to the question "who?" is to tell a life-story. For Ricoeur, the notion of "self-sameness" may solve the problem of a claim of "a subject identical with itself through the diversity of its different states":

> […] if we substitute for identity understood in the sense of being the same (*idem*), identity understood in the sense of oneself as self-same [*soi-même*] (ipse). The difference between *idem* and *ipse* is nothing more than the difference between a substantial or formal identity and a narrative identity. Self-sameness, "self-constancy," can escape the dilemma of the Same and the Other to the extent that its identity rests on a temporal structure that conforms to the model of dynamic identity arising from the poetic composition of a narrative text. (Ricoeur 1990, vol. III: 246).

Ricoeur supplements this through a model for transmitting narratives. First, a life story is shaped by what has been witnessed or experienced in some way by a first narrator. This pre-figuration is, of course, already an interpretation articulating the perceived identity or character of the narrative, or the protagonist. Another person reading, hearing or transmitting the narrative will re-configure it through the emplotment

– to use a term developed by Hayden White – of the narrative. Ricoeur's model makes explicit three levels: pre-figuration, configuration and re-figuration, termed mimesis$_1$, mimesis$_2$, and mimesis$_3$. As far as I can see, the three mimeses might as well be 5 or 100, depending on the complexities of the transmission, which, obviously, varies from one situation to another. But the basic structure of the model is clear, and, I believe, quite useful (Ricoeur 1990, vol. I: 45–47; see also Haker 2004 and Petersen 2018b: 3–6).

In the case of a saint's narrative, we have some actual events, we may call them the historical events reported about the saint, his or her life and deeds, even though they may not be historically verifiable, or even happened as reported. As far back as it is possible to follow the traditions about a saint, we will find a narrative which may be taken as the pre-figuration of the later transmission or reception of this story. In the case of Cnut Rex that would be the early texts, possibly the *Tabula* and the anonymous *Passio*. This pre-figuration, the first (traceable) version of the saint's narrative, as it were, is then configured and re-configured over the following narrative texts as they were constructed, obviously with respect to the purposes of the authors, their contexts, and the particular, for instance institutional, demands on the (narrative) identity of the saint in question. Clearly, there would have been certain expectations, and even demands on the (narrative) identity of a saint, for instance from the monastic house in which such a text or an office would have been composed, or from the royal family possibly commissioning or having interests in such texts. And a normal procedure would have been to rewrite the narrative, appropriate it into the format, and to heed the demands of the institution or the author or whoever had influence over the adaptation.

Among the main expected characteristics for, or ideas about, what constituted a royal saint was, as can be seen from numerous such saints' narratives, and as partly pointed out already for both Cnut Rex and Cnut Dux, the *rex iustus*. This notion would also include the balance between noble birth, high authority and power, on the one hand, and humility, love, justice and/or solidarity on the other. The legends, larger textual presentations, had quite some freedom in how to express these ideals, narratively or as explicitly stated in straight terms, not least because of the ample space for elaborating on them, for instance in narrative accounts. However, the brief, concentrated texts for the chants of a liturgical office needed these ideas to be configured with a high degree of clarity and sharpness, suitable or well-designed for the celebrative atmosphere of the daily prayers for the saint's day. Therefore, the saintly character-traits needed to be emphasised succinctly, also in order for the music to be able to bring them out. As pointed out by Roman Hankeln:

> As we have seen above, St Canute's chant cycle is an intense discourse on its own. This discourse is principally based on motives from the passion reports, but it also reformulates and amends the representation of the saint in order to integrate it into the frame of the liturgy. The function of the music in this context would have been to articulate, to clarify and to emphasize the content of the text (Hankeln 2015: 184).

The overall system of the medieval Latin liturgical celebrations constituted a complex and, for centuries, fairly stable system. This system and its structures, of course, had come about gradually, over the early Christian centuries. From around 800, based not least on the liturgical manuscripts of Carolingian monasteries, we have sources for overall structures that were kept (although with many changes and elaborations, and individual variations) throughout the Middle Ages (and beyond in the Catholic Church). Each day had its mass(es) and, at least in the monasteries, also the Divine Office. This involved a weekly cycle of chanting through all 150 biblical psalms distributed over the week's daily offices, influentially set up also as a daily cycle of seven prayers during the day and one prayer during the night in Benedict's Rule, written in the first half of the sixth century. The contents and individual structures (including the structures of the various chant genres involved) of the daily and nightly offices were gradually further elaborated in monastic houses during later centuries, but Benedict's overall structure determined all divine offices, including all saints' offices. Into a fabric of evolving, but seemingly timeless and – for centuries – unchangeable liturgical structures, within a church year fundamentally based on main events from Jesus' life and death, the so-called *temporale*, more and more saints' days were gradually added, constituting the *sanctorale* (Petersen 2016: 172–76, see esp. n. 13 giving many more references). This depended on the saints that were included in the Roman calendar as the papacy gradually centralised the Church's acceptance of saints' cults by way of papal canonization, as already pointed out. (It must be remembered that there were also saints who were venerated without an official canonization, and also sometimes without

a saint's office).

In liturgical saints' offices, the narrative of the saint would be reflected in numerous chants, but especially important was that excerpts of the saint's narrative would be recited during the nightly nocturnes with their nine or twelve readings and elaborate (so-called great) responsories.

> Repeated annually, of course, by way of the ritual structure of the church year, but within the particular office of the day, this brought an individual person's life story into the circularity of the church year. Otherwise, the church year primarily referred to only one life story, that of Jesus. In addition, however, it also referred to the all-encompassing progress of time to which all Christian narrative and thought refers: man's life and death on earth as part of the overall narrative of creation and historical time, embedded in God's eternal providence and judgment […]. (Petersen 2016: 175–76).

Fig. 3: The central vault of St Bendt's Church, Ringsted, cf. Fig. 2 and Fig. 4. Frescoes from c.1300. Photo: courtesy of Benedikte X. Rokkedahl and Middelaldercirklen, University of Southern Denmark.

Knowledge of these structures and traditional practices was, of course, a commonplace for a monk composing a saint's office. Such a person, for instance the cantor of the institution, would be well-acquainted with this framework for the appropriation of a saint's narrative into the right form and its appropriate contents, including special requirements in individual cases. This would be one new re-configuration of the pre-figuration, which might in the meantime have undergone several other re-figurations. (fig. 03)

Comparing Cnut Rex and Cnut Dux

It has already been pointed out that both of the Cnut saints shared two of the three common aforementioned traits for royal saints, the two, indeed, that actually characterise the sainthood; the third, that of the proto-martyr, however important at the time, simply denotes a first saint in a region, something that only one saint can be. Cnut Lavard was, as pointed out already, portrayed as a royal saint, a saintly king, although he never became king of Denmark. The narrative pre-figuration is significant in this connection. The overall narrative about Cnut Dux, in all the various figurations, was based on the, probably historical, situation concerning the rivalry between Prince Magnus, King Niels' son, and Duke Cnut, who, it was feared by at least Magnus, might end up becoming the successor of Niels. For a comparison between the two figures and their cults, it is most important, I believe, that the pre-figurations of their sainthoods were fundamentally different. In spite of re-configurations due to the demands of the various genres or media, the basic narrative structure, and thus the narrative identity of the two figures, was radically different.

All involved appropriations of narrative texts to be read or read aloud, and liturgical texts that were to be chanted in the church, or recited, could not change that the minesis$_2$ or mimesis$_3$ (or whatever number of re-figurations had already taken place) would have to correspond fundamentally to the pre-figuration narrative. The supplements of the readings through chants, which ultimately drew their texts (and musical emphases) from the same overall pool of narrative matter, would not change the narrative structure of the pre-figured saint's life in fundamental ways. Neither would, in most cases, appropriations based on ideal saintly discourses or on particular institutional demands. Also, the inclusion of general Chri-

stian liturgical praises and what else would be deemed important or appropriate for the Divine Office, would not change the basic narrative structure. Thus, the narrative identity of the protagonist saint would remain largely unchanged throughout the re-figurations, even if this process did change a number of facets of the narrative to make it conform to new ideals or demands. The narrative identity is mainly dependent on the behaviour and the actions of the protagonist and, of course, the ways in which this is presented narratively. The narrative identity is, however, less dependent on interpretative terms and evaluations that frame the narrative.

Even so, certain changes in a given appropriation may cause at least some change to the narrative identity. The seventh and eighth reading of Matins for Cnut Lavard's passion office claims that Cnut Lavard went unarmed to the meeting, to which Magnus had invited him, in spite of warnings that the meeting might be an ambush, as it turned out to be (Chesnutt 2003: 99–102, 150–52). Conversely, Saxo's (later) version lets him be convinced to bring a sword, which, however, he never gets to use (Saxo 13.6.6 and 13.6.9). This made an important difference in terms of Cnut's qualifications to be a martyr, and interestingly the pope's canonization bull does not mention his martyrdom, nor the martyr's day of 7th of January (see further Friis-Jensen 2006: 203, Petersen 2018a: 184). It is not known which of the two accounts may come closer to historical truth, but whereas it undoubtedly does make a difference for the narrative identity of Cnut, the legend constituted by the Matins readings for Cnut's offices and the Saxo version do not present fundamentally different narrative identities for the saint. Both claim him to have been murdered innocently. Saxo seems to have preferred a more knightly image of him, although he points out that Cnut Lavard was so trusting and loyal to Magnus that he did not, in the first place, want to carry a weapon to the meeting. Oppositely, the legend puts higher emphasis on the martyr-quality or the Christ-likeness of Cnut Dux, his being slaughtered like an innocent lamb. The overall narrative identity has been changed slightly, but not radically so.

Naturally, the stories pertaining to the two Cnut saints were not at all similar. This is a trivial thing to point out, but in addition to the narratives not following a similar course, it is important to note that there is simply much more anecdotal material to be found in the Cnut Dux material. The – seemingly – original pre-figuration was rich in terms of anecdotes about how Cnut Dux conducted his office as a duke in Schleswig and the balance between his high lineage and his role as a just judge. The problem that arose from his dual allegiances to the German emperor as well as the Danish king, which led him to be accused for disloyalty to the Danish throne, is not merely passed over in a brief rejection. This conflict is taken up in the narrative of lessons 4–5 of Matins in the passion office relating his defence at a moot in Ribe, where he convinces King Niels about his loyalty (but not, however, as the overall narrative shows, Niels' son Magnus; Chesnutt 2003: 94–97, 147–49, cf. also Saxo: 13.5.7 to 13.5.14). Altogether, the Odense literature has much fewer anecdotal sub-narratives than the chronicles and the offices of St Cnut Lavard. In this brief article, I can only exemplify this claim. Obviously, one needs to go through the complete bulk of texts to substantiate it. For Cnut Rex, Hope has done this, but mainly with respect to the overall (systematic) traits that were connected to the presentation of Cnut in this literature, not with respect to the narrative rhetoric, and only considering (and editing) the chants, not for instance the Matins readings, in his textual edition of the office. Here I shall just exemplify my impression of the narrative style of Aelnoth's *Gesta Swenomagni* with short excerpts. The first is taken from an episode at a crucial point in the narrative (see Hope 2017: 200–206), from chapter XVII, where the insurrection takes its beginning in officials' consultations against the king:

> *[…] regiis exactoribus de peragendis simul et inquirendis negociis demandans. Cuius aduentu tam nobiles quam et uulgus incitati impiorum consiliorum conuenticula aggregant et ad inuicem animos ad iniquitatem instigant, pudori deputantes regiis institutis cedere et sese inferiores quam regiam potestatem existimare. Idcirco, dum potestati insidiantur, deo aduersantur, quia iuxta ueridicum apostolum, qui potestati resistit, dei ordinationi obsistit.* (Gertz 1908–12, I: 104)
>
> [[…] at the same time he demanded the local authorities to follow through and investigate troubles. Through his coming, both nobles and common people were excited to such an extent that they arranged small assemblies for irreverent discussions and mutually incited [their] minds to unfairness, regarding it a shame to yield to the royal decrees and to think of themselves as inferior to the royal authority. Therefore, while they plot against the authority, they oppose God, because, according to the truthful apostle, he who resists the authority, opposes God's regulations.]

The point I want to make is simply that the way this episode is told by Aelnoth gives no narrative details that could make it possible for the reader to imagine the episode. It is told in moralizing terms, categorizing Cnut's and also his opponents' actions without making the action easy to imagine for the reader, beyond the author's assessment. This to some extent characterizes even Saxo's narrative of Cnut Rex in Book 11 of his *Gesta Danorum*, (which is not part of the Odense literature).

Also the narratives about Cnut Lavard are full of assessments and judgments of his opponents, but the rhetorical style involves narrative details to a much higher degree in most accounts, involving the imagination of the readers. As an example, I quote from the third Matins reading from the office for his martyr day, the 7th of January:

> *Quidam nacione nobilis set opere nequam sepius incausatus. a temeritate sua desistere nolens. cum potens esset pro minimo habebat pauperibus iniuriari et proximos suos opprimere. Porro dux in Skania degens(.) audiuit eum iura contempnere, iusticiam paruipendere. nec Deum timere. nec homines uereri. Quo audito de re sollicitus dux non se sompno dedit. quosque rediens Iuciam pervenit, et continuo coram illo preuaricator accersitur. accusatur. conuincitur. et a iusto iudice suspendio adiudicatur. Tunc ille duci dixit. Propinquus tuus sum, ingenuitati tue noli inferre iniuriam. Ad hec dux. Cum michi sis propinquus ceteris in pena es preferendus, quia quanto alijs es genere alcior. tanto alijs alcius eleuaberis. Et factum e(st). Malus nauis acquiritur et in uertice montis erigitur, cui reus appensus indignam uitam morte digna terminauit. Perpendentes iniqui quod nec prauis propinquis iudex iustus pepercisset, furari uel predari presumere metuebant.* (Chesnutt 2003: 93–94)
>
> [There was a certain man, noble of birth but evil in his ways, who had often been accused but chose not to desist from his insolence; powerful as he was, he thought it a matter of no moment to hurt the poor and oppress his neighbours. In due course the duke, while visiting Skåne, heard that this man held the law in contempt, despised justice, and neither feared God nor respected men. On learning this the duke was troubled and returned to Jutland, not even sleeping until he arrived there. Immediately the miscreant was summoned before him, accused and found guilty, and sentenced by the just judge to be hanged. Then he said to the duke: "I am your near kinsman. Do not bring shame on your own high rank!" To which the duke replied. "Just because you are so nearly related to me, you shall be raised up higher than others in your punishment. For, to the very same degree that you rank above others, so much higher shall you be hanged than them!" And so it was done: they fetched a ship's mast and erected it on the top of a hill, and here the evildoer was hanged, thus deservedly ending his undeserving life. And criminals, observing how the just judge did not even spare offenders who were his kinsmen, were now afraid to presume to commit theft or robbery.] (Chesnutt 2003: 147).

I believe that the two examples quoted here are typical for the narrative styles in the preserved narrative presentations of Cnut Rex and for the narratives about Cnut Lavard. Altogether, for instance, the Odense literature does not render any direct speech of Cnut Rex whereas the legend of Cnut Lavard delivers numerous direct statements by Cnut Lavard. Whether these direct statements are based in actual memory of what Cnut Lavard actually said on various occasions or are literary constructions, they contribute to the very vivid portrayal of his figure. The difference between the two textual traditions is also evident at the very martyrdom of the two protagonists.

Immediately before Cnut Lavard is stabbed by Magnus and his men, the legend conveys an exchange of words between Magnus and Cnut, where Magnus accuses Cnut of intending to snatch away the Danish throne. It is at this point that Cnut realises that he is surrounded by armed men. I quote from the eighth Matins reading (again) from the office for his martyr day, the 7th of January:

> *Hijs dictis, dux tamquam ouis innocens ad mactandum ductus, circumspiciens, armatos aspexit et ait. Frater scit qui omnia nouit me tibi aut tuis uerbo uel opere numquam obfuisse. et quid hoc fecisti? Vbi fedus. ubi fides. ubi uera fraternitas? Judicet inter nos, qui reddet unicuique iuxta opera sua. Jn hoc sanctus surgere uoluit. set per cappe capucium traditor eum indigne retrahens, extracto gladio. ab aure sinistra in dextrum oculum caput findit, et martyris cerebrum impie denudauit.* (Chesnutt 2003: 101–102)
>
> [At these words the duke, like an innocent lamb led to the slaughter, looked around him, saw the armed men, and said: "Brother, God the omniscient knows that I have never said or performed anything that might prejudice you and yours!

> Why then have you done this? Where is our pact, where is our trust, where is our true brotherhood? Let Him judge between us who rewards all according to their deserts." At this point the saint tried to stand up, but the traitor dishonourably pulled him back by the hood on his cape, drew his sword, and split his head from the left ear to the right eye, thus impiously uncovering the martyr's brain.] (Chesnutt 2003: 152)

Very differently in style, Aelnoth does not let Cnut Rex speak at his martyrdom. When the king is stabbed, Aelnoth highlights how the king does not forget Christ, nor his brother Benedict. I quote from chapter XXVIII of the *Gesta Swenomagni*:

> *[…] rege insignissimo pectore simul ad aram et ore conuerso, quidam ex impiorum caterua lancea per fenestram intromissa latus eius perforat et edem sacram sanguine innocentis cruentat. At ipse, Christi etiam post uulnus exitiabile non immemor, Benedicto fratre suo, certaminum collega, uulneribus admodum saucio assistente amplexato et pacis osculo dato, brachiis in crucis modum extensis membrisque solo ante aram sacram expositis, sanguinis uena ex uulnere lateris emanante, uoce adhuc superstite Ihesum interpellat ac spiritum creatori commendans.* (Gertz 1908–12, I: 120)
>
> [[…], while the most eminent king turned his breast and face toward the altar, a spear from the crowd of the irreverent, sent through the window, pierced his side and stained the holy temple with the blood of the innocent. But even after the deadly wound he did not forget Christ. Having embraced his brother Benedict, his fellow in combat, standing by his side, greatly hurt by wounds, and given him the kiss of peace, he exposed his limbs on the ground with his arms stretched in the manner of a cross with a fountain of blood flowing out of the wound in his side. With his still surviving voice he invoked Jesus and commended his spirit to the creator.]

The difference between the accounts, as in the previous examples, is one of liveliness and (believable) dramatic human action while emphasizing the martyr's piety, in the case of Cnut Lavard, against a more dogmatic, however narrative, presentation of Cnut Rex as a martyr according to the book.

Conclusion

The many lively narrative details in the Cnut Dux figurations, presumably going back to some pre-figuration (possibly beginning with Robert of Elgin's *vita* or possibly with orally transmitted stories) give rise to a much more recognisable human narrative identity. This was preserved through many re-figurations along the way, up to, and including the many post-Reformation receptions in literature, drama, and music. (For the post-Reformation sixteenth-century reception of Cnut Lavard, see Dubois and Ingwers-

Fig. 4: Cnut Dux and St Michael. Fig. 3 and 4 exemplify visual re-figurations of St Knud Lavard. In this particular image, he is presented as an equal of a universal saint, the archangel Michael. Fresco from c.1450, Vigersted Church near Ringsted. Photo: Kirsten Trampedach, 2006. National Museum of Denmark.

en 2008: 165–202; for the general post-Reformation reception up to the twentieth century, see Petersen 2015: 142–56, Petersen 2018b, 12–20, and Petersen forthcoming). (fig. 04)

This *may* be, because Cnut Dux – as his narrative implies – also historically was a much more popular figure than Cnut Rex, whose saintliness might appear to have mainly been constructed by stock saintly building blocks from the outset, without much pre-figured narrative material about his individual personality. But it may also be, of course, that the literary prefiguration simply was carried out by a much more vivid and efficient author in the case of Cnut Dux. My private guess is that it may be a combination. The narrative liveliness does seem to point to popular stories that have been going around among people, thus as a popular oral pre-figuration, not necessarily historical, but based on actual peoples' conceptions and possibly even memories of who Cnut Dux was.

Cnut Rex, oppositely, has not had a large reception history, neither in literature, drama, nor music. I believe that what I have only been able to sketch out in this brief article, may give the reason for this difference.

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Notes

[1] For a discussion and an English translation of the play, see Dubois and Ingwersen 2008, 168–74 and 178–201, see also Petersen 2015, 142–47.

[2] The ironically combined motif of exaltation and execution is found also in Henry of Huntingdon's twelfth-century chronicle *Historia Anglorum* (Book 6 chapter 14). One may speculate about the possible literary connections between the two narratives, not least since the monks in Ringsted who formulated the early Cnut Lavard hagiography were English. The basic storylines of the two narratives, however, also have important differences. Whereas Cnut Lavard uses exaltation ironically to show the justice of his rule even toward a kinsman, Cnut the Great in the *Historia Anglorum* uses exaltation to emphasize the particularly despicable and treacherous action of an ally, Eadric Streona.

Textiles in Christian Tombs

By Gale R. Owen-Crocker

The article begins with a brief discussion of textiles in pagan and pre-Christian graves, highlighting the differences between what can be deduced from these deposits and those from tombs in churches, especially in the age of St Cnut. It notes the different gender biases of the evidence from different periods and different kinds of archaeology. It considers clothing remains from two individual cases from the period of St Cnut. The consequences for burial ritual of the concept of death as sleep are discussed, particularly in relation to the addition of pillows or cushions and other bedding to graves. The accumulation of textiles in the shrine of St Cuthbert over centuries is highlighted. The survival of numerous silk shrouds demonstrates the range of sources and designs of medieval silks available in Western Europe. Finally, the survival of small pieces of textile used as wrappings for Christian relics is discussed.

Textiles in pre-and early Christian graves

There are a considerable number of textile fragments surviving from pre- and early Christian graves in North-western Europe, when people were buried clothed and accompanied by grave-goods (see, for example, Owen-Crocker 2004; Walton Rogers 2007; Brandenburgh 2016). In these cases, the textile is normally only preserved – often mineralised – on metalwork, usually iron or copper alloy, especially on dress accessories such as brooches, buckles and clasps. Despite the very small size of most cloth fragments, it is often possible to establish the quality and weave of the fabrics and to deduce – by criteria such as their degree of professionalism and relative frequency – which were likely to have been local products and which imported from other areas. The fibre from these early medieval graves is usually wool or flax, much of which was probably local. Silk always had to be imported into North-western Europe, whether as thread for embroidery or tablet weaving, or as woven cloth. Silk is only attested in England from the seventh century as furnished burial was disappearing, though it may have been present there earlier but not survived, since it was evidently worn in Francia by the late sixth century: a richly-dressed woman buried in the cathedral of St Denis, Paris, and identified, by the inscription on her ring (*Arnegundis*, and an abbreviation of *Regina*), as Aregund (d. *c.*580), wife of Clotair I, king of the Franks, wore a long silk coat and silk veil as well as garments of wool, beaver hair and linen (Desrosiers and Rast-Eicher 2012). Silk is more common in the burial archaeology of Scandinavia, since the northern countries were converted to Christianity later than the mainland Europe and England, and therefore the pagan custom of burial with grave-goods persisted longer in Scandinavia, into the period when silk had become more available. There is a good deal of textile evidence from Viking Age graves of the ninth and tenth centuries, much of it wool preserved on oval brooches, but a particular feature is that small pieces of patterned silk were recycled as appliqués on women's clothing (Vedeler 2014: 3-47; Hedeager Krag 2018: 37-44).

Archaeological textiles from early medieval cemeteries and barrows are predominantly associated with female burials since the metal dress accessories which preserve the fibre were buried in much greater quantities with women than with men.

The conversion to Christianity, along with other cultural and economic factors, brought about a general change in burial practice, and a general end to the practice of depositing grave-goods with the dead, as corpses came to be buried with only a shroud for covering, in keeping with Christian belief in the immortality of the soul and the transience of the body. However, the Church did not actually forbid grave-goods, and royalty and distinguished male ecclesiastics (see below) evidently continued to be buried in rich dress which reflected their status and office. There are a number of examples from the era of St Cnut, some of which will be discussed below. The

gender bias towards females which is found in archaeological textile finds of the pre- and early Christian period is reversed in finds from Christian tombs. Considering the emphasis on male succession in the secular world, and that popes, archbishops, bishops and priests, the wearers of elaborate vestments were all male, it is hardly surprising that textile finds from Christian tombs have a strong masculine bias.

Queens and Abbesses

Female Christian graves with textiles are few, and there are none known to this author from the time of St Cnut (d.1086), whose commemoration was the subject of the conference for which this paper was originally composed, though interments from both earlier and later contained unique remains of female garments of outstanding interest. Queen Aregund's corpse (see above), which was dressed in elaborate jewellery as well as a full outfit of clothes, demonstrates this practice for the burial of an early Christian queen. There is some evidence that early abbesses and royal nuns may have been buried in clothing that reflected their social prestige rather than the humility of their vocation. Textile relics preserved at Chelles, France, are associated with the royal nun Bathilde, widow of the Merovingian Frankish king Clovis II, who re-established the abbey of Chelles and died there in 680. Her unique burial garment takes the form of a linen "front", with silk embroidery depicting jewellery: two necklaces, from one of which hang pendants and a jewelled cross, depicting in needlework metal religious jewellery of a kind which a Christian queen might in fact have worn, but which Bathilde had renounced (pictured at E-Ref Chelles). Replica regalia, presumably prepared specially for a funeral, has occasionally been found in later royal tombs, such as the gilded-copper grave crowns accompanying Holy Roman Emperors Conrad II and Henry III in their graves at Speyer (respectively 1039 and 1056), and the leather-covered resin orb from Henry's grave which was also, presumably, an imitation of a metal treasure (English 2004: 364 and Plates 14, 18). A silk mantle and hair ribbon are among Bathilde's other surviving garments, as well as a linen over-gown and shawl. Other garment remains at Chelles are attributed to Bertille, abbess of the convent, who died *c*.704. She too had worn splendid silk clothing in the form of a tunic with tablet-woven decoration on the cuffs (Laporte 1998; Laporte and Boyer 1991).

After these early Christian examples, we have, as far as this author knows, no female graves with textiles until the thirteenth century. The royal mausoleum of the rulers of Castile and León, in Burgos, Spain, has produced several female burials with textiles, among them another queen/nun, Eleanor, divorced queen of Aragon, who died in 1244. She was buried in a matching outfit of fashionably-cut gown, over-gown and mantle of costly gold-brocaded silk over a linen blouse, with a silk, muslin and gold headdress (Gomez-Moreno 1946: 23-4; Herrero Carretero 1988: 47, 52-3; Yarza Luaces and Mancini 2005: 171-3).

We do not know, at the present time, whether abbesses, especially royal ones, and royal nuns were regularly buried in splendid textiles, and, perhaps, religious jewellery. This is a question which future archaeology might resolve.

Vestments from the tomb of Pope Clement II

Outstanding examples of surviving ecclesiastical vestments come from the tomb of Pope Clement II in Bamberg, Germany (Müller-Christensen 1955, 1960). Born to an aristocratic family, he became the second bishop of Bamberg in 1040 and was enthroned pope in December 1046. Although allegedly accepting the office with reluctance, his policy of reform against simony promised much, but was cut

Fig. 1: The buskins of Pope Clement II. Photo: Diözesanmuseum, Bamberg.

short by his death in October 1047 while returning to Rome from a visit to Germany. His body was interred in Bamberg, which was unusual, since popes are normally buried in Rome. When his tomb was opened in 1942, Pope Clement's remains were found to be vested in silk liturgical garments including a dalmatic, a cope, a bell-shaped chasuble and buskins (ecclesiastical stockings) (Fig.1). (The vestments are effectively pictured on the website E-Ref Clement: Kollmorgen 2009.) The cope is papal red, with a green border. The other silk vestments are monochrome, natural coloured silk, and their golden iridescence goes some way to conveying, even now, the visual impact of such vestments on the observers of a celebrant in a dark church illuminated by flickering lamps and candles as their intricately woven patterning caught the light. The human representative of God's Church, clad in these shining golden garments, must have appeared as a physical manifestation of Divine Light.

The buskins and the cope (both the border and the body of the garment) are woven to the same design though the cope is dyed, the buskins undyed. The textile is almost certainly Byzantine (Müller-Christensen 1955: 23, cat. 27d; Müller-Christensen 1960: 44–6) though Maureen Miller (2014: 194) has suggested the pattern is typically Persian. Both are patterned with large roundels containing addorsed griffins and panthers. The frames of the roundels are filled with geometric patterns, and there are pairs of confronted birds between the roundels. The papal tomb also contained the remains of a cingulum (a liturgical belt), a stole, four silk crosses which had been attached to the woollen papal pallium, gloves, lappets and a band from some kind of headgear. An alb, which was probably linen, had disintegrated apart from fragments of silk decoration for the sleeves.

Textiles from the tomb of Edward the Confessor

Textiles from secular graves are rarer than ecclesiastical. An example from the period of St Cnut, and almost contemporary with the burial of Pope Clement II, is that of Edward, king of England, who was buried in Westminster Abbey at his death in 1066. Although he passed into relative obscurity immediately after his death, a cult subsequently developed around alleged miracles during his lifetime and posthumous healings. The king was canonized a confessor in 1161, celebrated enthusiastically as a saint, particularly in royal circles, for several hundred years and is still remembered today.

Fig. 2: Fragments of textile from the tomb of Edward the Confessor. Photo: V&A Images, Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

According to documentary evidence, cloth was taken from his shrine each time his body was translated, in 1102 (when another textile was substituted) and 1163; and in 1245 goldwork was taken from the tomb of his wife, Queen Edith, who was exhumed with him (Owen-Crocker, forthcoming). However, three small cloth fragments recovered from Edward's tomb when it was damaged in 1685 (Fig. 2) almost certainly date back to the original funeral of 1066, since they closely resemble near-contemporary textiles from the tomb of Pope Clement II (deposited in 1047): specifically the undyed, patterned material of which Pope Clement's buskins were made, but also the coloured versions in the pope's cope and its border. Similar fabrics have been recovered from other eleventh- and twelfth-century burials, from a garment of Holy Roman Emperor Henry II (d.1024) and the chasuble of Archbishop Arnold I of Trier (d.1183). The textiles are of the same weave (now called weft-patterned tabby, called *diaspros* by contemporary writers), and the patterns and scale of the designs are very similar. The fragments from Edward's tomb are manifestly not, as their seventeenth-century labels proclaim, from three different fabrics: a cerecloth (a waxed cloth), a shroud like a sheet, and a ribbon from round the head of the corpse. In fact, they are all from the same undyed silk cloth. The assumption that the textile was from a shroud is also likely to be false: all of the similar survivals from royal or ecclesiastical graves were garments, and one of the fragments from Edward's tomb has the remains of a seam which indicates that it was tailored (Cigaar 1982: 89-90; Granger Taylor 1994a, 1994b. The presence of this fabric in the graves of a pope, a Holy Roman Emperor and a king of the prosperous country of England indicates the prestige in which it was held in the eleventh century, and gives a tantalizing glimpse of a contemporary international elite fashion. This is a particularly valuable contribution to social history in view of the facts that Clement's reign was so short and Edward's (though long) relatively undocumented. However, Hero Granger Taylor (1994b) has argued that this type of silk was not particularly rare or of high quality, and if she is correct it is possible that it was used for entombment in preference to other, more exclusive and expensive products. Even if this was the case, the material was far removed from what ordinary people would have worn, and its shimmering beauty would have made an impressive contribution to the funeral ceremonial.

The concept of death as sleep

Death is described as sleep repeatedly in the Bible, and this concept seems to have been taken literally from the conversion period onwards. In Anglo-Saxon England this was sometimes manifested by burying a person in a bed. As many as thirteen possible bed burials – identified by the remains of the iron fittings of the bed – have been excavated from Anglo-Saxon England, mostly of young women and dating to the seventh century (for example Speake 1989; Sherlock 2012; E-Ref Trumpington). The Sutton Hoo Ship Burial from Suffolk, England, *c*.625, was rich in organic remains, including textiles, though there was no trace of a body, and there have been various theories about the deposition of the rich grave-goods, including for a while, post-World War II, the possibility that the burial was an empty cenotaph. Opinion has now settled on the likelihood that this was an inhumation, probably of Rædwald, king of the East Angles, who was baptised a Christian but retained his pagan affiliations, in a chamber built aboard a ship, and furnished like a room, with a soumak-woven hanging, possibly a rug and bedclothes including a saffron-dyed cover (Crowfoot 1983; E-Ref Sutton Hoo). The current reconstruction of the burial chamber in the National Trust Visitor Centre at Sutton Hoo includes a realistic figure lying under bedding, turned slightly on one side, as if sleeping. It is fascinating to see how quietly and reverently visitors enter this chamber, both adults and children, as if a person were really sleeping there!

The concept of death as sleep persists on medieval tomb monuments where pillows or cushions are depicted supporting the heads of the dead. The effigy of Matilda le Caus, in the Church of St Peter and St Paul, Old Brampton, Derbyshire, England, dating from 1224, is an early English example, but there are other early thirteenth-century cases from France, Germany and Spain, both of men and women, the males both knights and ecclesiastics. (E-ref Effigies). This mirrors actual practice, since elaborate cushions have been found though material remains are quite rare. They include the thirteenth-century royal mausoleum at Burgos in Spain, where the heads of corpses rested on exquisite knitted silk cushions, and Bishop Antonio della Agli, who was buried in 1477 in the Basilica of Santa Maria dell' Impruneta, Italy, pillowed on a dazzling patchwork cushion (Evans 2012).

A startling aspect of this practice is that when the remains of a distinguished person were translated to

Fig. 3: The skull of Cnut the Holy resting on a pillow. Photo: Peter Helles Eriksen 2017.

a superior burial place some years after death, he was still treated as if he were sleeping and accordingly provided with a pillow and sometimes other bedding. Alpheide, sister of the ninth-century King Charles the Bald, left an explanatory inscription embroidered in silk and gold thread around a cushion supporting the head of the dead St Remigius, who had died in 533. The cushion cover was made of Byzantine or Persian silk, and the inscription relates that Bishop Hincmar (of Rheims) had asked Alpheide to embroider the cushion for the saint at the consecration of the church in 852, over three centuries after his death (Volbach 1969: 106, 112; Coatsworth 2005: 8; pictured at E-Ref Remigius).

King Cnut IV of Denmark was murdered and buried in 1086, exhumed in 1095, and, in 1100/01, placed in a shrine in Odense, at which point textiles were added. As with St Remigius, the passage of time since the subject's death was no obstruction to the conception of the interior of the shrine as a bed, with a yellow silk quilt on which the remains of the body were laid, and a pillow. The shrine of the king's brother, Benedikt, who was killed at the same time, was also provided with a quilt and pillow (Hedeager Krag 2010). However, in the case of Cnut, the resting place for his head was much more than a functional cushion (Fig. 3). The yellow silk cushion cover was patterned with birds, facing a cross. The birds may be doves, but are more probably peacocks. Both birds potentially carry Christian symbolism, especially in association with a cross: the dove a biblical image of the Holy Spirit, the peacock widely used as an emblem of immortality and resurrection. As such, the iconography of the pillow is very suitable for the resting place of a saint, but the silk of which it was constructed was not made for that purpose, its silk was as much as 200 years old when it was placed in the shrine. The pillow, then, was not just an item of luxury bedding for a king to lay his head, it was probably already a precious object in its own right.

Accumulation of textiles in the shrine of St Cuthbert

The bodies of saints did not necessarily remain at rest. Exhumation and re-interment were common, and it was often the case that those honouring the dead person took the opportunity to substitute or add expensive and prestigious silk cloths to a shrine during its opening. This practice surely reaches its apogee in the case of the tomb of the Anglo-Saxon saint,

Cuthbert (Battiscombe 1956).

A well-known ascetic and bishop of Lindisfarne, in the Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Northumbria, Cuthbert died in 687, and, according to textual sources, was initially buried in ecclesiastical vestments. Exhumed eleven years later, his body was found to be miraculously incorrupt, a fact that became the basis for an enduring cult. He was re-vested and reinterred but was repeatedly moved, initially because of Viking attacks on Northumbria, until his remains arrived in Durham Cathedral in 995, where his tomb remains today. Cuthbert's coffin became a repository for precious textiles presented to the saint's shrine both while it was located in Chester-le-Street in the ninth to tenth centuries and after its removal to Durham Cathedral at the end of the tenth. It was frequently opened in the eleventh century by a zealous sacristan and relic collector called Alfred Westou. The tomb was formally opened in 1104 when the body was translated. The occasion was described by Reginald of Durham (Battiscombe 1956, 107-111). Some of the textiles were removed at that time and replaced with others considered superior. The tomb was again partially disturbed at the Reformation and was finally excavated in 1827. Investigation of the fragmentary textiles found then shows that silks dating to various times and originating from various places had evidently been added to the tomb on different occasions long after the death of the saint. The earliest, probably eighth-century, was a garment in the form of a silk tunic. Hero Granger-Taylor suggests that the garment was a hybrid, in some ways like an ecclesiastical dalmatic, normally at this period made in light-coloured silk, with the contrasting border typical of secular Germanic tunics. The body of the garment was made from two (different but similar) cream, monochrome, weft patterned, silk textiles, perhaps Italian, with repeating designs of large and small crosses. Clearly, in this case the material was chosen for its visible Christian pattern as well as the beauty of the silk. The makers were also evidently re-using other silks: an unpatterned green tabby silk, probably also from the Mediterranean area, was used as a seam binding and a purple and yellow compound twill silk, perhaps from Central Asia, was used for seam binding and facings. The garment was edged with a tablet-woven band decorated with soumak ("wrapped") weave. The band was probably English-made, but copying an Asian design (Granger-Taylor 1989a, 1991). There is no evidence of when the garment was given to the shrine. Cuthbert would not have worn a dalmatic during his lifetime. This vestment was not used in the ordination of Anglo-Saxon deacons or bishops, as it was on the Continent, though there is some evidence that dalmatics were being worn in England in the tenth and eleventh centuries (Keefer 2007: 29-30). The dalmatic given to St Cuthbert may have been constructed from old and valued materials when these vestments became fashionable in England and added to the tomb at that time.

More precisely dated is the donation made by King Athelstan, who visited St Cuthbert's shrine in Chester-le-Street in 934. According to the eleventh-century *Historia de sancto Cuthberto* formerly attributed to Symeon of Durham (Arnold 1882: 196-214) the king donated, among other gifts, a girdle and a stole *cum manipulo* – "with a maniple". This is almost certainly the matching embroidered stole and maniple which survive today (Freyhan 1956; Hohler 1956; Plenderleith 1956; Coatsworth and Owen-Crocker 2018: 327-331). Reginald saw the stole in the tomb at the opening of 1104, and the embroideries were recovered in the nineteenth century. The two narrow vestments are of the same materials – red silk embroidered with coloured silks and gold spun round a silk core, and both depict figures in a similar style. Both display a complex theological iconography (Fig. 4). The design of the maniple centres round an image of the *Manus Dei* (Hand of God), which is flanked by four figures in ecclesiastical vestments, identified by captions: Popes Sixtus and Gregory the Great, with their respective deacons, Saints Laurence and Peter the Deacon, who were both martyrs. The four share liturgical significance. St Sixtus and St Laurence are both named in the Canon of the Mass, while St Gregory and his secretary St Peter the Deacon were responsible for an important revision of the Roman rite. In addition, St Gregory was the inspiration behind St Augustine's mission to convert the Anglo-Saxons. Named busts of St John the Baptist and St John the Evangelist, Christ's predecessor and the disciple who continued His message, occupy the fronts of the square, fringed terminals. On the reverses of those terminals is a Latin text naming the patron and intended original owner of the embroideries: *ÆLFFLÆD FIERI PRECEPIT … PIO EPISCOPO FRIÐESTANO*: Ælfflæd [commissioned this] to be made … for pious Bishop Frithestan. The inscription gives a close date for the gift, between 909 and 920, because both donor and recipient are documented elsewhere. Frithestan was bishop of Winchester, the most important city in the kingdom of Wessex, a post he assumed in 909. Ælfflæd is a female name.

Fig. 4: Detail of the maniple from the tomb of St Cuthbert. By kind permission of the Chapter of Durham Cathedral.

Ælfflæd was evidently the patron of the embroideries. To have commissioned such a luxurious gift she was no doubt of high rank and is almost certainly to be identified with Elffled, wife of King Edward the Elder of Wessex. Since Edward remarried in 920, Ælfflæd had either died or retired to a convent by that time.

The stole is less well preserved, having suffered the loss of some pieces removed for souvenirs since it was excavated. Its design centres round an image of the *Agnus Dei* (the Lamb of God, representing Christ). This is flanked by depictions of prophets, twelve surviving but probably once sixteen. The prophets immediately flanking this central motif both refer to "the lamb that is led to the slaughter" and the image of the Lamb of God was formulated by John the Baptist ("Behold the Lamb of God"), quoted by John the Evangelist, and hence indicating that the prophets foretell the coming of the Messiah (the central Lamb of God), and also providing a link between stole and maniple since the two St Johns are depicted on the maniple. The obverses of the stole's terminals have busts of saints Thomas and James, probably representing the extent of the Church, since Thomas was believed to have gone to India, James revered in Spain. The reverses of these terminals carry the same text as the maniple.

Closely dated, therefore, by the inscription to the early tenth century, the vestments are again not contemporary with St Cuthbert or even local to Northumbria. Their patron and recipient were located in Wessex and stylistically they are typical of Wessex art, specifically the tenth-century Winchester Style of art with its lavish use of acanthus leaves (here between the figures), its realistic human figures, somewhat attenuated with long slim hands and feet, the fluttery movement of their clothing and the decorated, metallic gold haloes. They show that English gold embroidery, which was to become famous later in the Middle Ages as *opus anglicanum*, had already reached a superb standard in Anglo-Saxon times.

The so-called girdle presented by Athelstan (above) has been identified with another embroidery, known today as Maniple II, which now consists of 2 embroidered strips sewn together. Made in the same materials and techniques as the stole and maniple, it has no religious decoration. Elizabeth Coatsworth has argued that it was originally a secular piece. Unlike the stole and maniple set, it is double sided, so was probably expected to flip over when worn. It is not long enough to constitute an entire girdle but could be the decorated ends of one. However, Coatsworth (2001: 292-306) suggests it was originally part of a headdress or a pair of cloak ribbons as seen in a depiction of the earlier King Cnut the Great in an English manuscript dated to 1031 (British Library MS Stowe 944, fol. 6).

Significantly, St Cuthbert's shrine was also the recipient of a variety of silk cloths which were not tailored into garments. The source of what is probably one of the surviving examples is documented: King

Edmund visited the shrine in 944, presenting two *pallia graeca*, Greek or Byzantine textiles, which he personally wrapped around the saint's body. The surviving fragments of what was once called the Nature Goddess silk, but is now known as the Earth and Ocean silk, is likely to be one of these, since it has a Greek inscription and must originally have been quite stunning in appearance (Granger-Taylor 1989b; Higgins 1989). Possibly ninth-century, it was originally purple, now dark pink, woven with yellow, blue, green, white and purple silks. It depicts a female figure in a jewelled costume, bearing fruit, rising from water. The production and distribution of silk was an imperial monopoly, strictly controlled, and silk was an important Byzantine diplomatic tool. A silk cloth of this quality can only have left Byzantium as a diplomatic gift. It must have been chosen for the shrine on account of its beauty and prestige, not for its iconography, which is pagan.

Other magnificent silk cloths attested by fragments from St Cuthbert's tomb include the so-called Rider Silk, which is probably tenth- or early eleventh-century. It could have been added to the coffin at the 1104 translation of St Cuthbert. It is probably Spanish, from Cordoba, and is extremely rare, having been printed with gold on some kind of glue. It depicts a rider with a falcon, and a dog below the horse (Muthesius 1989). Another, known from its design as the Peacock Silk is also probably Spanish, and is eleventh- or twelfth-century. It could have been added at the last documented opening of the tomb in 1104, but more likely on some later, undocumented occasion (Muthesius 1989).

When the contents of the coffin were seen in 1104, St Cuthbert had a mitre on his head, and a gold fillet, which might perhaps have been added under the charge of Alfred Westou, updating the regalia of the saint. Mitres were not worn when Cuthbert was alive. Reginald of Durham, by his own account, was awestruck by a dalmatic of a purple colour unknown in his own day, shot through with yellowish-green. It was finely embroidered with small animals and flowers and had a gold border the width of a man's palm and similar border at the ends of the sleeves and at the neck, covering most of the shoulders in front and behind. It gave off a crackling sound when it was moved, presumably because the gold made it so stiff. Outermost, the saint was covered with a very large, fringed, linen sheet bordered with embroidery depicting paired birds and beasts flanking trees. This, and presumably the crackling dalmatic and the mitre, were removed at the translation and have disappeared.

Surviving silks

There are more than 1.000 precious medieval silks still to be found in church treasuries of Europe (Muthesius 1997, 2004, 2008). Some of them are garments, and some of these, like the magnificent tenth- to eleventh-century chasuble surviving at Bressanone (Brixen), Italy, of Tyrian-purple dyed silk and woven (like the Eagle Silk from the tomb of St Cnut) with a pattern of large freestanding eagles, have never been buried (Coatsworth and Owen-Crocker 2018: 127-8). Many more silk textiles have been recovered from tombs and are designated "silk shrouds" (Fleming 2007). These were not stitched into body bags but were sheets of cloth wrapped around or draped over corpses. The Nature Goddess/ Earth and Ocean Silk, the Rider Silk and the Peacock Silk from the shrine of St Cuthbert are assumed to be shrouds of this kind, as is the Eagle Silk from Odense.

The surviving silks from medieval tombs are an eclectic collection gathered over centuries. The history of silk weaving is complex, and diverse in both cultural and geographical terms. Originally a Chinese monopoly, silk weaving was taken up by Sassanian Persia, Christian Byzantium and the Arab world, different cultures copying, adapting and redeploying motifs from one another. Thus hunting scenes, originating in the tradition of Sassanian culture (AD 224 to 651), became useful motifs in Byzantine art of the ninth and tenth centuries when religious images were banned under the periods of iconoclasm in the Christian Church. Griffins, mythological creatures, appear regularly: with the front parts of an eagle and the back of a lion, the concept of the griffin dates back to around 3000 BC and was again probably transmitted into medieval art through Persian silks. Such legendary creatures were mixed on medieval silk textiles with common (but potentially symbolic) birds such as doves and eagles. Exotic animals, native to Africa or Asia, such as lions, panthers and elephants, also appear on silks found in Christian tombs in western Europe. Fashions from different eras – large freestanding animal and bird motifs from the second half of the ninth century, geometric patterning from the tenth and eleventh (Muthesius 2008), and creatures in medallions are all found in the treasuries and museums of western Europe. Silks were prized by both the ecclesiastical and the secular elite for their exclusiveness, their economic value, their colour, iridescence and beauty. Apparently, the exact subject matter they depicted was less relevant, resulting in anachronisms such as one of England's

foremost Christian saints, Cuthbert, being honoured by a multi-coloured silk probably representing a pagan deity (the so-called Nature Goddess or Earth and Ocean silk); and the body of St Lazarus of Autun being shrouded in an eleventh-century Islamic Spanish silk of blue taffeta embroidered in red, white, yellow, blue-grey and green-bronze silk and gold with medallions containing a sphinx (a lion/human hybrid and an Ancient Greek motif) and a falconer: an Islamic silk surviving in Christian context. This is one of many silk fragments in the Musée de Cluny collection in Paris (Desrosiers 2004). The same collection also includes a Persian silk samite of the sixth to seventh century deposited with the remains of the little-known St Benignus, martyred in the third century. Its design includes confronted birds and stylised trees in blue, yellow, beige-pink, green and white.

The medieval passion for relic collecting has long passed, and the once esoteric subject of historical textiles has become an academic study and so recently, as in the case of the St Benignus fragment, more attention has been paid to the cloth that wrapped the relics than to the human being they honoured! However, new techniques in science are beginning to return scholarly attention to the bones and hopefully the two disciplines, textile studies and analysis of human remains, can be brought together in the future to shed more light on the history and practices of medieval cults of relics (see Kazan and Higham in this volume).

It is rare that the circumstances of deposition are known, as they are with the silk textiles donated to St Cuthbert's shrine by English kings. The elephant silk found in Charlemagne's tomb in Aachen tells some of its own story, but there are still uncertainties about who gave it to the shrine, and when. The textile bears an inscription denoting its origin in an imperial workshop in Constantinople under Michael the Eunuch. It has been dated to the first half of the eleventh century on both stylistic grounds and by association with the identifiable Michael (Muthesius 1992: 103). This Byzantine silk was one of the most skilfully dyed and woven of silk textiles, among the most beautiful of the cloths enjoyed by the early medieval aristocracy. It probably left Constantinople as a diplomatic gift. It must have been added to the shrine of Charlemagne centuries after his death, which had occurred in 814. It was almost certainly a royal gift to the shrine, but the date and patron are unknown. Anna Muthesius speculates that it might have been given on the occasion of Charlemagne's canonisation in 1165 by Holy Roman Emperor Frederick I; or when Charlemagne's shrine was completed in 1215, by Frederick II, then King of Germany. (He did not become Holy Roman Emperor until 1220.) It is just possible that the elephant silk was presented earlier by Emperor Otto III, who was responsible for the opening of Charlemagne's tomb in 1100, two years before his own death. His mother, Theophanou, was a Byzantine princess and associations between the German and Byzantine courts were particularly close in the tenth and early eleventh centuries. Whoever donated the elephant silk, and those who opened the tomb for him, may have seen an earlier silk, probably eighth-century, with the design of a Roman charioteer, used earlier to cover the body of Charlemagne.

Better known are the circumstances of the importation and deposition of the so-called *Günther Tuch*, a Byzantine silk tapestry depicting a secular subject: the triumphal return of a Byzantine Emperor. The silk was acquired by Gunther, Bishop of Bamberg, on his pilgrimage to Jerusalem in 1064-5, probably received when he was in Constantinople as a gift intended for the German Emperor Henry IV. It was probably a soft furnishing originally: a wall hanging or perhaps a carpet. However, the bishop died on his return journey and the precious silk was used to wrap his corpse and buried with him. It was discovered in his grave in Bamberg in 1830 (Muthesius 1992: 102-3; E-Ref *Günther Tuch*).

Silk removed from tombs in medieval times

The removal of textiles is sometimes mentioned when the opening of a tomb in medieval times is documented. Sometimes textiles were appreciated for their arcane beauty (as in the cases of a purple kerchief and the gold bordered dalmatic in St Cuthbert's tomb seen by Reginald of Durham, which must have been removed at some point because they were not among the relics discovered in the nineteenth century), but any cloth taken from shrines was considered sacred by contact with the holy relics. No doubt these *brandea* (textile relics) were subsequently displayed, but they were also re-used. Goldwork removed from the tomb of Queen Edith when St Edward and his wife were exhumed in 1245 was incorporated into a cope already on order (Owen-Crocker forthcoming). A liturgical banner incorporating textile from the tomb of St Cuthbert, as well as a corporal (a square of linen cloth) which had been used for celebrating the mass of the saint, was pro-

cessed on festival and feast days and was carried into battle against the Scots from 1097 up to the Battle of Flodden in 1513 (Armitage Robinson 1923; E-Ref Banner). Some of these textiles found at exhumations may already have been fragmentary; others were probably cut up, in order to be distributed: some of the textile relics listed in medieval church inventories may have come from tombs.

Silk used to wrap holy relics

In addition to garments and shrouds, there are numerous surviving pieces of silk which were used to wrap holy relics, usually the bones of saints which must have been removed from their original resting places. The practice is attested from as early as the fourth century when the relics of St Athanasius of Alexandria were wrapped in silk (Muthesius 2008: 89). The oldest known example from western Europe is textile around the remains of St Paulinus, a former bishop of Trier, Germany, whose remains were returned there in 395, four decades after his death in Phrygia (Brown 1981: 167). The practice proliferated after AD 800, when all newly-consecrated altars in Christian churches were required to contain relics (Muthesius 2008: 89). Cut from larger cloths, which might have been vestments, curtains, hangings or cushion covers, in a recycling process to which many medieval fabrics were subject, the prestige of these brightly-coloured pieces of precious textile honoured the saints whose bones they wrapped, and the textiles thus associated with holy relics became sacred relics themselves. While the textiles consigned to tombs remained unseen for centuries, those which were wrapping smaller, separated relics may been more visible, though they were often kept in containers and so were not seen on a day-to-day basis. They may sometimes have been exhibited, and were regularly carried in processions long into the later Middle Ages. Whether they were looked at or not, they had been chosen to provide appropriately grand visual enhancement of the holy relics they enclosed, and remain magnificent fragments today, when the identity of the associated saint is often entirely forgotten.

Conclusions

While the discovery of textile fragments in pre- and early Christian graves in cemeteries or barrows is not unusual, these are most often wool and linen. The textiles recovered from Christian shrines in churches are largely silk, a cloth which was evidently important both for its prestige and beauty. Silk was considered appropriate for wrapping the holiest of corpses. Some of the textiles found in shrines were garments, others were shrouds, or luxurious bedclothes. The concept of laying out a tomb as if the dead person was sleeping was a persistent practice, therefore the enshrinement of St Cnut and his brother Benedikt with bedding was neither unique nor innovative, though the Christian iconography of the textile used for Cnut's pillow is unusually appropriate; many of these imported silk textiles recovered from Christian tombs have pagan or non-religious designs.

Some silk garments and shrouds had already been resting in Christian tombs for centuries when St Cnut was enshrined, but it is clear that the tenth to twelfth centuries were a period when donation of rare and expensive textiles to elite shrines had come to be particularly desirable as a gesture of piety on the part of the donor which equally gave honour to the deceased saint.

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Researching relics: new interdisciplinary approaches to the study of historic and religious objects

By Georges Kazan and Tom Higham

What is a relic? While the concept is largely subjective, it is primarily associated in Western thought with religious relics, mainly comprised of sacralised human remains. Meanwhile, the word 'relic' has also become synonymous with the remains of past cultures, especially with those of a material nature. In this article the authors will discuss the nature of relics and research in this field, including the methods and analyses employed, identifying areas for development and exploring the current outlook for future research.

In 1978, Patrick Geary could write that "relics themselves, physical remains of saints, are essentially passive and neutral, and hence not of primary importance to historians" (Geary 1978: 3). Developments in the fields of both archaeological theory and archaeological science have made it clear that the above statement is no longer correct, not only for relics but with regards to material remains in general. Having previously been largely inspired by those of the natural sciences (Johnsen and Olsen 1992: 419, 432), the logic and objectives of archaeology are increasingly drawing on philosophies of mind. As such, material objects, including relics, are considered to possess an active agency of their own, inviting responses from the audiences that encounter them (Johnson 2019: 141). Meanwhile, the value of material objects from the past as documents of factual, historical data is becoming increasingly clear as a result of accelerating advances in methods of scientific analysis.[1] Accessing this data presents not only new answers but also new questions, and demands a structured interdisciplinary approach. Geary and a small number of historians have not only taken heed of these advances, but have also entered into collaborations with geneticists and other scientific researchers (Veeramah *et al*. 2011), urging colleagues to engage with such new technologies in their study of the human past (Nature Editorial, May 2016: 437–438). While historians and archaeologists are increasingly incorporating scientific analyses into the study of objects, this article proposes that given their importance in evaluating objects, attention should be given to the scientific study of audiences also. Advances in areas such as cognitive neuroscience, for example, are shedding new light on the processes used by the human brain to perceive and conceive people and things (Raichle 2015; Binder & Desai 2011; Kosslyn *et al*. 2006).

Relics: objects at the nexus of the material and the immaterial

Since 2010, the authors have been exploring Christian relics and the remains of medieval royalty using a range of scientific analyses, within the context of the historical and material evidence. Religious relics provide extremely interesting evidence: they can be approached either as material religion, as cultural heritage, (in certain cases) as human remains, or, more generally, as material objects. As such, the study of relics presents an important opportunity for scholars in a range of disciplines, but also challenges current concepts, theory and practices. As research in the field of relics becomes increasingly common, careful consideration and consensus is required in a number of areas. A fundamental question concerns the definition of a relic: does the subject solely concern religious material, or can it extend to other objects?

Relics as material objects from the past

Relics play a vital role in our perception of the past and of the present. The English word 'relics' stems from the Latin 'reliquiae', which in the Latin literature of late antique and medieval European Christianity is predominantly connected with religious relics, a translation of the Ancient Greek word 'λείψανα'. Both words literally mean 'things left behind' (i.e.

remains) and are also used in late antique and medieval sources to refer to Christian relics.

In the Western tradition, anything that survives from the past, be it a museum object or a personal keepsake, can thus in theory be considered a 'relic'. The word has indeed been commonly applied to material remains of the past, especially among English-language scholars, for whom the word's religious sense has been loosened since the Reformation (Lutz 2015: 21). Archaeology itself has thus been described as "the subject par excellence which is concerned with relics or remains" (Giddens 1987: 357), a view echoed by the archaeologist and philosopher of history R.G. Collingwood, who conceived relics as "artifacts serving human purposes" (Collingwood 1947: 212) and sets them alongside documents as the prime evidence for historical thought (Collingwood 1946: 282). In this sense, the understanding of relics is fundamental to the philosophy of archaeology.

Until the 1970s, archaeologists commonly considered material objects, monuments and landscapes within a logical-empiricist framework aspiring to that of the natural sciences. Since then, they have increasingly adopted philosophical approaches already in use by sociologists, historians and anthropologists to question and largely reject positivistic conceptions of causality within their fields (Johnsen and Olsen 1992: 432). One result has been a recognition of the intersection between the objectives and aims of archaeology and those of hermeneutics, with regard to the limits of presence in the interpretation of meaning (Giddens 1987: 357). The influence of hermeneutics can be seen in post processual archaeology, which, rather than seeing objects as a product or fossil of a past society, considers objects as mediators of social relationships and activities, as well as of the evolution of identities. Since the 1990s, the cluster of theoretical ideas evolved from postprocessual archaeology known as the Material Turn has attributed to objects an active agency, in the manner of human beings (Johnson 2019: 134-145). Objects, places and monuments, like individuals, have thus been described as having biographies of changing character (cf. MacGregor 2010). The biographies of such objects, moving through changing environments, have been termed itineraries in more recent scholarship (Joyce & Gillespie 2015). The Material Turn has led to a number of theoretical positions such as Symmetrical Archaeology (Olsen & Whitmore 2015) and the New Materialism (Dolphijn & Van der Tuin 2012), which continue to evolve. As tangible representations of intangible subjects, relics now provide valuable opportunities to explore conceptions of the material and the immaterial, a field of increasing relevance in today's digital age (Buchli 2016).

Relics and cultural heritage: from memory to consciousness

Since the rise of the Christian cult of relics in the fourth century, it has been acknowledged that "a relic has no intrinsic meaning or existence. If detached from its worshipping community, it is void of power or significance" (Frank 2000: 176).[2] Within the context of the Christian tradition, defining a relic is therefore an aesthetic process, in which the audience is as important as the object. Outside the context of Christianity, this complex and audience-specific process of encountering and defining is also found in the conception of 'heritage' (Johnson 2019: 253-254). Heritage objects have been described as "a material structure for the "accumulation of affect"" that produces and sustains the memory and identity of a person or culture (Ireland & Lydon 2016: 1, 6). This definition can also be applied to religious and "secular relics" (Lutz 2015: 4). These have been described as objects such as keepsakes and mementoes, which materialise a memory or experience that has changed or defined the identity of their audience. Relics also have the particular characteristic of materialising memories of persons, objects or events (Lutz 2015: 5, 56). Since these aspects can also be found in some but not all forms of heritage, one might therefore describe relics as a particular category of heritage. As such, it can also be argued that an object can be defined and cherished as a relic by a group or by a single individual (Lutz 2015: 4).

The interaction between objects and their audience is key to what can, or can no longer, be considered a memory (Davie 2000: 156). Like objects, audiences change and evolve over time (with the added aspect of variations in their emotional states). This concept of memory has been explored by Davie with reference to religious memory. Distinctions can be drawn between degrees of engagement, ranging from fully active (direct engagement) to indirect engagement and non-engagement (an audience for whom something is not, or is no longer a memory). Within this range, Davie describes different categories, such as vicarious memory (where a smaller group preserves it for a larger community, precarious memory (where the guardians of memory are at risk), mediated memory (in which the medium can become the message), symbolic memory (where the memory is formally acknowledged but not actively participated

in), alternative memory (e.g. between different parts of a community), conflicting memory (e.g. between rival communities in a region), extinguished, ruptured and/or rediscovered, and mutating memories (e.g. the ongoing evolution of a memory) (Davie 2000: 36-37, 177-192). These concepts provide a useful means of understanding the changing identities of relics among different, changing audiences.

In contrast to memory, which can vary and change over time, objects can permit the past to maintain a physical foothold in the present. In so doing, they may be perceived as 'materialising' memory for certain audiences, by stimulating perceptions of a common history and shared identity, assisting in the development of consensus positions (cf. Bockmuehl 2012: 27; Freeman 2011, p. xiv). Furthermore, as well as serving as mnemonics, evoking specific memories, objects can also be said to elicit a spatiality of memory, acting as anchors for a landscape of further, associated memories.[3] At the same time, objects can also "trigger an interest in 'unarchived' histories and give glimpses of alternative narratives beyond the familiar ones" (Rigney 2015: 14). Finally, while the biographies and itineraries of objects from the past can mark or change their appearance, in many cases their seemingly unchanging nature can highlight to the beholder the changes that have taken place within their own environment.[4]

It appears, then, that the identification of an object as a religious or secular relic, as material heritage, or as something else, takes place during encounters - where the itineraries of an audience and object intersect - and depends on the conditions of each. As we shall observe later, one such condition is an audience's ability to interpret the relic as an image that is removed from a perceived original, by learning a semantic association and being able to recall it (Sadowski 2009: 105). Such objects can therefore represent physical and metaphysical aspects of a culture, both its body and its soul, and as such, one might argue, are inherently religious objects (Tillich 1959: 42).

Relics as material religion

In addition to their perceived identity as material heritage or ordinary objects, relics can also function as expressions of material religion (cf. Hutchings & McKenzie 2017: 5). This aspect, along with their specific role as a medium for the perception of the past, mentioned above, and the fact that they regularly comprise human remains, seems to distinguish them from most other forms of heritage. The term 'relic' is commonly applied to the sanctified physical remains of persons and objects revered in Christianity and Buddhism, although the worship or veneration of relics can be found in a number of other religions (Murray 2015). To the faithful, religious relics represent a point of convergence between Heaven and Earth; a medium for contact with the Divine (Gregory the Great, Dialogues I.10, IV.5-6; George 2013: 28; Freeman 2011: 14). In the Buddhist tradition, relics have for centuries been a focus of worship (Stargardt & Willis 2018), although the theological basis for this has been debated (Werner 2013). In Roman Catholic Christianity, relics are venerated (not worshipped) as objects that are perceived to carry the *virtus* (or contagious holy power) of Christ or of a saint, and are traditionally distinguished as 'first-class' or 'primary' (bodily remains); 'secondary' (objects used or touched by a holy person); and 'tertiary' (objects that have been in physical contact with one of the former) (Hahn 2012: 8-9). In the case of 'primary' relics, a further distinction is made by Canon Law between significant (*insignes*) relics, non-significant (*non insignes*) (Vacant, Mangenot & Amann 2005: "relique", cf. Angelo Card. Amato 2017; Immonen & Taavitsainen 2014: 152). Significant relics are said to consist of a saint's entire body or a major portion of this, such as the head, forearm, heart, tongue, hand or leg, or the part of the body by which the saint was martyred if this is complete and not small. Orthodox Christians do not apply such hierarchies in their veneration of relics (Carroll 2017: 120). Like Roman Catholics, however, they believe that the grace of God's Holy Spirit remains active in the relics of saints after death, and "that God uses these relics as a channel of divine power and an instrument of healing" (Ware 1993: 234).

A religious relic can therefore be perceived as an extension of the personality or consciousness of a deceased or otherwise absent being. It may be useful to note that in Buddhism, relics comprising of humans remains are known as *dhātu*, a word that refers to a person's essence (Strong 2004: xvi; Chidester 2018: 81). The 'co-presence' of individuals within relics, it has been argued, enables such objects to be considered instead as subjects (Carroll 2017: 131). However, even within Christian material religion, this phenomenon is not restricted to relics, but can be extended to other objects that are ascribed a dual nature, namely the Eucharist and religious icons (Frank 2000: 174), as well as to religious texts, as material vessels for a greater, spiritual whole (Schadee 2016, 684).

The role of religious relics in the process of presencing of an absent sacred, through what has been described as "the Eye of Faith" (Frank 2000: 133), has been attested in Christian literature since the rise of the cult of relics in the fourth century.[5] This aesthetic experience, through which events or persons from a sacred past are perceived as a present reality, takes place through the sensorium: a spiritual journey which been termed a "haptic visual connection" (Buchli 2016: 49, cf. Marks 2002: 2), or as a tactile visuality (Frank 103-104), by which the meanings and values assigned to a sight by a culture are triggered through sight and grounded in a sense of touch, which is located as the source of vision's power and authenticity (Frank 2000: 133).[6] This has been likened to the practice of *enargeia* in classical oratory, by which a speaker made their description of a person or event as detailed as possible, inviting the audience to engage their emotions and imagination to create missing details and give them a sense of participating in the past directly (Frank 2000: 18-19). The ability to provoke certain audiences to engage emotion, as well as memory, has also been described as a further property of heritage materials (Ireland & Lydon 2016: 3-5), and incidentally recalls Hegel's description of religion or "genuine religious action" as the "binding together of feeling's emotion and memory's reflection in thought" (Hegel 1986: 370).

This process can be ascribed to both religious and secular relics, which can be effectively sacralised by successfully evoking an absent prototype for which an audience has a sufficient emotional attachment (Lutz 2015: 108; cf. Davie 2000: 96). This would extend the concept of material religion beyond its traditional sense towards a broader, more personalised form, and depend upon relics acting as triggers for an audience's semantic memory (connecting an object with an absent original), with emotion, memory and imagination combining to produce a vivid, virtual encounter. Such a connection, or the awareness that it can be made, would thus invest an image or medium with a special, immaterial value, leading to its identification as a relic.

This living, sensory experiencing of relics by their audiences, which transcends traditional boundaries such as that of subject-object, evokes the aesthetic approach applied in the consideration of artworks (Babich 2002: 272). In the manner of works of art, relics serve as intermediaries between the audience and prototype represented, a sacred portrait that the viewer looks through rather than at (Barber 2002: 29). This can be seen in the Byzantine concept of sacred images, which is clearly expressed in the sixth-century *Life of St Symeon the Younger*, who exclaims to a devotee "when you look at the imprint of our image, it is us that you will see" (Van den Ven 1962: 205–206 [231]). As representative objects worthy of veneration, relics would therefore also share the properties of icons as sacred images (cf. Chidester 2018: 82-83).

Relics and authenticity

As expressions of an independent prototype, relics, like images, constitute both original and copy (cf. Buchli 2016: 57). Whereas images alone represent their subjects visually, relics can do so materially, often through synecdoche, through which the essence of the whole can be physically encountered in its smallest part, or metonymy, by which one thing evokes another thing to which it is perceived as being closely connected. The process of perceiving an object from its parts also recalls the hermeneutic method of interpretation.[7]

This conception of relics in terms of art leads to the consideration of aesthetics and authenticity. In the case of relics, as with artworks and heritage objects, 'authenticity' is often a problematic question, critical to the aesthetic assessment of their value. The question of authenticity in the case of art, cultural heritage and even commodities has been widely discussed, with constructivist approaches prevailing (Hicks & Beaudry 2010). In the absence of an independent reality, modern scholars would therefore conceive authenticity as a highly contextual, time-bound social construct, with authenticities, or degrees of authenticities, being determined on a daily basis by changing and diverse audiences, which means that "even the explicitly inauthentic can be reconceptualised into something authentic" (Geurds 2013: 2-4).

One result of scholarly discussion in this area has been the distinction between "nominal authenticity", authenticated by empirical facts, and "expressive authenticity", described as any original, personal expression of an artist (Dutton 2003: 259; Kivy 1995: 123). Dutton describes the important role of the audience in determining what he calls 'expressive authenticity', in contrast to a 'nominal authenticity', an approach appears more logical (relying on reason), than aesthetic (relying on the senses), with 'truth' established with reference to authority, expertise, accuracy. He also problematizes the loss of the living critical tradition that is supplied to an art form by an audience indigenous to its creational context. "Establishing nominal authenticity […] enables

us to understand the practice and history of art as an intelligible history of the expression of values, beliefs, and ideas, both for artists and their audiences — and herein lies its link to expressive authenticity" (Dutton 2003: 270). In the understanding of art, heritage, or relics, then, it would seem that an understanding of the earliest examples and their audiences provides an important starting point.

One might therefore propose that the definition of a relic is based on notions of audience participation and authenticity, elements which regularly figure in discussions of art and cultural heritage. An example of this can be noted in the behaviour of different audiences towards objects in religious buildings and museums: each can elicit behaviour associated with the other, depending on the audience and the objects displayed.[8] The discussion of the authenticity of relics within the context of art and aesthetics leads to questions of value. One measure of value might be a relic's perceived authenticity and the strength of an audience's emotional response to the object that the relic represents. As such, the value would be relative to the audience, be it a single individual or an entire population. Alternatively, if one perceives value as the sum total of emotion that a relic triggers, then this would depend upon the size of the audience. In such cases, one might speculate that the awareness that others are taking part in the same experience might further validate the authenticity of a relic for each individual, elevating the emotional energy (Riis & Woodhead 2010: 153). Riis and Woodhead therefore propose that "the capacity of symbolic objects to evoke powerful emotions seems to increase with the size of the group for which the symbol is moving. The most powerful of all are those that symbolise and help constitute an entire society; they can be animate (an animal, a charismatic leader), inanimate (a national flag, a crucifix) or intermediate (a relic of a saint, a memorialized leader)" (Riis & Woodhead 2010: 38, with reference to Durkheim 1912/2001 and Collins 2005). In the case of relics, this raises the question of global cultures: with 2.2 billion Christians in the world out of a total population of 7.5 billion, it can be argued that religious relics have a wide audience at varying degrees of engagement, and are thus the most widely understood and valued examples of relics.

Relics – a social medium?

Like art, places and material cultural heritage, relics are pliable, evoking ideas, emotions and memories, inviting the formation of images and identities, and acting as nodes in evolving networks between people and places (cf. Geurds 2013: 2). Whereas the images created by individuals in their encounters with a relic may vary, relics act as media to connect members of culture or group connected by shared or similar values and memories, not only with a remote 'original' but also with each other, through the shared experience of participating in the same process. This seeming resolution of differing individual realities into a perceived common sense of reality and meaning can be conceived as a religious experience, given Tillich's conception of religion as engagement with an ultimate reality that exists independently of observation by an audience (Tillich 1959: 59-61).

The role of relics as a medium for communication is being increasingly recognised by scholars (Sadowski 2009: 34-35, 96; George 2013; Leone 2014). Sadowski, for example, uses relics as examples in his application of Peircian semiotics to media in communications theory. He distinguishes between direct and indirect forms of communication as follows:

Direct Communication	**Indirect Communication**
contiguous (in the same spatio-temporal context)	indexical (original perceived through its secondary marks or traces)
spatially contiguous (in the same spatial context)	iconic (image created by the audience to evoke a real or imagined original)
simultaneous (in the same temporal context)	symbolic (through signs (e.g. a name) with no direct equivalency but able to trigger an image of original)

As with direct forms of communication, distinctions are drawn within these indirect forms of communication between contiguous, spatially-contiguous and simultaneous forms, with the added classification of displaced forms (neither spatially nor temporally contiguous). Furthermore, Sadowski distinguishes metonymic cues (fur, hair, teeth) from indices, since these are not secondary traces created unintentionally. Within forensic evidence, he distinguishes material such as photographs and fingerprints (indexical) from blood and DNA (metonymic cues). He adds that religious relics, such as saint's bones, being originally a part of the saints' bodies should probably be classified "as contiguous metonymic signs (not as cues or signals), because they are not invested with symbolic, that is, metainformational meaning. The most famous displaced indexical sign of Christiani-

ty, he proposes, is probably the Turin Shroud, a piece of cloth allegedly containing an imprint of Christ's body taken from the cross. He remarks that "the excitement would probably be much greater if for example something like Christ's bone or lock of hair were ever to be found. The difference in emotive response would be due to the fact that a contiguous metonymic sign (a bone) would be an integral physical part of, and therefore closer to the "real thing"." (Sadowski 2009: 96).[9] With regard to relics as media, this would suggest the existence of a hierarchy of closeness to the original, with physical remains ranking among the highest forms, a phenomenon that one can indeed observe in the classification of relics within Roman Catholic Christianity (as mentioned above).

Conceptualising the function of religious relics outside the context of Christianity in this way lends support to the concept of secular relics. Sadowski therefore remarks that "spatially contiguous connection with objects removed in time is also the basis of such widespread cultural phenomena as the cult of relics, fetishism, or sympathetic magic, in which an object is invested with special emotional significance deriving from its earlier physical contact with another object or person: a saint's bone, a lover's lock of hair, water from a holy well, a phial supposedly containing the blood of Christ, an alleged splinter from the Cross, Elvis Presley's handkerchief, Marilyn Monroe's dress, Eric Clapton's guitar and so on. Spatially contiguous communication underlies human fascination and almost "magical" obsession, found today in collectors of memorabilia for example, with material objects that have been either a part of or in physical contact with culturally significant persons or objects. Consequently, this type of indirect interaction illustrates what can be called displaced indexical communication." (Sadowski 2009: 34).

Another scholar, Leone, has also applied Peircean semiotics to the subject of relics, although he prefers to class relics simply within the category of "indexes", and similarly identifies their presence within "nonreligious" contexts, giving the example of Elvis Presley's guitars (Leone 2014: S54-S55). He concentrates on the wrapping of relics (e.g. by reliquaries), by which they are defined (Leone 2014: S70-S72), and attempts to provide a typology of reliquaries, both in religious and secular contexts (e.g. the use of pristine packaging of an iPhone for sale on eBay). Leone uses his discussion of the wrapping of relics to reach a valuable conclusion: "The icons wrap the index, and together they wrap the intangible object of transcendence" (Leone 2014: S78).

One might therefore argue that in cases where an object performs this role extremely effectively, nominal authenticity becomes less critical, and a relic's ability to express, incarnate or "wrap" the values, beliefs or memories of an audience provides them with a powerful expressive authenticity, which, as we shall note later, has the potential to outweigh nominal authenticity.

Object and audience: a scientific approach

Relics therefore possess intriguingly liminal qualities, straddling conceptual boundaries (e.g. between the past and the present), or bridging realms between which tensions can exist (e.g. history and memory, or the temporal and the eternal in Christian cosmology).[10] As a subject that transcends disciplinary as well as conceptual boundaries, and engages with different conceptions of reality, the study of relics offers a valuable opportunity for interdisciplinary research. The critical, participatory role of audience in defining an object's meaning highlights the need to open up research agendas to establish interdisciplinary connections. As Geurds points out (with reference to ethnographic museum objects), this is required within academia specifically and more widely at local and global levels, "in order to compare ways in which different disciplinary discourses have invited their audiences to consider authenticity and inauthenticity, and to see the tenuousness of such bipolar hierarchy" (Geurds 2013: 5). As such, the results of scientific analyses offer a range of new opportunities not only to better understand the history and nature or relics, but also to explore theoretical discourse in this field.

To date, we have concentrated on the application of scientific analyses to relics as objects. However, by acknowledging that the audience plays a critical part of a relic's identity, we propose that the scientific study of the mind of the audience, for example using experimental psychology and cognitive neuroscience (including the use of functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) of brain activity), offers new approaches to the use of relics in mediated memory (cf. Van Dijck 2007: 27-52). An initial survey of work in this field has suggested that such studies may support the above reasoning with regard to the nature and meaning of relics. For example, recent work on semantic memory describes the recall of memories, including emotion, not only for purposes

such as the recognition of objects, but also to imagine and develop conceptual knowledge in an abstract, symbolic form. "All of human culture, including science, literature, social institutions, religion, and art, is constructed from conceptual knowledge. We do not reason, plan the future or remember the past without conceptual content – all of these activities depend on activation of concepts stored in semantic memory." (Binder & Desai 2011). Objects, emotions and memories would therefore play an important role in conceiving the immaterial, with material objects also easier to imagine given that our mental representations are said to be largely analogical. This would underline the importance of relics in the recall and re-conception of the past, and in the imagination of immaterial concepts, such as the Divine. In triggering memories semantically, objects (e.g. relics) are also observed to be more effective than images (Snow *et al.* 2014).

One may compare the concept of the "Eye of Faith" to that of the "Mind's Eye" (i.e. visual mental imaging), for which it has been shown that imagined and perceived images are processed using the same parts of the brain, with the imaging said to function "like a weak form of perception" (Pearson *et al.* 2015). Furthermore, conscious visual experiences without a corresponding retinal stimulus, termed "phantom perception", both voluntary and involuntary, has also been documented (Pearson & Westbrook 2015). These recall the envisioning of a saint or past event by an audience upon contemplation of a relic, as described in Christian sources, compared by Franks with the classical oratorical technique of *enargeia* (see above).[11]

This process recalls narrative Transportation Theory, a term coined by Gerrig within the context of encounters with texts (Gerrig 1993: 3), explored further by Green and Brock, who describe it as follows: "In sum, individuals reading stories may become transported into a narrative world. Transportation is a convergent mental process, a focusing of attention, that may occur in response to either fiction or nonfiction. The components of transportation include emotional reactions, mental imagery, and a loss of access to real-world information; the resulting transportation may be a mechanism for narrative-based belief change" (Green & Brock 2000: 703). "Beyond loss of access to real-world facts, transported readers may experience strong emotions and motivations, even when they know the events in the story are not real" (Green & Brock 2000: 703, with reference to Gerrig 1993: 179-191). This raises the question of the role of relics and other triggers in the transportation of an audience into a narrative (religious or secular), and suggests that relics may have an important role in supporting belief and religious faith over empirical knowledge. Further research is required to explore the role of relics in the narrative transportation of audiences, with potential practical applications in the modern world.

The critical role of emotion in helping to bind together features of an event and preserve certain memories has also been noted (Mather 2007). This may support the role of objects in the recall of connected memories, and possibly as anchors for a wider memory landscape, suggested above. Cases where the emotions that are triggered by a religious symbol are so overwhelming to an individual that the symbol seems to be a powerful agent in its own right have also been interpreted by Riis and Woodhead as 'ultra-subjectification': in this category they place Christian relics: "in a religious context this may mean an object that is venerated as if it were alive, powerful, and potentially dangerous to humans. It is beyond human control, or at least beyond the control of all but an elite that is ascribed with the ability to approach, handle, and interpret the symbol" (Riis & Woodhead 2010: 133-134). This would recall the conception of the dual subject-object identity of relics, described above, and underlines the importance of relics and related ultra-subjectified objects in studies of materiality and immateriality.

The potential for the desubjectification of the audience during encounters with such objects such as relics is another avenue for further investigation. Research has been made concerning human brain activity during intense meditative contemplation of objects (Lutz *et al.* 2008), with researchers concluding that, in some states of mindful meditation, the mind achieves positive outcomes through a process of disidentification, since significant signal decreases were observed in structures associated with interoception (Ives-Deliperi *et al.* 2011). These beneficial decreases in activity during states of mental repose have more recently been identified as a function of the brain's default mode network (Raichle 2015). To confirm this, further research is required, including experimental and behavioural studies.

Fact and Faith: the Study of Christian relics

The most prominent interest in relics has been as objects of religious devotion, most notably in Christianity, where theological debates on the relationship between humanity and the Divine have shaped per-

ceptions of sacred materiality.[12] As a search for empirical evidence to substantiate religious faith, therefore, the study of relics has a long history, with each generation of scholars attempting to apply the most reliable methods available. From Late Antiquity and throughout the Middle Ages, accounts concerning the discovery of relics cite as proofs of their authenticity the holy smell they produced, the working of miracles, and divine apparitions.[13] Meanwhile, according to Early Christian accounts, the Wood of the True Cross could cause liquid to boil, cure sickness, and even restore the dead to life.[14] At the Reformation, Protestant censure of the Roman Catholic Church targeted the cult of relics, inspiring Catholic scholars to undertake the first modern studies of relics in response.[15] As we shall see, these studies focused on applying scientific methods not to religious audiences, but to the relics themselves.

Today, the Roman Catholic Church continues to integrate modern scientific analyses into its traditional methods for investigating the authenticity of relics in its possession for religious reasons, often by arranging scientific studies, the precise results of which are sometimes published (Guarducci 1995, p. 96-103; Wiel Marin & Trolese 2003), sometimes not (H.H. Benedict XVI 2009). For example, in 1995 the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Birmingham arranged for the radiocarbon dating by Accelerator Mass Spectrometry (AMS) of five bones attributed to St Chad at the Oxford Radiocarbon Accelerator Unit (ORAU). Results indicated that at least two individuals were present, with three of the five bones dating to the era of the saint's death (Tavinor 2016: 77). The results prompted the Archbishop of Birmingham to authorise the veneration of the relics as a group.

While in such cases the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church have recourse to the spiritual authority of sources and traditions in the interpretation of scientific results, it is usually impossible for modern science alone to establish what might be termed the nominal or empirical authenticity of putative early Christian relics, due to the absence of sufficient scientific evidence. Meanwhile, by demonstrating that a relic's origins are incompatible with their traditional identification, scientific analyses can be used refute the nominal authenticity of relics. For the faithful, however, this does not necessarily refute a relic's authenticity, in the expressive sense at least. In the case of the Turin Shroud, for example, the scientific dating to the Middle Ages of an object supposed to date to the first century (Damon *et al.* 1989) has not prevented the object from continuing to be venerated as a relic: during its public exposures for veneration in 1978, 1998, 2000, 2010, 2013 and 2015, visitors have continued to number between one and three million, according to the Church and the Shroud's official website, www.sindone.org (see also H.H. Benedict XVI *et al.* 2010).

Depending on a relic's effectiveness, or power to trigger a virtual experience of an original subject, and the depth of an audience's engagement or faith in the original, a relic may therefore continue to be valued as authentic regardless of the results of scientific analyses. In the case of relics with a reputation for working miracles, there is even at least one account of popular veneration being continued after it has been discovered that the relic was fraudulently produced (Argenti & Rose 1949: vol. I, p. 272, n. 3). However, while one would expect the aims of independent, scientific relic studies to focus on a range of issues, there has been a tendency for studies of relics that are primarily or purely science-based to address the question of 'authenticity' as a binary debate between 'authentic' and 'inauthentic', an approach which scholars are increasingly rejecting.[16] Just as the analyses available for the study of relics has progressed, the opportunity to develop the objectives of such research is also growing.

Traditionally, scholarly research into relics has been a fragmented field, variously approached from such separate disciplines as history, theology, art history, patristics, or conservation, and rarely as a subject in its own right. Until recently, the main evidence considered was largely contextual, consisting of written sources, monuments, art, oral traditions, and artefacts, with the physical nature of the relics themselves remaining for the most part shrouded in mystery. In special cases, information such as the species of wood relics or osteological information was obtained as part of collaborations between the Roman Catholic Church and scientific experts (e.g. H.H. Leo XIII 1884). Independent, interdisciplinary studies of relics of a particular person or object, such as the Wood of the Cross, which integrated material evidence with written sources, were virtually non-existent (Rohault de Fleury 1870).

During the 1980s and 1990s, medievalist and conservator Philippe George (Trésor de Liège), led a number of collaborative interdisciplinary studies of relics in Belgium, opening medieval reliquary caskets, assessing and documenting their contents. This allowed George to combine his knowledge of medieval history and art with, for example, physical anthropology (e.g. Charlier & George 1982), metallurgy

(Martinot, Weber & George 1996), dendrochronology (George 2006) and radiocarbon dating (Charlier & George 1982; George 2002: 146-147). At this time, it was not possible to obtain ancient DNA (aDNA) from such remains, and the size of sample required for radiocarbon dating was so large that George and his colleagues would need to make a plaster mould of any bone that was to be dated before sampling, in order to preserve a record of its form. The radiocarbon dating of smaller bone relics which were on public display was therefore out of the question, and studies were restricted to the mostly complete skeletal remains of medieval local saints found in large reliquary caskets. Even so, George decided to suspend studies that involved the opening of medieval reliquaries until more effective analyses would become available (George 2002: 188-193 and personal communication; cf. George 2003: 22).

From the turn of the millennium, the development of such methods permitted the radiocarbon dating of Christian relics to regain momentum (Evin & Rillot 2005). The first major attempt at applying a systematic scientific methodology to a broader assemblage of evidence was led by radiocarbon scientist Mark van Strydonck in a ten-year study of more than 20 relics of Belgian and Dutch saints from shrines under restoration at the Royal Institute for Cultural Heritage (KIK-IRPA) in Brussels (Van Strydonck 2006). This project combined detailed physical anthropological observations, stable isotope measurements, and radiocarbon analysis of bones, documenting and comparing the results. While its aims included the evaluation of nominal authenticity, the study also sought to discover new evidence concerning the origin, history, and treatment of valuable parts of Belgium's religious heritage (Van Strydonck 2009).

Since 2007, the aspect of methodology and cross-disciplinary study on relics has been explored by another decade-long relic study: that of the collection discovered in Turku cathedral in the 1920s. This has been led by Taavitsainen, Arponen and Immonen, and it is the first study to apply radiocarbon dating and further isotope analysis, alongside osteology, on a systematic basis to the examination of a single, major collection (Immonen & Taavitsainen 2014; Taavitsainen 2015). It has been followed by collaborative studies of other relic collections in the Nordic region (Nilsson *et al.* 2010; Morten 2013; Arneborg *et al.* 2015, 148; Sten *et al.* 2016; Taavitsainen 2018).[17] These studies have included radiocarbon dating along with other isotope analyses and, increasingly, aDNA analysis.

In addition to advances in radiocarbon dating and other isotope analyses, the emergence of molecular genetics since 2005 has opened up new opportunities for the study of human history, not only concerning early human evolution (molecular anthropology) as well as prehistoric and undocumented migrations of peoples, but also to help solve historical mysteries (Samida & Feuchter 2016). This emergent field of research has been termed 'genetic history'. As well as finding solutions, researchers in this field have encountered a range of new questions, including unexpected genetic diversity within a culturally homogenous population (Schiffels et al. 2016).

Over the course of the above-mentioned research, and particularly over the past decade, advances in scientific analyses have progressively reduced the amount of sample material required, resulting in forms of testing that are either minimally invasive or entirely non-invasive, and making available an increasing amount of information. Along with falling costs and the increasing availability of scientific testing, this has had the effect of opening up for study a wide range of precious materials that were hitherto unavailable for research, resulting in something of a boom in the scientific analysis of Christian relics and other precious heritage by means of invasive sampling. Furthermore, by digitising data from invasive and non-invasive analyses, and with the use of 3D and other forms of imaging, such as computed tomography (CT), it is now possible to document and preserve a precise, long-term record of an object's physical nature and appearance.

The increasing integration of modern science into the study of Christian relics offers the opportunity to encourage interdisciplinary research, which is particularly valuable in the study of relics, as proposed above. The value of multidisciplinarity is also being increasingly recognised within the natural sciences: in the case of radiocarbon dating, supporting analyses in fields such as botany and biochemistry are of critical importance, in addition to an understanding of an object's broader historical and archaeological context (Palincaş 2017). However, it has also been noted that the mode of collaboration required is "an equal partnership, with a mutually intelligible language of communication, agreed objectives, and equal inputs" (Pollard & Bray 2007: 246). While multidisciplinary approaches are valuable, the balanced approach desired in the case of relics and other subjects should be, in practical terms, interdisciplinary (Samida & Feuchter 2016) or, perhaps more ambitiously, transdisciplinary (Nicolescu 2008), which aspires to en-

gage the unity of different realities in the interaction between audience and object.

Advances in scientific analyses and increasing interdisciplinary collaboration are therefore allowing relics and other materials from the past to be studied as complex historical and religious documents, archives not only of memory but also of faith and fact. For example, relics now represent invaluable repositories of bio-history, especially in the case of well preserved, accessible human remains, attributed to an individual with a documented life story. Such data can be compared with the textual and artistic evidence available to deepen our understanding of the history of this period. In the case of St Erik of Sweden, for example, scientific results confirmed details recorded in the saint's legend, the earliest known copy of which dates from 130 years after his death (Sten *et al.* 2016; cf. Bjerregaard in this volume).

While more than thirty years have passed since the radiocarbon dating of the Shroud of Turin, the scientific study of relics continues to be identified as an emerging field of research (George 2013: 391; Van Strydonck et al. 2018: 1). This is because, despite steady progress being made through increasing research, a standard methodology, along with other important features such as an established scientific community, journals, code of research ethics and a shared research database are still lacking (Fulcheri 2006; Petaros 2011: 28, 31, 45). This would appear to be a result of the fragmented nature of this field or the localised nature of current relic studies. The innovation of new methods, cross-disciplinary partnerships and tools are therefore required at national and international levels. These all have the potential to be also applied in related fields, interdisciplinary platforms through which existing practices (e.g. in history, conservation, radiocarbon dating) can be reassessed.

The Oxford Relics Cluster

The Oxford Radiocarbon Accelerator Unit (ORAU) has a longstanding tradition of archaeological research into relics. Based within the University of Oxford's Research Laboratory for Archaeology and the History of Art (RLAHA), the ORAU is one of the world's leading laboratories for AMS radiocarbon dating, especially the dating of bone. It has previously been called upon to undertake AMS radiocarbon dating on relics such as the Holy Shroud of Turin in 1988 (*Damon et al. 1989*), the remains of St Chad in Birmingham in 1995 (Boyle 1998: 35-38), and of St Luke in Padua in 2000 (Wiel Marin & Trolese 2003). These early AMS radiocarbon studies of major relics were led by the Roman Catholic Church. The St Luke study was ground-breaking in that it brought together historians, theologians, pathologists, and experts in AMS radiocarbon and DNA analysis among others, resulting in the presentation of secular and religious studies side by side in a two-volume publication (Leonardi & Trolese 2002; Wiel Marin & Trolese 2003). Following this, in 2002, ORAU was also invited to participate in a study of the relics of St David of Wales at the Anglican cathedral of St Davids in Wales (Higham *et al.* 2007).

In 2010, the authors began a collaboration in Oxford to study historic relics, beginning with a group of human bones attributed to St John the Baptist excavated that year at a site on Bulgaria's Black Sea Coast, bones which Higham was able to demonstrate belonged to an individual who had died in the first century AD (Kostova *et al.* forthcoming). Since then, rather than simply co-operate with existing relic studies or undertake localised studies on a case by case basis, the authors have led new projects and developed new working collaborations and research methods, in order to advance a holistic approach to the study of relics.

In 2015, the authors formed the Oxford Relics Cluster, based at the Advanced Studies Centre of Keble College, University of Oxford. The Cluster was conceived to help realise the major opportunities for interdisciplinary research that relics present. It provides a platform for dialogue and collaboration between experts from across the Humanities and the Sciences through round-table meetings and at seminars on a termly basis, as well as through collaborative research projects. This also aids in the sophistication of current methodologies and in the development of relics research into a field in its own right. The authors' research was further supported by Kazan's appointment in 2017 as a Collegium Research Fellow at the Turku Institute of Advanced Studies. This has provided the possibility to explore new approaches to relics within the interdisciplinary environment of an international centre of excellence, surrounded by leading researchers in a range of disciplines. The role was also situated within the University of Turku Department of Archaeology, allowing for valuable insights to be gained from collaboration with the ongoing Turku Cathedral Relics Project.

Religious relics: a resurgent phenomenon

The increased academic attention to relics has coincided with the revival of relics in both the Orthodox East and Latin West since the 1990s.[18] Relics are once again also providing a platform for international diplomacy: in 2017, a rib of St Nicholas, on loan from the Basilica San Nicola in Bari, Italy, toured Russia, where it was publicly venerated by Russian President Vladimir Putin.[19] Meanwhile, in 2016, a bone fragment said to be from the elbow of St Thomas Becket, preserved in the Basilica of Esztergom, Hungary, visited the UK to take part in a ceremonial 'pilgrimage' from London to Canterbury, involving the President of Hungary and leading Catholic and Anglican clergy.[20] This phenomenon is not limited to Christianity, but can be observed across the world: in August 2015, for example, India sent the Kapilavastu relics of the Buddha, preserved in the National Museum in Delhi, on a tour of Sri Lanka, while later that year Chinese authorities arranged for a tooth relic of the Buddha from the Lingguang Si Temple in Beijing to be sent on a tour of Burma, in what has been interpreted as a rival acts of relic diplomacy.[21] In the case of Russia and China, state interest in relics has been seen as part of a wider revival of religion in these countries.[22] Relics therefore are again presenting an important platform for dialogue, attracting global attention. Their research is thus of high interest and has the potential to deliver significant impact within and beyond academia.

Ethics in the study of relics

At present, international research and conservation practices advise careful consideration in cases where objects are recognised as culturally sensitive material or as human remains. The International Council of Museums (ICOM) requires that "collections of human remains and material of sacred significance should be acquired only if they can be housed securely and cared for respectfully. This must be accomplished in a manner consistent with professional standards and the interests and beliefs of members of the community, ethnic or religious groups from which the objects originated, where these are known" (ICOM 2017: 10). In many cases, relics can be of sacred significance or represent material that is still culturally sensitive today, although the degree of sensitivity or religious devotion has not been quantified and may vary. Also, for objects with long itineraries, the identity of the group from which a relic originates is not always clear. The appropriate application of such requirements to the study religious or secular relics will require further clarification and consensus, as well as the development of an ethical framework which may enable it to emerge as a recognised field of study in its own right. Today, ethical practices in archaeology, conservation and scientific research concerning human remains vary widely. A major question concerns how to balance the interests of scientific research with requests to repatriate unburied human remains (Strauss 2016). In this millennium, the UK has emerged as a leader in this field, issuing advice for the archaeological excavation of human remains and for their conservation in museum collections, as well as for their scientific study and sampling. Legislation concerning the treatment of human tissue less than 100 years of age was consolidated under the Human Tissue Act of 2004, with an exception made for religious relics (Parry 2013). Guidance has been subsequently issued by the UK government for the ethical treatment of human remains, including on the ethics of destructive sampling, and on dealing with claims for the repatriation of human remains. In this case, a distinction has been made between requests from genealogical relatives of the deceased, those from cultural communities with a connection to the remains, and those from the country of origin of these (Department for Culture, Media and Sport (UK) 2005: 26-27). Further advice regarding the treatment of human remains excavated in burial grounds has been issued by a joint panel of UK government, Church of England and Historic England (Advisory Panel on the Archaeology of Burials in England 2017).

The authors have therefore applied these ethical guidelines and legislation, and sought to further clarify and build consensus on their application to relics (Parry 2015). Since 2011, they have communicated extensively with church, museum, scientific and state authorities across Europe, to consult the needs and interests of these stakeholders and building a broad support network in support of ethical scientific research into relics. Given that relics and human remains are subject to different guidance and regulations across Europe and the wider world, the development of interdisciplinary relics research as an international field of study offers an opportunity to consolidate practices for the ethical treatment and study of human remains. The authors have so far consulted both the Vatican and the Ecumenical Patriarchate of the Greek Orthodox Church, requesting their blessing to pursue scientific research on relics in a respectful and acceptable manner. The po-

sition of the Roman Catholic Church regarding the treatment and investigation of various categories of relics was also recently clarified by the December 2017 Instruction, issued by the Congregation for the Causes of Saints (Angelo Card. Amato 2017). The authors present understanding is that requests for scientific investigation of religious relics are to be made to the bishop in whose diocese or eparchy the relic is located. For certain monastic communities, for example in the Greek Orthodox Church, the abbot has authority to decide on each case.

The authors deemed this engagement with religious authorities as an integral part of an ethical approach to the study of objects which, while originating in the distant past, are part of a living religious heritage in the present day. Meanwhile, a further area for investigation would be the assessment of a relic's religious status or cultural sensitivity within a wider range of different groups to which it might be considered connected. This could involve a survey not only of religious authorities at local and international level, but also of faith and non-faith groups from the area or areas with which a relic is considered connected. This may enable the assessment of a relic's perception by these different audiences, and result in the acquisition of informed consent from relevant stakeholders in cases where a relic is adjudged to be religiously or cultural sensitive, in addition to the required permission from relic owners and other relevant authorities.

Current Methods and analyses

The data acquired from relics by scientific testing is quantitative and digital in nature, allowing direct access to the facts of the past. While this appears ostensibly free from the subjective choices of presentation and the vagaries of language that characterise written or oral historical sources, the use of this data in historical and archaeological research nevertheless requires caution. In selecting materials for research and interpreting their significance, one must remain mindful of one's own subjective bias. Careful consideration should therefore be given to the scope of a study, especially those taking place within a particular collection or across multiple collections. While attempts to unravel the motivations of past generations of relic collectors, however necessary, are fraught with difficulties, one's own approach to the study of relics is something one is far better equipped to assess and revise.

Relics research: general approach

To date, the authors have approached the study of relics in the following manner:

i. First steps: networks, consultation and collaboration

Religious relics present a large and sensitive subject for research. As described above, the authors have

Fig. 1: The authors (Kazan, left, and Higham, right) prepare to study a relic attributed to St John the Baptist from the Guelph Treasure, at the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in Kansas City (MO), USA. Photo: P. Benson

spent a great deal of time consulting and communicating with relevant authorities to acquire the information or permissions required. Furthermore, as our research has progressed, it has become apparent that an increasing range of disciplines are required to gain as full an understanding as possible about the subject. Time is therefore required to develop collaborations with leading experts in a range of fields.

ii. Relics: a comparative study

Having been initially invited to date relics attributed to John the Baptist, the authors extended their research into relics by adopting a comparative approach. While most relic research to date has consisted of case studies, the authors hoped to set the results of their find in context. In the case of St John the Baptist, a survey was made by Kazan of over 200 major relics attributed to the saint surviving in modern collections worldwide. An initial, explorative study was made of relics from six of these locations, which were sampled by Higham and a student, Jamie Cameron, for scientific analysis (radiocarbon dating, stable isotope analysis and aDNA). The selection was constrained by issues of access, but material was selected to explore further the different types of connections existing between relics (Fig. 1). Three relics were therefore selected from a single geographical region (Belgium), two others (USA) were said to have originated from the same medieval collection (the Guelph Treasure, originally preserved at the cathedral of Brunswick in Germany, and now scattered across different collections), and the last was chosen due to its curious nature, a collection of three human leg bones (3 fibulas) in the National Museum of Denmark, integrated within a traditional type of later medieval artwork – a carved wooden head of St John the Baptist on a platter (Fig. 2).

iii. Selecting evidence for research

The results of these studies have been informative, helping the team to focus its approach. For example, as described above with regard to nominal authenticity, in seeking to study relics that are the most highly comparable (e.g. in attribution, provenance, location, context), it appears useful to first seek out relics with the most ancient provenance in order to establish a basic understanding of the early origins of a particular relic tradition. This understanding can then be supplemented by information from later contexts, which may consist of fragments of relics from

Fig. 2: St John the Baptist relics from Ørslev Church, Denmark. The platter is a later replacement. Photo: Lennart Larsen, National Museum of Denmark.

earlier known provenances or separate material attributed to the same source. Knowledge of existing examples such as these may also have influenced the development of subsequent traditions elsewhere. Furthermore, the selection of relics that exert a broad appeal will permit the comparative study of examples from across a wide geographical area. These two criteria can be combined for greater effect. We therefore chose to concentrate on Early Christian relics, including those of figures that appear in the Synoptic Gospels. These offer insights into relic veneration over the longest period of time and across the largest geographical areas. A range of examples will be sought for comparison, especially from the earliest known contexts. It will then be possible to draw meaningful conclusions on the source, circulation and use of these objects during the Middle Ages and beyond.

v. Relics and Collections

In order to inform one's selection and approach to this material, an initial assessment of the available historical sources and documented evidence (e.g. objects in church and museum collections) is required. The process of selecting material is not only an important

part of any scientific study, but was also a key feature in the assemblage of relic collections. Surviving relic and museum collections, as well as inventories that describe lost collections or the earlier compositions of ones that survive, can provide valuable information about the resources, contacts and preferences of the collectors over time. It has even been remarked that the "practice of collecting things in some places was in itself more important than what could be said about collected things" (Geurds 2013: 2). The presence of different relics, or combinations of relics, within different collections, along with patterns of acquisition, as well as significant absences or gaps within these records, offers an important opportunity for comparative research of Europe's Christian relic tradition.

v. Approaching relics and the contexts that define them

Along with the character of a relic collection's composition as mentioned above, a number of artistic, textual and architectural contexts (such as containers, decorations, *authentica* tags or symbols) can serve to enshrine and define an object as a relic (cf. Hahn 2010: 291). These may be considered individually and collectively, as a non-verbal, cultural "language" in their own right (cf. Leone 2014: S60, S70-S71). As with historical texts, therefore, the understanding of relics requires the deconstruction of these material contexts and the exploration of the motivations behind them, as far as this is possible. This deconstruction can be attempted through a process of deduction, based on the comparative study of existing evidence. Given the limits of research time and resources, and the ethical practice of limiting unnecessary invasive sampling, an exploration of a relic's known history and material context, including the chronology, fabric, treatment, iconography, and origins of these, along with any evidence available concerning the relic itself (appearance, osteological data), is therefore required before selecting it for scientific study (Fig. 3).

vi. Reassessing and revising: an ongoing process

The scientific analysis of relics and their contexts can thus be used to establish a basic understanding of their past, which can be compared and contrasted with available written and oral sources in order to establish useful questions and likely hypotheses concerning an object's history (e.g. why and how such objects came to be treated as relics, and what happened to them subsequently). In the case of the authors' research on the Wood of the True Cross, for example, this prompted the formulation of a list of aspects (including provenance, reliquary context,

Fig. 3: Preliminary examination of a relic and authentica in context, Eglise Saint-Jean Baptiste, Namur. Photo: Oxford Relics Cluster.

size, wood species, chronology) relevant to the assessment of individual relics within the wider history of the relic (Kazan & Higham 2019). An integrated method is consequently desirable, a rolling and reflexive "fusion of horizons" that considers new data from a range of scientific analyses in the light of historical sources and the non-verbal 'languages' of art, architecture and ritual, while also continuing to explore and develop methodologies for selecting and studying relics.[24]

Scientific approaches

The authors' research employs the latest scientific analyses in a growing range of disciplines, which are available either at RLAHA in Oxford or through leading institutions and experts elsewhere. Collaboration with historians and art historians, experts in the material and period in question, offers invaluable assistance in framing research questions and interpreting scientific findings. In addition to providing new information concerning their origins, the modern study of relic collections also offers the possibility of rediscovering new objects and even texts hidden inside caskets and altars that have been sealed for centuries, as well as a chance to document and assess the current condition of heritage. The presence of a conservator is therefore usually required, and in certain cases specialist skills are needed for the opening and re-sealing of relic containers (Fig. 4), and for the preservation (e.g. at correct temperature and humidity levels) of any materials removed for further study. X-ray, ultrasound or CT imaging can also be used to assist decisions concerning the opening of a reliquary by giving an indication of its internal structure and contents. Furthermore, specialist art historical expertise in palaeography, textiles and metalwork, for example, is also required for the interpretation of new texts and material discovered during the opening of reliquaries, and in the selection and sampling of such materials for scientific analyses (e.g. radiocarbon dating, dye analysis, animal species analysis).

The documentation of all research materials for

Fig. 4: Metal conservator L.-P. Baert (Royal Museums of Belgium) removes a relic package for further study, under the supervision of the medievalist and relic conservator Philippe George (centre) and representatives from the church authorities and Belgian KIK-IRPA national heritage institute. Photo: G. Kazan

Fig. 5: Computerised turntable system with multi-camera setup developed at RLAHA accelerates the photographic documentation of relics for the creation of 3D photogrammetric images. Photo: G. Kazan

further study through photos, measurements and observation is essential. This is particularly important for religious heritage in Northern Europe or the Middle East, where evidence that can often be endangered by incidents of theft, arson, vandalism and general decay due to lack of funds. The authors' documentation of texts and objects on-site is carried out photographically and in note form. In the case of relics in particular, measurements are taken along with photographs from multiple angles, allowing for the preparation of 3D images by photogrammetry. For this, a new, computerised turntable device connected to three cameras at different heights has been developed by Richard Allen (RLAHA) (Fig. 5).

Religious relics often comprise of human remains, concerning which modern scientific analyses offer a wide range of data (Department of Culture, Media and Sport (UK) 2005: 8). This can generally be divided into two main areas: details concerning an individual's life history (such as their health, diet, geographical movements, sex, genetic origin, appearance, relationships to others, life-style, age and cause of death), and details concerning the fate of their remains (such as how and when these were divided, circulated, treated, and packed away). A comparison of such data can also offer further insights, such as concerning patterns of sourcing and circulation, as well as permitting the identification of anonymous relics with others for which an attribution or source is known.

Osteology/physical anthropology remains the primary method for the identification and assessment of skeletal remains (Fig. 6), providing information concerning an individual's age, sex, health, and lifestyle, as well as evidence of their post-mortem treatment. This can be supported by the use of imaging techniques such as CT scanning to offer non-invasive insights into the internal make-up of objects and their cellular structure. In the case of wood, this has been used to determine tree species non-invasively (Fig. 7). In the case of bone, Zooarchaeology

Fig. 6: Osteological inspection of relics from a Belgian church reliquary conducted on site by Dr. Eleanor Farber (Oxford Relic Cluster). Photo: G. Kazan

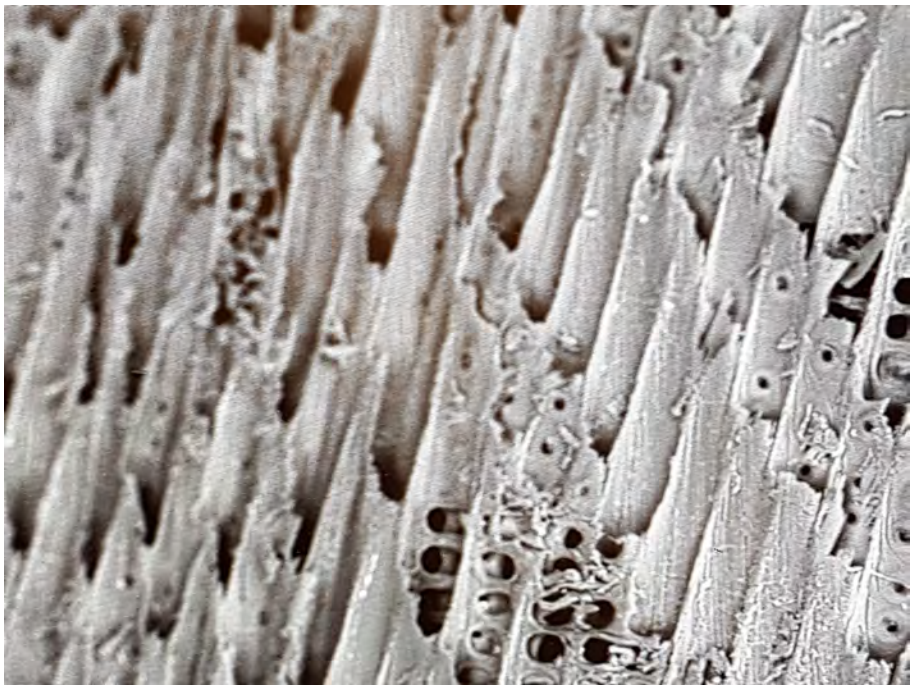

Fig. 7: High-powered CT imaging at the University of Helsinki MicroCT laboratory reveals the internal structure of a wood relic. Photo: G. Kazan

by Mass-Spectrometry (ZooMS), provides an important initial analysis to identify small fragments of uncertain origin to genus and sometimes species level. Organic and inorganic substances present on the surface of relics, or comprising secondary relics in their own right, as well as the fabric of related objects can be characterised using a range of methods, such as gas chromatography / mass spectrometry (GC/MS), FTIR and Raman spectroscopy, Scanning Electron Microscopy with Energy-Dispersive X-ray analysis (SEM–EDX), Particle-Induced X-ray Emission (PIXE) and X-ray Fluorescence (XRF), which is especially useful for determining the composition of metals and thus, potentially, date their production and locate their geological origin. Such analyses can also identify traces of materials from the previous containers and cladding used for relics, as well as substances used in their veneration or conservation. So far, the authors have based their studies around AMS radiocarbon dating and relevant, supporting analyses (e.g. ZooMS to screen relics of unidentified species for animal origin), taking advantage of the increasingly sophisticated methods available at ORAU. This allows for objects to be placed within their correct chronological context, and is thus of critical importance for historical research. Sample size depends on the material and the quality of an object's preservation. Typically, between 100 mg and 300 mg is required for bone samples, while for wood, which is more concentrated in carbon, as little as 5 mg is needed. The authors' research to date has determined that relic material often survives in excellent condition, allowing the new capabilities of scientific analysis to be tested to their limits, further reducing sample size. Samples of bone material can be extracted almost imperceptibly using a "keyhole" sampling technique, by which a small hole (1mm to 2mm diameter) is made in the bone using a tungsten carbide drill, and use to hollow out sample material from within the object (Fig. 8).

Fig. 8: A surgical drill is used to obtain bone powder from a relic using the "Keyhole" sampling method. The quantity of powder on the foil indicates the sample amount required for a successful radiocarbon date. Photo: Oxford Relics Cluster

The isotopes present in samples can also provide other information: for example, the ratio between ^{13}C and ^{12}C, expressed in parts per mille, can indicate the types of food an individual ate in their lifetime, while nitrogen isotopic ratios (^{15}N and ^{14}N) can reveal the position of an individual in the food chain (in the case of humans: vegans, vegetarians and omnivores) and the types of food eaten (e.g. diets high in marine protein). Where sufficient reference data exists, other forms of stable isotope analysis (e.g. strontium and oxygen) can also be applied to reveal further aspects of diet, geographical origin and migration.

Genetic analysis of historic or pre-historic remains (aDNA), which allows an individual's genetic data to be identified using Next Generation Sequencing (NGS), is an area of research that is rapidly developing, with the sequencing of entire ancient genomes becoming increasingly possible. This can reveal information such as genetic relationships between people, sex of the individual, phenotypic traits (eye, hair colour etc.). aDNA analysis offers the most secure comparisons between relics, allowing parts of the same or related individuals to be identified. Samples of 30mg or less are extracted, ideally within a clean laboratory environment, purified and amplified. With the number of published ancient and modern genomes rising rapidly, aDNA analysis offers new opportunities for interpreting the genetic and probable geographical origin of a relic, with implications for its sourcing and circulation.

Other useful new methods available for which small samples (~1-20 mg) are required include ZooMS, and microbiome analysis, which uses the aDNA of microbes present in the plaque from an individual's teeth to determine their diet and disease history. In addition, further aspects of a relic's context can be assessed using textile, weave and dye analysis, dendrochronology, minerology, geology, microbiology and hair analysis. In some cases, archaeobotany and archaeoentomology can also be used to identify the particular environment or season of the year in which an object was sealed up, based on the plant, pollen or insect remains present. All these analyses and others are becoming increasingly available and sophisticated, offering new insights into our understanding of relics and raising new questions regarding existing methodologies.

Relics: present and the future

The authors are presently engaged in a number of major studies, concerning religious relics, the remains of medieval kings and historic objects. These include the first interdisciplinary, comparative scientific study of relics of the True Cross[24], as well as modern case studies of relics of St John the Baptist and the Apostles, and the remains of early British and European royalty. In collaboration with the Turku Cathedral Relics Project, National Museum of Denmark, and Nordic research group on medieval saints' relics, established by Prof. Lena Liepe (Linnaeus University) in April 2019, the authors are also exploring new opportunities for relic research in the Nordic region.

Research on Christian relics in the Nordic region is particularly interesting for a number of reasons. Written sources can be less plentiful, or more hagiographical or legendary in nature, making data from scientific analysis particularly valuable. Also, the number of published relics from the region is relatively limited (less than 400 finds, approximately). In many cases, these relics are the property of museum collections, and are not the subject of an active religious tradition, making scientific research less of a sensitive issue in most cases. However, while the Catholic cult of Christian saints and their relics effectively ended in most of northern Europe at the Reformation, devotion to particular saints continued. This could be, for example, under their guise of founders or patrons of national churches, such as in the Faroe Islands, where the Lutheran Church continues to be celebrate the annual feast of St Olav, or as popular traditions, such as the continued reverence for St Nicholas, albeit with most of the formal religious aspects removed. Meanwhile, certain relics, hidden away by local communities, survived the Reformation, such as the collections of Linköping Cathedral in Sweden and of Turku Cathedral in Finland, rediscovered the seventeenth and twentieth centuries respectively.[25] Elsewhere, relics encased within ancient altars simply remained in place, such as those of Seem Church, near Ribe in southwest Jutland, to be rediscovered centuries later (Vellev 1974). Today, these objects offer rare glimpses into a past which, in some cases, is still undocumented, revealing the contacts and networks that once bound medieval Christendom together. Data obtained from relics, such as from the remains of St Erik of Sweden (Sten 2011), is therefore especially valuable to our understanding of the presently undocumented history of this region.

The development of an international scholarly community for the field of interdisciplinary relic studies, particularly in Belgium and the Nordic countries, has seen notable progress. The interna-

tional workshop "Relics of the Saints – Remnants of Papacy in Reformed Churches", Turku (31.10. – 1.11.2014), hosted by the Turku Cathedral Relics Project team, provided an opportunity for relics researchers in the Nordic region to discuss their work, with Philippe George and Mark van Strydonck contributing insights from their long experience in this field. The foundation of the Oxford Relics Cluster in October 2015, with its series of seminars and meetings, was followed by "Relics@the lab" - the first international workshop in this field, organised by the Royal Institute of Cultural Heritage (KIK-IRPA) and held in Brussels, Belgium (27-28.10.2016) (Van Strydonck *et al*. 2018). Following the present conference, *Life and cult of Canute the Holy: Interdisciplinary research seminar in Odense* (6-7.10.2017), the Archaeological Society of Namur (SAN) held the "Labs, Art and Relics Workshop" at the Royal Library of Belgium in Brussels. (22-23.11.2018). Collaboration in this new field is thus gaining momentum, as cross-disciplinary interest in the opportunities presented by relics continues to grow. The authors' collaboration with the Turku Cathedral Relics Project in Finland has led them to consider relics from across the Nordic region. Scholars from the region from a range of fields (conservation, archaeology, art history) met at the recent workshop "Nordic research on medieval saints' relics" (Helsinki, 1-3.4.2019) convened by Prof. Lena Liepe (Linnaeus University, Sweden). The authors have been developing a network of relics researchers since 2013 and are supporting Prof. Liepe's existing efforts to develop a research network for the study relics and religious art in the Nordic region.

Progress is also being made in the field of database development. Prof. Liepe's ongoing project "Mapping Lived Religion: Medieval cults of saints in Sweden and Finland" is preparing a digital resource of relics and other material from Nordic countries. In collaboration with Prof. Taavitsainen, Prof. Liepe, Jens Vellev, Øystein Ekroll and others, Kazan has also developed a preliminary working database, shared online among Nordic scholars, which will be developed further as research in the region advances. This is expected to be eventually absorbed and replaced by Prof. Liepe's project database, once the latter is complete. Furthermore, a pilot study was carried out in 2015 by Kazan and research student Jamie Cameron, in which part of an unpublished collection of obscure relics in Liège cathedral was inventoried and photographed by researchers from the Oxford Relics Cluster, with an initial database listing created for the cathedral's ongoing use. This has allowed the cathedral to rapidly locate relics of interest within the collection, and provided a number of methodological insights to the researchers. A broader database project is now under development, in collaboration with other European researchers and institutions.

While the above research is expected to provide elements needed for the development of relic studies as a subject in its own right, it also underlines the crucial role of the audience in identifying objects as relics. Furthermore, as proposed above, neuroscientific and psychological studies of the minds and brains of audiences can also shed light on a separate aspect of relics: how they are defined, and how we respond to them. Through such research, it is hoped that findings will be made from the study of these vestiges of our past that make possible new applications for the world of today.

We therefore find ourselves at a new frontier in our perception of the past. The scientific study of religious and secular relics represents a new resource of historical data, allowing us to re-evaluate our understanding of our shared history and perceptions of cultural identity. The resurgence of popular devotion and global popular interest with regard to religious relics also offers a new opportunity to revisit our perceptions of these holy objects and what they represent, within the context of scientific, historical and archaeological research in this field. While the study of relics is very old, a growing number of scholars are now aiming to offer new methods, benefits and opportunities across a wide field, providing an integrated approach to interdisciplinary research collaboration in the twenty-first century.

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Notes

[1] At present, this is especially clear in the field of genetics, where the number of published ancient genomes has multiplied rapidly from 5 in 2010 to almost 4000 in 2018 (Reich 2018: xviii).

[2] In ca. 400, Jerome's opponent, Vigilantius, derides relics as some unknown dust kept in a little vessel, wrapped in costly cloth (Jerome, *Contra Vigilantium* 4-5).

[3] This evokes Pierre Nora's concept of *lieux de mémoire*, the fundamental purpose being "to stop time, to block the work of forgetting, to establish a state of things, to immortalize death, to materialize the immaterial" through "an endless recycling of their meaning" (Nora 1989: 24). Cf. Nora 1984: 19.

[4] "The same objects are before us. . . they are permanent and the same; but when we look upon them in cold unfeeling old age, can we, changed in our temper, our pursuits, our feelings changed in our form, our limbs, and our strength, can we be ourselves called the same?" (Scott 1886: 92).

[5] "For as if it is the same body, still alive and flourishing, those beholding it embrace it with the eyes, the mouth, the ears. And when they have approached it with all the senses, they pour tears out over it from piety and emotion. And as if he was intact and appearing, they address to the martyr a plea that he would intercede on their behalf." (Gregory of Nyssa, *De Sancto Theodoro*: 85)

[6] "By touching, I think, we experience a sense of our own implication in a history longer and broader than our personal one: I am – and it is – and touch can somehow affirm that truth" (Josipovici 1996: 70).

[7] "The part is understood within the whole from which it originated, and the whole is understood from the part in which it finds expression" (Droysen 1977:35). "Complete knowledge always involves an apparent circle, that each part can be understood only out of the whole to which it belongs and vice versa. All knowledge that is scientific must be constructed in this way. To put oneself in the position of the author means to follow through with this relationship between the whole and the parts." Schleiermacher (1986:84). Cf. Johnsen and Olsen 1992: 421, 425-426.

[8] See Davie 2000: 163-167 on the conceptualising of churches as museums, and Berns 2017: 88, with reference to praying before holy objects in museum exhibitions).

[9] Whereas the use of the term 'metonymic', rather than 'synecdochal', may need further clarification, and the classification of the Turin Shroud might be debated (index, icon, or 'metonymic sign'), this particular relic raises a number of valuable points. For example, the Turin Shroud provides a framework for the understanding of the hierarchy of religious relics applied in Roman Catholic Christianity. Primary or first-class relics would thus be classified as 'metonymic signs' (or, more accurately, 'synechdocal signs'), consecrated materials such as the Eucharist and the Gospels as 'metonymic symbols', and secondary and tertiary relics as indices, with religious images acting as a form of iconic communication.

[10] Unlike history, for example, it is claimed that memory, situated between tradition and modernity, "does not attempt to rescue the past, but is in the service of the present and the future" (Todorov 1995: 8). Cf. le Goff 1988: 31. Nora, meanwhile, argued that history's purpose is to suppress and destroy memory (Nora 1989:

9).

[11] See n.5.

[12] For a study of the uses and enduring importance of Christian relics, see George 2013.

[13] According to contemporary sources, sweet smell emanated from the relics of the Forty Martyrs (Sozomen, *Historia Ecclesiastica* IX.2) and St Stephen (See *Revelatio S. Stephani*: 214-215) upon their discoveries in the early fifth century.

[14] For healing, see Rufinus, *Historia Ecclesiastica* I.8 (ca. 397). For restoring the dead to life, see Judas Cyriacus Legend of the Invention of the Cross (5^{th}-6^{th} c.) in Drijvers 1997. For causing liquids to boil, see Piacenza Pilgrim (ca. 570), Antoninus of Piacenza, *Itinerarium* XX (Wilkinson 2002: 139). See also Frolow 1961: 25.

[15] See Gretser 1598, 1605, 1616; Rohault de Fleury 1870.

[16] Van Strydonck *et al.* 2006;Van Strydonck *et al* 2018: 2.

[17] Project members: University of Turku - Prof. J.P. Taavitsainen, Prof. V. Immonen; Finnish National Board of Antiquities: A. Arponen. Kazan joined the Turku project in 2017 as a TIAS Collegium Fellow (University of Turku).

[18] For an example of the decline of Christian relics in the mid-twentieth century and their revival in the 1990s, see Bertram 2013.

[19] Source: BBC Online, *Why St Nicholas works wonders for Russians.*

[20] Source: Information about the May events relates to St Thomas Becket's relic from Esztergom (Hungarian Embassy in London 2016).

[21] Chinese Buddha sacred tooth relic conveyed to Myanmar for obeisance (*Sina Online News* 2011), Exposition of the Sacred Kapilavastu Relics in Sri Lanka, see High Commission of India, Colombo, Sri Lanka 2012, discussed in Material Religion Editorial 2013.

[22] See BBC Online, *Why St Nicholas works wonders for Russians*; Ramachandran 2019.

[23] Cf. Gadamer 2004: 153-161, 367-371, 390, 398-415.

[24] Only a fragment of the *Titulus* preserved in the church of Sta. Croce in Rome had previously been examined (Bella & Azzi 2002). See also Kazan & Higham 2019, forthcoming.

[25] For descriptions and references, see Horskjær & Norberg 1956–1978 and Taavitsainen 2015.

«Sanctus Olaus rex et martiris»: Constructing the early cult of St Olav of Norway 1030 – 1220

By Øystein Ekroll

In Norwegian medieval history and historiography, the holy king St Olav (995 – 1030) looms larger than all other persons. Traditionally, in historical writing, his death in battle in 1030 marks the beginning of the Middle Ages in Norway, while the destruction of his shrine and cult in 1537 marks the end. Many questions still surround the development of his cult: How does one establish the cult of a saint in a newly Christianized country where the concepts of saints and saints' cults are almost unknown? Where does one look for inspiration, e.g. to England, to Rome, or even to Jerusalem? Were any established cults perhaps used as models for the new cult? How should a cult be constructed, by whom and for whom? And how did one spread the knowledge about it in a mostly illiterate society?

Introduction

The cult of St Olav seemingly appeared spontaneously within a year after his death, and it quickly spread to the rest of Scandinavia and the British Isles. Still, it was no passing fad, but grew steadily and became a constant feature in religion and politics in the Nordic lands for five centuries until the Lutheran Reformation in 1537.

The cult's development was, however, a prolonged and complex process, and the cult changed and developed through the centuries. This happened partly through internal dynamics and partly through influence from Christian cults in general. In this paper, I will argue that at first the construction of the cult of St Olav borrowed heavily from older royal cults, and that his cult was a means of bringing Norway, a newly christianized country on the European fringe, into the European religious mainstream and thus establish it firmly as an integrated part of Christendom. Later, his cult became closely connected with the Norwegian monarchy, and after the late fourteenth century also with the union of the three Nordic kingdoms. During these centuries, the cult of St Olav lent its prestige to the earthly monarchy, but as the cult gradually developed in Scandinavia, it also acquired and incorporated royal ideology. St Olav belonged to an exclusive group of holy European kings who acquired a position as dynastic saints, lending their prestige to their successors. My aim is to examine how and why this happened

In my view, the medieval cult of St Olav can be divided into four phases. The first lasted from 1031 until *c.* 1152/53, and the second from the establishment of the Nidaros archbishopric in 1152/53 to the completion of the Romanesque cathedral *c.* 1210/20. A full survey of all four phases would demand too much space, so this paper deals only with the first two phases up to the time when both the cathedral and the cult had become fully developed. The first phase is little known, as there are very few preserved contemporary sources. The second phase, on the other hand, is well attested through a number of documents and literary and liturgical works which testify to how the cult of St Olav was consciously developed by the Nidaros clergy in order to enhance the national and international prestige of the new archbishopric.

From viking to king and saint

King Olav II Haraldsson belonged to the royal line of King Harald 'Fairhair' who ruled Norway around 900. Olav was born in 995 as the son of a local king in south-east Norway and from 1007 he spent seven formative years as a Viking, mainly in the British Isles. According to the anonymous *Historia Norwegie* from *c.* 1160-75 and Snorri Sturluson's *Saga of The Norwegian Kings*, written *c.*1230, he served King Æthelred (978 –1013, 1014–16) as a mercenary commander, and his ships managed to pull down

London Bridge during Æthelred's siege of the city in 1014 (Mundal and Mortensen 2003: 103; Hagland & Watson 2005: 328-333). According to Snorri, Olav was converted to Christianity and baptized in Rouen in Normandy in 1014. By then, he had collected a considerable treasure and was planning his future.

Since the death of King Olav I Tryggvason in the naval battle at Svolder in 1000, Norway had been ruled by the earls of Lade, the brothers Eirik and Svein Håkonsson, as vassals of the kings of Denmark. In 1015, King Cnut called Earl Eirik to England to assist in his conquest of the country, and Cnut later appointed Eirik earl of Northumbria. With the less able Svein and Eirik's young son Håkon in charge of Norway, Olav saw his chance of conquering the throne of Norway.

The same year, Olav left England with two merchant ships filled with 260 men and treasure, and he also brought with him four English clerics consecrated as missionary bishops: Sigurðr, Grimkell, Rudolf and Bernhard. All four were English or Anglo-Scandinavians (Townend 2005: 266). Sigurðr was the uncle of Grimkell, and he had gone to Norway before in the company of King Olav I Tryggvason (995–1000). These two stayed in Norway for many years, while the latter two went to Iceland. Grimkell is probably identical with Grimcytel or Grimketel, who is mentioned in English sources as bishop of Selsey in Sussex 1038–47 (Garmonsway 1953: 161, 164-65, 167; Norsk Biografisk Leksikon IV: 627).

After his victory against Earl Svein Håkonsson in the sea battle at Nesjar in Vestfold in 1016, Olav was acclaimed king of Norway at the Eyraþing Assembly in Nidaros. With the zeal of the newly converted, he set out eradicating the last remnants of paganism in his kingdom, often by force and leaving a bloody trail. As king of Norway he minted coins and introduced several new laws, among them the 'Christian Law' (*Kristenretten*) at a national assembly at Moster in 1024 which made Christianity the only legal religion in Norway. The local magnates, whose power rested on their dual function as secular and pagan religious leaders, lost much of their power and built up much resentment towards the king. In 1028, they forged an alliance with King Cnut, who strived to include Norway in his North Sea empire of England and Denmark, and accepted him as their overlord. In his turn, he promised to give them a large degree of self-rule.

King Olav fled into exile in Russia and was well received by his Swedish-born sister-in-law Ingegjerd and her husband Prince Yaroslav who urged him to remain there, even offering him a kingdom near Volga (Snorri Sturluson 1979, vol. 2: 80-81). However, in an effort to regain his kingdom, King Olav returned from Russia through Sweden with a small army in 1030, but he was met with overwhelming force by an alliance of farmers and magnates at Stiklestad northeast of Nidaros on the 29th of July. The king and most of his army were killed in the battle, and the survivors fled back to Sweden.

According to Snorri's saga of St Olav, the slain

Fig. 1: Nidaros Cathedral and the Archbishop's Palace, aerial view seen towards NE. The cathedral choir stands above the presumed location of St Olav's grave site. The medieval town was situated along the lower part of the River Nið to the north of the cathedral. Photo: Nidaros Cathedral Restoration Workshop.

king's body was hidden by local farmers and brought in a coffin by boat to the small town of Nidaros (modern-day Trondheim) by night (Snorri Sturluson 1979, vol 2: 111-14). (Fig. 1) They hid the coffin in a shed while searching for someone who could take care of it, but in vain. They then brought the coffin further up along the river and buried it in secret on a sand bank by the river. By all accounts, this total defeat should have been the end of the story of King Olav. Even though most participants on both sides were Christian, in Norwegian historiography this battle symbolizes the end of the pagan Viking Age and the beginning of the Christian Middle Ages, even though the Christianization was a gradual process stretching over several generations.

Olav's death and sainthood is recorded in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, indicating that the news spread quickly (Garmonsway 1953: 157). The Norwegian magnates expected to retain their large degree of self-rule with a distant king in England or Denmark, but instead Cnut installed his young son Svend (*c.* 1016–35) and his English mother Ælfgifu of Northampton as rulers of Norway. They soon managed to make themselves as unpopular as Olav had been in his time as king, and, according to the sagas, the Norwegian magnates soon regretted their deal with Cnut and began looking for a way out.

The first phase: From the translation of Olav in 1031 to the establishment of Nidaros Archbishopric in 1152/53

Soon after Olav's death, rumours began to swirl about miraculous healings connected to the body of the dead king. During the following year, these rumours grew so strong that in the summer of 1031 the powerful magnate Einar Tambarskjelve and Bishop Grimkell went to Trondheim and received King Svend's permission to open Olav's grave. The Stiklestad farmers were called to Trondheim and pointed out the location of the grave, and the coffin had by then worked its way almost to the surface. The coffin was reburied by the Church of St Clement, at that time the only church in Trondheim, but soon it reappeared again, a clear sign the the king did not want to remain in the ground. The coffin was then opened by Bishop Grimkell on the 3rd of August, one year and five days after Olav's death, in the presence of King Svend, Ælfgifu, several magnates and a large crowd of people. (Fig. 2)

A wonderful odour emanated from the king's body which looked as if he had died the day before, and the king's hair and nails had grown. Bishop Grimkell cut

Fig. 2: The St Olav Altar Frontal, painted *c.*1300 in Trondheim. It depicts the passion and translation of St Olav as described in Snorri's saga of St Olav from *c.*1230. Photo: Nidaros Cathedral Restoration Workshop.

some of the hair and placed it on a fire which he had blessed and sprinkled with incense, and it emerged unscathed. This was taken as the final proof of Olav's holiness, and with the approval of King Svend and the common people Bishop Grimkell declared that King Olav was a saint. The story about the burning of the hair appears for the first time in Snorri's saga of St Olav (1979, vol 2: 116-19). However, the two oldest skaldic poems, *Glælognskviða* (see below) and *Erfidrápa*, both dated to *c.* 1035-40, mention that Olav's hair and nails had grown, so this element clearly played a role in his translation. The coffin was then brought into St Clement's Church and placed above the altar. It was covered with a costly textile called *pell*, and a canopy of even more exquisite textile called *guðvev* («divine cloth», perhaps silk) was hung above it. Next to the original gravesite, a spring of healing water emerged which cured many people of ailments (Snorri Sturluson 1979, vol. 2: 116-19).

The new saint clearly posed a challenge to the rule of Cnut and Svend, but they felt powerless to oppose it by force and chose to recognise it, perhaps in the hope of controlling it and use it to their benefit. Instead, King Svend's court skald Torarin Law-Tongue composed the poem *Glælognskviða* («The Calm Ocean Poem») where he advised Svend to pray to St Olav and and ask for his help (Snorri Sturluson 1979, vol. 2: 118). Even if he did, it was to no avail. The discontent against the king and his mother grew, and in 1035 a group of magnates went to Russia and brought St Olav's young son Magnus back from his exile and made him king of Norway. Ælfgifu and Svend fled back to England where he died shortly after, as did his father King Cnut. His successors Harold Harefoot and Harthacnut were powerless to exert their claims to the Norwegian throne during their short reigns.

The small town of Nidaros/Trondheim developed quickly and surrounded the royal residence. In the late 1040s, King Magnus (r. 1035–47) built a new residence a bit further south and moved the shrine to a new stone church dedicated to St Olav in the residence. This church was placed on the site of a shed where the saint's coffin was hidden by the farmers the night before its burial. In his turn, around 1060, the saint's half-brother King Harald the Hardruler (r. 1046–66) moved the royal residence even further south along the river Ni, and he moved the shrine to the new St Mary's Church in this residence. The year after his death in the battle at Stamford Bridge in 1066, the body of King Harald was brought back from England and buried in St Mary's Church. This church was clearly intended to become the royal burial church for his successors, but it was not to last.

Finally, around 1090, Harald's son King Olav III the Peaceful (r. 1066–93) came full circle by building a fourth church – the Christchurch which was the predecessor of the present cathedral – in the residence close to St Mary's Church. According to Snorri's saga, its altar was placed above St Olav's purported grave site (Snorri Sturluson 1979, vol. 2: 221-24). This must be a pious fraud, as the Christchurch stands on the highest point on the peninsula, far from the riverbank. But of course a large stone church could not be built close to the river, so the whole site had to be moved. The shrine was placed on a tall base behind the altar, thus creating the vertical axis of grave-altar-shrine which is also found in some other martyr shrines, e.g. the grave and shrine of St Thomas Becket at Canterbury Cathedral. Close to the altar, a 12m deep well was dug down to the river level, taking over the function as the source of healing water.

During the next century, the Christchurch was the royal mausoleum of Norway. Every 29th of July, the shrine of St Olav was carried around the town in a solemn procession. The *Passio Olavi* from *c.* 1180 describes how the procession halted on the cathedral cemetery where it according to tradition was placed on the ground (*cum processionis offitia solempniter agerentur, et in cimiterio reretrum ex more deponeretur*), perhaps marking a special location (Metcalfe 1881: 92; Jiroušková 2014, vol. 2: 53). Even if the details of the route are unknown it is highly possible that the procession reenacted the progress of the saint's body from church to church, thus keeping the memory alive. There was still no chapter attached to the cathedral, and the only monastic presence in Nidaros was the Benedictine abbey of St Lawrence founded in 1103 on a tiny island of Munkholm in the fjord (Vaughan 1993: 81-82). Unlike most English cathedrals, no Norwegian cathedrals were monastic.

The incorrupt body of St Olav was in itself the greatest proof of his sanctity, and its presence was the cathedral's greatest attraction. According to Snorri's saga from *c.*1230, first Bishop Grimkell and later King Harald the Hardruler unlocked the shrine once every year and they personally cut the saint's hair and nails, a tradition said to have lasted until 1066. According to Snorri, when Harald departed from Trondheim on his fateful expedition to England, he threw the shrine's key into the river Nið and "since then the shrine has not been opened" (Snorri Sturluson 1979, vol. 2: 206-07). There is thus no doubt that

for decades after 1031 the shrine was cared for and guarded by the royal family, and that it remained so at least until the 1120s and perhaps until the metropolitan seat was founded in 1153.

Unlike most other saints, St Olav's body was kept intact all through the Middle Ages. Cutting it up or removing parts of it would not only be sacrilege, but would also ruin some of the cathedral's attraction. In my recent study, I have not found a single reliable medieval source claiming possession of a body part of St Olav, not even a finger (Ekroll 2016: 243-297). The admittedly few preserved medieval lists of relics in Scandinavia mention only contact relics of St Olav which usually consist of fragments of his shirts or his dragon-shaped standard, both of which were kept in the cathedral as relics (Ekroll 2016: 285f).

In Norway, a country without traditions of saintly cults, the main selling point for establishing St Olav's reputation was clearly his miracles, nothing of the kind having been seen before in the country, and the early skaldic poems emphasize this aspect of the saint's work. Many of the miracles, at least the ones that were collected *c.*1180 in his *passio et miracula*, are very mundane, with the saint saving people from danger, stopping fires, healing people or giving them absolution from their sins.

St Olav also turned up in dreams and visions, helping people who prayed to him before a battle, like his son Magnus before the battle with the Wends – a Slavic tribe – at Lyrskov Heath near Hedeby in South Jutland in 1043, or his nephew Guttorm before the naval battle with the Irish king "Margod" (Murtach) in the Irish Sea in 1052 (Metcalfe 1881: 76; Jiroušková 2014, vol. 2: 32). In the battle of Beroë in 1122, St Olav appeared as a shining knight on a white horse in the battle between the Byzantines and the Pecheneg invaders, leading the Scandinavian or Varangian imperial guard to save the day for the Byzantine emperor John II Comnenus (r. 1118-43) (Metcalfe 1881: 77; Blöndal & Benedikz 1978: 148; Jiroušková 2014, vol. 2: 34f). No problem was too large or too small for the royal saint to solve.

Nordic and continental sources before c.1150

The beginning of the cult is little known. The bare facts, such as his death in battle, the secret burial, and his exhumation and translation one year later are fairly secure. The oldest known literary sources about the cult of St Olav are two skaldic poems which are dated to the decade after Olav's death (Mundal & Boje Mortensen 2003: 354). The oldest is the aforementioned *Glælognskviða* by Torarin Law-Tongue which was composed before 1035, as it adresses King Svend. In some of the stanzas, Torarin describes how the incorrupt body of the holy king rested in his coffin above the altar, with hair and nails growing. Candles lit up on the altar by themselves, and the bells rang without being touched. Also, a large number of crippled pilgrims seeking help were already visiting his shrine and went away healed.

The memorial poem *Erfidrápa Oláfs helga* ('Memorial poem for St Olav') was composed by King Olav's court skald Sigvat Tordsson *c.* 1040. Sigvat was not present at Stiklestad, as he was on a pilgrimage to Rome at the time. The poem describes how the sun disappeared when Olav was killed, how the king now rested in a golden shrine, and that many blind people regained their eyesight at his shrine. Sigvat also named one of Olav's killers: Tore Hund ('the Hound') (see Jesch 2012). The description of the "golden shrine" helps to date the poem: After Olav's son Magnus became king in 1035, his father's coffin was covered with gold and silver (Snorri Sturluson 1979, vol. 2: 131).

In the 1040s King Magnus, who was also king of Denmark 1042–47 after the death of Harthacnut, issued a series of coins in Hedeby (Gullbekk 2016: 109-43). This happened shortly after his decisive victory in the battle with the Wends at Lyrskov Heath, where St Olav appeared to his son in a vision before the battle, promising him victory, and a church bell was heard tolling, which many recognized as the bell named *Glöð* ('Glad)' which St Olav had given to the Church of St Clement in Nidaros (Snorri Sturluson 1979, vol. 2: 140). (Fig. 3)

King Magnus used Olav's axe in the battle, and this axe was later kept as a relic in Nidaros Cathedral until

Fig. 3: Coin minted in Hedeby *c.*1045 by King Magnus Olavsson 'the Good', son of St Olav. The king holding an axe might be St Olav. Photo: Svein Gullbekk, Oslo University Museum (KHM).

the Reformation, when the last archbishop Olav Engelbrektsson brought it with him into exile in the Netherlands in 1537 where it was later lost (Ekroll 2016: 249). From the middle of the thirteenth century, an axe became the attribute of St Olav, and in 1280 this axe was incorporated into the royal coat of arms of Norway. After his victory, Magnus issued coins with the probable image of his father, holding a cross-staff in one hand and an axe in the other (Gullbekk 2016: 117). If correct, these are the earliest images of St Olav.

During the following decades, there was considerable confusion about who actually killed the saint. In his *Historia Hammaburgensis ecclesiae pontificium* from *c.*1075 the cleric Adam of Bremen (*c.*1040–81) presented various theories, e.g. that Olav was killed by some sorcerers, that he was killed in battle, that he was mocked by a crowd and some sorcerers (and presumably lynched), or that he was assassinated by followers of King Cnut. Personally, Adam believed that the latter theory was the most probable (Adam of Bremen Book II: Ch. 61).

Adam was on safer ground when describing the contemporary situation: "The ecclesiastical centre of Norway is Trondheim, which today is decorated with churches that are visited by large crowds of people. There rests the body of the blessed martyr and king, Olav. At his grave the Lord today works many miracles, and therefore people come to this place from afar in the knowledge that the holy Olav can help them" (Lund 1978: 55-57). This is the first description of Trondheim as a pilgrimage town, even though Adam never went that far north but relied instead on second-hand descriptions, e.g. from King Svend Estridsen of Denmark.

Interestingly enough, Adam's narrative demonstrates that even in the lifetime of St Olav's contemporaries, a great confusion reigned about what really happened at Stiklestad beyond the bare facts. There was still no agreed-upon narrative, only confusing rumors which no one could set straight. The twelfth-century sources like Ágrip and *Historia de antiquitate regum Norwagiensium* (the surviving part of *Historia Norwegie* stops in 1015) are very sparse when it comes to details. The most comprehensive narrative of the life and death of King Olav Haraldsson/St Olav, which is still read today, was written down about two centuries after his death by the Icelander Snorri Sturluson *c.*1220–30. Snorri visited Norway around 1220 and made historical studies in preparation for his large work on the history of the Norwegian kings. The local tradition was probably still strong, especially among the cathedral clergy, and three of the four churches where the shrine of St Olav had been kept still stood when Snorri spent the winter of 1219–20 in Trondheim.

Still, the few and confused facts contained in the older written sources show that the story of St Olav's life and death as depicted by Snorri, especially his long and detailed saga of St Olav, is more a literary than historical work. Snorri built his narrative upon older sagas and poems, some of which he incorporated into, or referred to, in his text, and some of which are now lost. Much of the detailed information in the saga is, however, at best based on oral traditions, but most of it is probably the product of Snorri's literary imagination. (Fig. 4)

The English connection

Fig. 4: St Olav depicted in a thirteenth-century stained glass window from Träkumla Church on Gotland, Sweden, now in the Gotland Museum in Visby. St Olav is identified by the axe, which is his attribute. Photo: Øystein Ekroll.

But how did one establish a cult in a country almost without saints? The only cult founded in Norway before 1030 was that of the holy men at Selja, later known as St Sunniva and her followers (Ommundsen 2010: 82-89). According to Odd Monk's *Saga of King Olav Tryggvason* written *c.*1190, Sunniva was an Irish princess who stranded with her followers on the small island of Selja on the west coast north of Bergen. In 997, her incorrupt body was reportedly found in a cave on the island by King Olav Tryggvason, who built a church there (Rekdal 1997: 105-111). Around 1100, a Benedictine abbey dedicated to St Alban, a very rare dedication in Norway, was founded at Selja, and the first bishops of western Norway resided there before officially moving the bishop's seat to Bergen in 1170 (Helle 1982: 92). The 2nd century church at Åheim near Selja is dedicated to St Edmund (Norw. Jetmund), which is also an uncommon dedication in Norway, pointing to an early and strong influence from the British Isles in this area. The same strong English influence is also evident in Trondheim. The oldest written sources, e.g. *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, are very sparse, conveying only for the year 1030 that "In this year king Olaf was slain in Norway by his own people, and was afterwards canonized" (Garmonsway 1953: 157).

In England, the concept of holy kings was better established than anywhere else in Europe at this time (Hoffmann 1975: 18-58, 206-09; Folz 1984: 27-33). From the seventh to the eleventh century, several royal men and women became objects of cults. The best-known royal cults in England were those of St Edwin (616–32), St Ethelreda of Ely (d. 679), St Oswald (634–42), St Oswine (642–651), and especially St Edmund of East Anglia (*c.*858–869/70), and later St Edward the Confessor (1042–66). St Edmund was killed by Danish Vikings and his cult in Bury St Edmund was well established by the tenth century.

According to Snorri's saga of St Olav from *c.*1230, it was Bishop Grimkell who supervised the exhumation of King Olav's body and proved his sanctity by cutting off some of the king's hair and placing on a fire which he blessed and sprinkled with incense, from which it emerged unscathed. The bishop clearly knew what it took to prove a person's sanctity and how to convince people about it. By making the process of unearthing the coffin and revealing the dead king's incorrupt body, and especially making the test of burning the king's hair into a dramatic public spectacle, Grimkell made any criticism of this process invalid. In his narrative, Snorri lets Ælfgifu be the voice of doubt, saying loudly that corpses buried in sand were often well preserved, and demanding that the bishop placed the hair on the fire without blessing it. She is silenced with harsh words from Einar Tambarskjelve, perhaps fearing the result. Whether true or not, this public declaration of sainthood is a spectacular scene with few parallels in medieval history.

It can thus be assumed that it was Bishop Grimkell who formulated the ecclesiastical beginning of St Olav's cult. By doing this, he clearly drew on his English background, as the miracles of St Olav contain several elements inspired by the established English royal cults, e.g. the well or source with healing water springing out by the grave (Hoffmann 1975: 73). Sadly, the preserved written sources from this period are scarce, even in England. The close resemblance between these royal saints and Christ, which is a recurring theme in the English hagiography, also became an important theme in the cult of St Olav (Hoffmann 1975: 76, 79). The written sources indicate that Bishop Grimkell of Sussex had close contact with several of the aristocrats who founded churches in England dedicated to St Olav.

The cult of St Olav spread quickly in England. The oldest preserved liturgical sources pertaining to the cult are found in England, consisting of an office and litanies written down before 1072. This text is preserved in the *Leofric Collectar* (BL Harley MS 2961, 123r – 126r), named after Bishop Leofric of Exeter (1047–72) who had close contact with the highest circles in England. It is highly possible that Grimkell was the intermediary between Norway and England, conveying his knowledge of the holy king and his miracles to his fellow bishops in southern England. In addition to Sussex, for a short period Grimkell was also the bishop of East Anglia where Bury St Edmunds is situated, so he had first-hand knowledge of the cult of St Edmund and could draw upon its sources (Hoffmann 1975: 79).

In the *Exeter Pontifical* (BL Cotton Vitellius A. vii) from *c.*1060, St Olav has been added at the end of the list of martyrs, and an eleventh-century psalter from Exeter (BL Harley 863) contains a litany in which St Olav is invoked (Dickins 1940: 56). The "Red Book of Darley" (CCC MS 422), written *c.*1061 at Sherbourne Abbey in Dorset, includes in its calendar the feast *S.Olaui* and provides a votive mass of St Olav (Dickins 1940: 57). In London, at least four, possibly six, churches were dedicated to him. All of them seem to be early foundations, e.g. St Olave in Southwark is mentioned in 1085 and St Olave in Hart Street possibly in 1109 (Dickins 1940:

64-68). St Olave Exeter existed by 1063 and St Olave in Chester by 1101 (Dickins 1940: 69f).

An additional point that connects Olav to Edmund is that the Danes were behind the murders of both kings. Cnut the Great had recently made atonement for the part his forefathers played in the murder of St Edmund by building a new church in Bury St Edmund, and it was claimed that the early death of his father Svend Forkbeard was the saint's revenge (Licence 2014). Now Cnut was cast in the role as the force behind the murder of another king who turned out to be a saint.

This brings us right into the most powerful families in the late Anglo-Saxon period. Earl Godwin of Wessex was the most powerful earl in England, and he and his wife Gyða were the parents of Queen Edith, married to King Edward the Confessor. King Edward also made donations to build a St Olav church in England, but its location is disputed. Godwin and Gyða had at least five sons, among them Edward's successor Harold Godwinson and Earl Tostig Godwinson.

Countess Gyða was Danish-born, the daughter of the magnate Thorgil/Thorkell Sprakling and the sister of Earl Ulf who was married to Estrid, the sister of Cnut the Great. They were the parents of King Svend Estridsen of Denmark (1047–76). In 1026, King Cnut had his brother-in-law Ulf murdered in Roskilde in Denmark, an act which did not endear him to Gyða.

In 1053, Bishop Leofric attested a donation letter by Countess Gyða for building a church in Exeter dedicated to *Sancti Olavi regis et martiris*, for the benefit of the souls of her husband Earl Godwin of Wessex (d. 1053) and herself.

Around 1050, Earl Siward or Sigeweard of Northumbria, the second most powerful earl in England at the time, built a church dedicated to St Olav in York and he was buried in this church in 1055. In addition to the St Olav churches in the City of London, before the end of the eleventh century there were churches dedicated to him in Southwark, York, Chester, Exeter and Norwich. Apart from St Edmund, I doubt that there were other contemporary saints who attracted the same immediate following as St Olav. The cult of St Olav also spread early to Ireland. By 1074, relics of St Olav's vestments were kept in Christchurch Cathedral in Dublin (Dickins 1940: 71). In this Norse-Hibernian city there was also an early St Olav church by the harbour, a common location for many St Olav churches.

This shows that within one generation after his death, the cult of St Olav was established in the highest circles in England, which still had close family ties to the Nordic royal houses. One interesting question is why a king who was an adversary of King Cnut, and was killed by Cnut's allies, could become so popular in these circles?

In a 2005 paper, Matthew Townend argues that the cult of Olav was actually promoted by Cnut and his son Svend: "(…) in other words, it looks like a centrally agreed policy and suggests strongly that the early promotion of Óláfr's cult took place precisely because of the Danish occupiers of Norway rather than in spite of them" (Townend 2005: 265f). Townend also sees the speed with which the cult was successfully established in the late Anglo-Saxon England as the best evidence that Cnut and his dynasty purposefully supported the cult of St Olav (Townend 2005: 266), and that the Anglo-Danish dynasty attempted to take control of the cult and make it serve their own interest (Townend 2005: 273). In a way, this was a strategy of 'if you can't beat them, join them' or 'riding the tiger'. Perhaps they believed that the interest in St Olav would soon recede and remain a local cult without political significance. The author does admit, however, that this is only a hypothesis, as the evidence for a cult of St Olav in England before 1035 is only circumstantial (Townend 2005: 266).

I will argue that this hypothesis is wrong, and that the preserved evidence can be interpreted differently. There is no doubt that King Svend was at first reluctantly forced to accept the fact that Olav was made a saint, and to live with it as best he could. Initially, no one could imagine the speed with which the cult would spread and the success it would enjoy. Cnut and his family might at first have tried to control and contain the cult, but by 1035 both Cnut and Svend were dead, and the successors Harold Harefoot and Harthacnut were weak kings with short reigns. After the death of King Harthacnut in 1042 the Danish dynasty lost its grip on England, and Edward the Confessor, son of King Æthelred, became king. There was no love lost between the two dynasties: Edward's wife Edith was the daughter of Earl Godwin and Gyða, and Cnut had ordered the murder of Earl Ulf, Gyða's brother.

In my view, it is possible to interpret the rapid spread of the cult of St Olav in England in an opposite way: The oldest surviving evidence for the cult of St Olav in England dates to the reign of King Edward between 1042 and 1066. The re-established Anglo-Saxon dynasty consciously promoted St Olav as a royal saint and martyr, dedicating churches to him, as a way of demonstrating a distance from, and

opposition to, the Danish royal house, building up a resistance against their return to power in England. Before 1013, King Olav/St Olav had faithfully served Æthelred as a mercenary in his struggle against the Danish invaders, and had escorted his wife and sons to safety in Normandy, a fact King Edward was sure to remember (Norsk Biografisk Leksikon X: 376).

The killing of St Olav could ultimately be blamed on King Cnut, just as his ancestors were blamed for the murders of King Edmund in 869 and Archbishop Ælfheah in 1012, casting the shadow of regicide and sacrilege over his descendants. St Olav's son Magnus became king of Norway in 1035, and he was also king of Denmark from 1042 until his early death in 1047. By promoting the cult of Magnus's father, a bond was created between England and Norway which could replace the Danish connection.

Bishop Grimkell was a vital intermediate in establishing the bond between England and Norway. In 1046 he returned to Norway to mediate between King Magnus and his uncle Harald Sigurdsson, who had returned with a great treasure from Constantinople and now demanded to become king of Norway. According to Theodricus Monachus, *c.*1180, Grimkell and his old ally from 1031, the magnate Einar Tambarskjelve, negotiated a truce whereby Harald received half the kingdom in exchange for one half of his treasure (Storm 1880: 54; Kraggerud 2018: 104-07). This power-sharing was also in the English interest. A successful deal would hopefully defuse the danger of a Norwegian invasion of England which Magnus had been planning earlier, even writing to King Edward and demanding the throne, or he would invade England from Norway and Denmark. *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* says that in 1045 "King Edward gathered great naval force at Sandwich because of the threathened invasion of Magnus of Norway" (Garmonsway 1953: 165; Snorri Sturluson 1979, vol. 2: 150). Twenty years later, that was exactly what King Harald attempted, with catastrophic results.

The Norman invasion of England in 1066, which led to the annihilation of much of the Anglo-Saxon culture, might also have meant that St Olav was replaced by other saints and forgotten, but this does not seem to be the case. One must remember, however, that the Norman dukes were close kin to the Nordic royal families, and that William the Conqueror's grandfather Duke Richard II (r. 996–1026) was the host of St Olav at his baptism by Richard's brother, Archbishop Robert, in Rouen in 1014. It is possible that the duke even was his godfather. This information is provided in the chronicles of William of Jumièges and Dudo of Saint-Quentin.

Establishing the metropolitan seat of Trondheim

From the missionary period until 1104, Norway was a remote corner of the huge archdiocese of Bremen/Hamburg which encompassed the whole of Scandinavia. When the new archdiocese of Lund was carved out of Bremen/Hamburg in 1104, encompassing all the Nordic or Norse-speaking countries, this situation did not improve much. The fledgling Nordic archdiocese of Lund had more than enough problems establishing its independence from Bremen, which strived to reverse this development. Norway was mostly left alone, and no preserved sources indicate that any archbishop from Bremen or Lund ever visited Norway. By the early twelfth century, the church in Norway was still wholly dependent on the monarchy for its subsistence and protection, and the bishops had no independent income or permanent residences. Instead, they were largely a part of the royal entourage moving around the kingdom.

It was only with the introduction of the tithe in the 1120s that the Norwegian church obtained an independent income and economy. From this time onwards the bishops settled permanently by the cathedrals that were built in this period, and began building up an ecclesiastical organisation. This development was completed in 1152/53 when the English-born Cardinal Nicholas Brekespere arrived in Nidaros with the papal mandate of establishing two new archbishoprics, in Norway and in Sweden respectively. The seat of the Norwegian archbishopric was located in the northern town of Trondheim/Nidaros rather than the larger and more centrally situated towns of Bergen or Oslo, no doubt because of the presence of St Olav's relics in Trondheim. This act finally created an independent ecclesiastical centre of gravity in Norway, and it marked that the country had become integrated in the European Christian world, with Nidaros as the northernmost cathedral on the European mainland.

The establishment of the Nidaros church province was a pivotal moment for the cult of St Olav, whose grave and shrine became the centre of gravity around which the liturgical life of the metropolitan cathedral turned. The metropolitan seat came to Trondheim because of St Olav, but this also gave a great boost to the cult in turn. Within two generations from 1153, the cult of St Olav was much expanded and developed, and brought even more into line with other royal cults which at this time developed in several European countries. In addition to liturgy, music and hagiography, an architectural aspect was also included. A stable monarchy was established in 1161 by

Earl Erling Skakke ("the Tilt-headed") who made his young son Magnus king, and in close cooperation with Archbishop Eystein the two men helped create a period of peace in the country, as well as a period of unparalleled creativity in the newly established archiepiscopal seat at Nidaros.

The new metropolitan seat also needed its own historical narrative, and during the next decades several historical works were created in order to establish the Norwegian church as a part of the wider European christendom. However, the early confusion about the exact facts surrounding Olav's death that we see in Adam of Bremen's work was also evident in Trondheim a century later. The *Passio Olavi*, which was compiled and edited by Archbishop Eystein *c.*1170/80, claims that Olav was killed at Stiklestad on Wednesday the 28th of July, 1028 (sic!) but provides no further details of his death and translation (Metcalfe 1881: 73; Jiroušková 2014, vol. 2: 29).

About the same time, the cathedral canon Theodricus Monachus wrote his *Historia de antiquitate regum Norwagiensium* ("History of the ancient Norwegian kings") which he dedicated to Archbishop Eystein. Theodricus provides few new details. St Olav was killed in a battle at Stiklestad, but Theodricus is not certain by whom, or how many wounds the king received. Only one of the king's adversaries, Tore Hund ("the Hound") is mentioned by name, indicating that Theodricus knew Sigvat's poem *Erfidrápa*. Theodricus dates the battle to Wednesday the 29th of July, 1029 (Storm 1880: 39; Kraggerud 2018: 76-77).

Another work of history known by its modern name *Ágrip* ("Excerpt"), which was written in Trondheim *c.*1190–1200, states only that Olav was killed by three men in a battle at Stiklestad in 1029 (Koht 1950: 50-53). A third work, the *Historia Norwegie* from *c.*1165-75 breaks off its narrative with Olav Haraldsson's return to Norway in 1015 (Ekrem & Boje Mortensen 2003: 224). Likewise, the poem *Noregs konungatal* from *c.*1190, which contains the genealogy of the Norwegian kings, only states that Olav was killed at Stiklestad (Salvesen 1990: 10).

After the founding of the new archbishopric, the old Christchurch was far too small, and during the next decades the cathedral was greatly expanded with new transepts and an aisled nave, so that the old church now became only the eastern arm of a cross-shaped, *c.* 82m long Romanesque cathedral (Harrison 2012: 106f). This was built in the Anglo-Norman style, designed by an English master-builder and probably built by English stone masons, showing that England was still the near abroad. According to a later tradition written down *c.*1230, the main altar of the new cathedral kept its place above the saint's grave (Snorri Sturluson 1979, vol. 2: 117-19).

In 1180, this active period ended when the political tables turned and Archbishop Eystein decided to go into exile. He went to England and was well received by King Henry II, who gave him financial support. From August 1181 until the summer of 1182 Eystein stayed in the abbot's house at Bury St Edmunds, as the position was vacant at the time and its income was thus in the hands of the king. He then moved to Lincoln where the position of bishop was also vacant, and stayed there for 168 days until early 1183 when a new bishop was appointed (Johnsen 1955: 134-37). Eystein was thus in an excellent position to study the cult of St Edmund at close range. The best-preserved copy of *Passio Olavi*, now in the library of Corpus Christi College in Oxford derives from the library of Fountains Abbey, indicating that the archbishop also spent a period here (Metcalfe 1881: 1; Jiroušková 2014, vol. 1: 238-240). Fountains Abbey had a daughter house at Lyse near Bergen (Clara Vallis, founded 1146) and thus had close connections to Norway (Metcalfe 1881: 3).

The second phase: Developing the cult after 1153 until *c.* 1220

As a part of the celebrations in 1153, the Icelandic priest and poet Einarr Skúlason was commissioned to compose a long poem about the glory of St Olav, which he performed in Christchurch Cathedral in the presence of the new archbishop and the three young kings sharing the throne at the time, Inge, Sigurd and Eystein, all sons of King Harald IV Gilchrist with three different women. The poem is today known as *Geisli*, which translates as "sunbeam" or "ray of light" (Ødegård 1982: 28-82), thus indicating one important theme in the St Olav cult: His *imitatio Christi* or similarity with Christ, especially the parallel between their passions and miracles: The eclipse of the sun when both died, Olav healing a blind man and giving a mute back his voice, and the light shining above the dead king's body (Hoffmann 1975: 69). Einarr also described other miracles of St Olav taking place right up to his own time, dwelling at length on the two battle miracles in Ireland in 1052 (verse 31-34) and especially at Beroë in 1122 (verse 43-56). When the recital ended, the cathedral was filled with a wonderful odour – a sign that the saint was present

and approved of the poem (Ødegård 1982: 22).

The poem, the occasion, and the staging marked the point of departure not only for the new archbishopric, but also for a new phase in the cult of St Olav. From this stage, the driving force behind the cult seems to be the elite, and it bears the marks of a planned project. This seems to be a common trait of early royal cults (Pinner 2015: 9, 14). In the three next decades, during the reign of the forceful Archbishop Eystein from 1157 to 1188, the cult of St Olav was consciously created and developed. The seal of the newly established cathedral chapter depicts St Olav enthroned, holding a scepter and orb, but not yet the axe which later became his attribute. The seal's legend says that it belonges to the 'chapter of the church of St Olav king and martyr', even though the cathedral was dedicated to the Holy Trinity and was commonly called the Christchurch. (Fig. 5)

The archbishop created political room for maneuvering by allying himself with Earl Erling Skakke who, after the three kings had finally managed to kill each other, placed his own infant son Magnus

Fig. 5: Matrix and impression of the Nidaros Cathedral chapter seal from *c.*1200 or slightly earlier, depicting St Olav enthroned holding a scepter and orb. The seal's legend reads: SIGILL. CAPITVLI ECLIE SCI OLAVI REGIS ET MARTIRIS (Seal of the chapter the church of St Olav king and martyr). Photo: Nidaros Cathedral Restoration Workshop.

on the throne in 1161. Earl Erling was married to Kristin, the daughter of King Sigurd the Crusader, but this did not give their son the required legitimacy. According to the old law of royal succession, only male offspring of kings could become kings, no matter if they were born in wedlock or not.

This delicate problem was solved by forging an alliance between the archbishop and the earl, with the Church backing Magnus. The archbishop introduced a new law of royal succession tailored to fit Magnus, cast in the mould of other European laws of succession (Gunnes 1996: 112: 21; Imsen 2012: 24). The new law first stated that there could only be one single king, secondly that a royal candidate must be fitted for the job, and thirdly but most importantly: the candidate must be born in wedlock. The law stated that he must be a king's son, but by then Magnus was already king, so the law would only affect his offspring.

The archbishop cemented this agreement by crowning Magnus in Bergen in 1164, the first ever coronation in Scandinavia, all in the effort to provide Magnus with the required legitimacy. (Fig. 6)

In his turn, in his coronation oath, which was probably formulated by Archbishop Eystein, Magnus swore loyalty to the pope and the Church. When he came of age, Magnus issued a letter of privileg-

Fig. 6: The reliquary from St Thomas of Canterbury's Church at Filefjell, Central Norway. It forms part of a small group of reliquaries from Norway, Iceland and Sweden which are small-size imitations of the large Shrine of St Olav in Nidaros Cathedral. Photo: Bergen University Museum.

es for the archbishop. Here he promises to take his kingdom in fief from St Olav, becoming the royal saint's vassal and knight, and as a visual proof of this allegiance he will sacrifice his crown on the saint's altar in Nidaros Cathedral (Vandvik 1959: 62-63; Gunnes 1996: 121-21). St Olav now became *Rex perpetuum Norvegiae* – the eternal king of Norway – an expression first found in the *Historia Norwegie* from the mid-twelfth century (Gunnes 1996: 121). The archbishop also received wide-ranging privileges for the Church, which gave him a large income and free hands to build up his own power-base. The earl quickly made every possible new claimant to the throne a head shorter, thus creating a most welcome period of peace for most people and the Church.

All the preserved evidence indicates that this was a top-down process instigated and driven by the old secular elite, who now sought to extend their power by filling the positions of bishops, canons and abbots with family members, rather than a popular movement (Mortensen 2010: 212).

During the next decades a liturgy of St Olav was developed, including a new office of St Olav, a new church law, and a canonical law (*Canones Nidrosienses*) for the archdiocese. The life, passion and miracles of St Olav were collected and edited by Archbishop Eystein in the *Passio et miracula beati Olavi*, a work which was completed by 1180. In much of this work, a strong influence from Augustinian liturgy and theology is easily spotted, and the Augustinian role in the creation of the cult was vital (Hankeln 2012: 135-149). Archbishop Eystein was himself an Augustinian, as were his two immediate successors Ivar and Tore who studied at St Victor's Abbey in Paris (Gunnes 1996: 49).

The upper chapel in the cathedral's south transept was in the 1160s jointly dedicated to St Olav and St Stephen *protomartyris*, thus connecting Olav with the first Christian martyr. The implication is that Olav was a Norwegian protomartyr, thus linking the founding of the Norwegian church to the early Christian church and Jerusalem.

The direct spiritual connection between Trondheim and the Holy Land at this time was also demonstrated by the creation of painted images of St Olav and St Cnut the King on adjoining columns in the Holy Nativity Church in Bethlehem *c.*1150–60. The image of St Olav is identified by the painted inscription «SCS OLAUUS REX NORWEGIE» (Folda 2008: 54; Kühnel 1988: 112-25). Interestingly, this is the oldest extant undisputed image of St Olav, located at the opposite end of the Christian world in the twelfth century. At the feet of the saint a woman kneels, who was surely the donor of the painting. She is not identified, but she might be Kristin, daughter of King Sigurd the Crusader and mother of King Magnus Erlingsson. Her husband Earl Erling took part in a large Norwegian crusading expedition to the Holy Land in 1153–55, and Kristin was not the kind of woman who waited paitently at home for his eventual return. (Fig. 7)

Fig. 7: The image of "SCS OLAUUS REX NORWEGIE", painted *c.*1150-60 on a column in the nave of the Nativity Church in Bethlehem. Photo of a drawing by Taddeus Richter *c.*1930, in Lidén 1997.

1150 – 1200: The age of holy kings

The promotion of the cult of St Olav in Norway after 1153 did not take place in a vacuum. All over Northern Europe, the 1160s was a ground-breaking period for the cults of holy kings. After the translation of St Olav in 1031, only two kings were declared as saints for more than a century. The first was St Stephen of Hungary (*c.* 975-1038) who was canonized in 1083. The second was St Cnut the King of Denmark, who was murdered in 1086 in St Alban's Church in Odense (see Hope in this volume). His body was translated in 1095 and he was formally canonized in 1101. His shrine was moved to a new church nearby, the present cathedral, which was dedicated to him. This cathedral was also a Benedictine abbey church, the only monastic cathedral in Scandinavia (Johannsen 2001: 8-36).

The new spate of royal saints began in England, when King Edward the Confessor who had died in 1066 was canonized in 1161 and then enshrined and translated by King Henry II in 1163. Then followed, in quick succession, the relics of the Holy Three Kings (the Magi), which Emperor Frederick Barbarossa took as war booty in Milan in 1162 and gave to Cologne Cathedral in 1164. Their cult immediately caught on, and the creation of a splendid new shrine for their bones began. In 1165, Emperor Charlemag-

ne was canonized in nearby Aachen, and a temporary shrine was made for his bones in his palatine church. Between 1190 and 1215, a new splendid shrine for his relics was executed.

In Scandinavia, King Erik Jedvardsson of Sweden was murdered at Uppsala in 1160, and he was regarded as a holy man soon after, certainly by 1198. In 1169, Duke Cnut Lavard, who was murdered in 1131 and was the father of king Valdemar the Great of Denmark, was canonized. The following year his relics were enshrined in Ringsted Abbey in Zeeland which also became the royal Danish burial church for the next two centuries (see Petersen in this volume).

The formalization of the cult of St Olav in the decades after 1153 formed a part of the same wave. St Olav became a part of this group of royal saints in the western, northern and eastern fringe of Europe, which also included St Wenceslas (Václav) of Bohemia and St Ladislaus (Lázló) of Hungary. The former was murdered in 929 or 935 and was made a saint shortly after, while St Ladislaus (1046-1095) was canonized in 1192 and can be regarded as the conclusion of the "new wave".

Nidaros becomes St Olav's town

The construction of the cult of St Olav was not limited to liturgy and literature, or the rebuilding of the cathedral. The town and its surroundings were also included in this build-up. Between 1103 and the 1160s, three abbeys were founded right outside this small town, towards the north, east and south. Next to the cathedral, a St Mary's hospital for pilgrims was established before 1180, as we see from a miracle that took place there, which is listed in *Passio Olavi*. During the second half of the twelfth century an urban infrastructure was established, with a long wooden bridge across the river Nið giving travelers a safe access to the town from the east.

On the hill south-west of the town, in the area where travelers from the south first set his or her eyes on the cathedral, in 1179 a location is mentioned called *Feginsbrekka*, which is a Norse translation of the Latin *Mons Gaudi* or Mountjoy (Karl Jónsson 1979: Ch. 35). This name is also found in similar locations outside other important pilgrim sites like Rome, Jerusalem and Santiago, and it gives at least an indication of the scope of the ambitions of the new archbishopric, including a consciousness of being the northernmost Christian center of pilgrimage in Christendom, on a par with Santiago in the south-west and Jerusalem in the south-east.

The Holy Land and Jerusalem played an important part in theological thinking in the twelfth century, and also in Nidaros. The conscious theological pairing of St Olav first with St Stephen and then with Christ was clearly inspired through direct contact with the Holy Land. The *inventio* of the relics of St Stephen is the 3rd of August, which is also the *translatio* of St Olav. In addition to the two large seaborne crusading expeditions of 1108-11 and 1153-55, numerous individuals and smaller groups left Norway for the Holy Land between 1099 and 1187, returning with strong impressions and new inspiration. Even though most of the material is lost, one surviving visual expression of this contact is the paintings of the royal saints Olav of Norway and Cnut of Denmark on two columns in the nave of the Nativity Church in Bethlehem, dated to *c.* 1150-60 (Kühnel 1988: 116).

Based on the few surviving sources, it is possible to suggest that the development of Trondheim during the second half of the twelfth century was modeled on other pilgrimage towns, and possibly even on Jerusalem itself. We see one example of how important Jerusalem was as a symbol in the contemporary thinking when the pretender to the throne Sverre, claiming to be the son of King Sigurd Munn, took up the struggle against King Magnus and Archbishop Øystein in 1177. Sverre claimed that St Olav and the prophet Samuel had appeared in his dreams. In the first dream, St Olav gave Sverre his battle standard, i.e. making him his heir, telling him to continue his struggle, and in the second dream Samuel told Sverre he was sent by God and anointed Sverre's hands, telling him God would be on his side (Karl Jónsson 1979: Ch. 5 & 10).

Sverre was trained as a priest and knew his Bible. In 1182/83 he founded a castle on a steep cliff on the hill near Feginsbrekka and named it Zion after King David's castle near Jerusalem. Sverre clearly cast himself as a new David, and consequently King Magnus and Archbishop Øystein were branded as King Saul and the prophet Samuel, i.e. an anointed king who was eventually deserted by God and a prophet who had made a grave mistake by anointing Saul before ultimately anointing David. Using the Bible this way could not happen in a vacuum, but rather in an environment where at least the elite would be familiar with the symbolic meaning of these actions and locations.

The crowning glory: St Olav's octagon at Nidaros

The keystone in the shaping of the cult of St Olav was the construction, *c.*1200, of a new part of the cathedral around the high altar with grave and shrine of the saint (Ekroll 2015). It was designed as an octagon with a central room, an ambulatory and three small

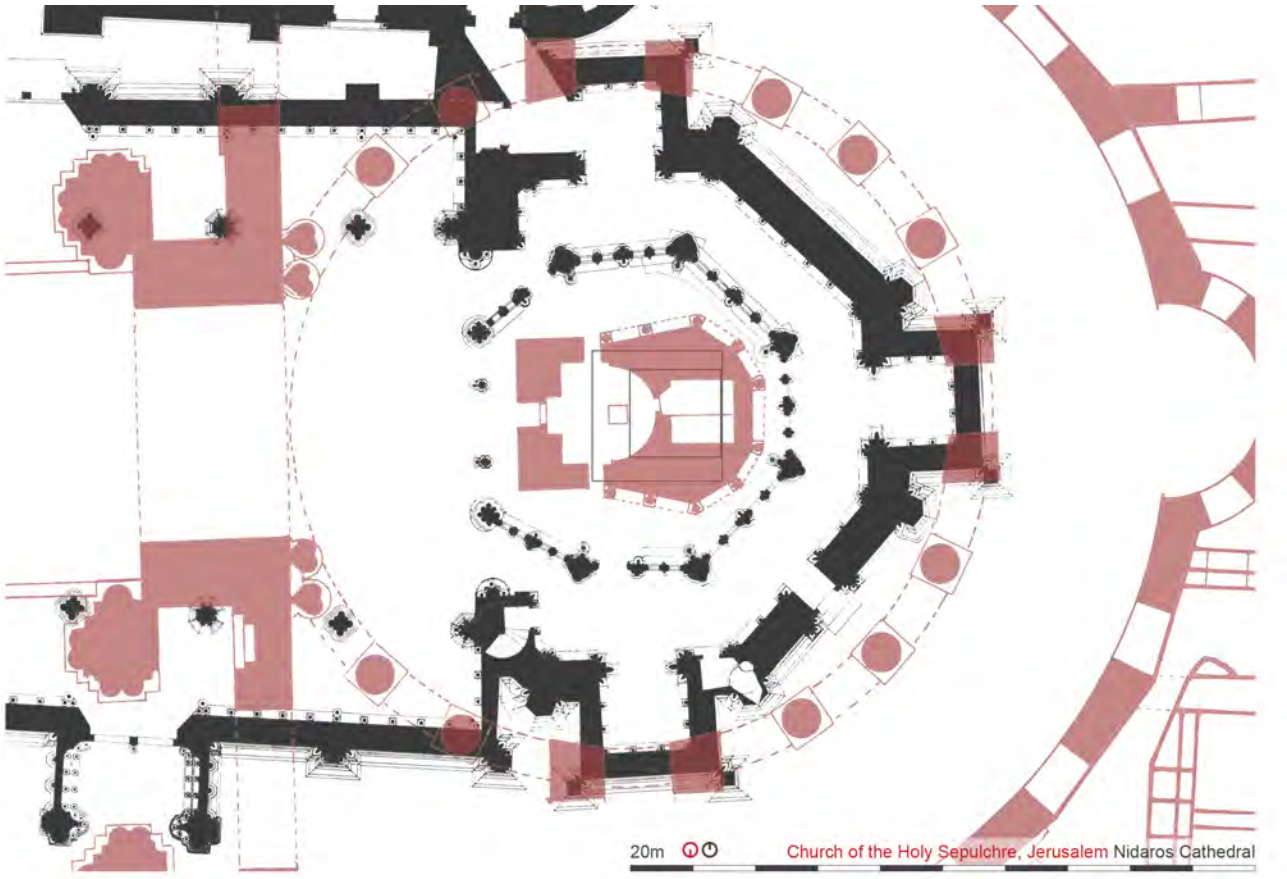

Fig. 8: The ground plan of the central room of the Holy Sepulchre Church rotunda (red) interpolated on the ground plan of the Nidaros Octagon (black). The external diameter of the Nidaros ambulatory is identical with the external diameter of the Jerusalem arcade. Graphics: Samuel Billaud Feragen.

protruding rooms which perhaps served as chapels. The ambulatory walls are richly decorated with elements inspired by Classical architecture, like astragal and kymation borders, dentils, acanthus borders, palmetto borders, laurels, and variations of Ionic capitals. The octagon was the crowning element of the Romanesque cathedral, marking its completion but also heralding the introduction of the Gothic architecture. During the thirteenth century, most of the old Christchurch was rebuilt in the Gothic style.

The ultimate inspiration for the design of the octagon was clearly buildings with a centralized plan in twelfth-century Jerusalem, especially the Rotunda of the Holy Sepulcher Church, but also the Dome of the Rock which the Crusaders believed to be the Temple of Solomon. During the twelfth century, a group of round or polygonal churches more or less directly inspired by these two buildings were built in Europe, e.g. the Temple Church in London or the round Church in Cambridge, and the Nidaros Cathedral Octagon is affiliated with this group.

Most importantly, the octagon visually demonstrates the connection between St Olav and Christ. By comparing the ground plans of the octagon and the central part of the Holy Sepulchre Rotunda, it is clear that at least one vital Jerusalem measurement was known and employed when setting out the ground plan of the octagon: The external diameter of the octagon ambulatory wall is identical with the internal diameter of the arcade in the Holy Sepulchre Rotunda, which was the easiest measurement to take in this building (Ekroll 2015: Fig. 167). The external diameter of the nave of the Temple Church in London seems to be identical with the Nidaros Octagon. Also, the position of the purported grave site of St Olav in the Octagon and the Tomb of Christ in the Rotunda converge surprisingly well, as neither is placed in the centre-point of the buildings, but both are situated a little off-centre (Ekroll 2015: Fig. 168). Whether these measurements were transmitted through pilgrims going to Jerusalem, or perhaps through intermediates like Augustinian canons, remains an open question that will probably never be fully answered (Ekroll 2015: 326-28). (Fig. 8)

Conclusion

King Olav Haraldsson's violent death in battle in 1030 looked like the conclusion of a total failure. However, his translation in 1031 turned out to be the start of an enormous success. Apart from the religious aspect, his cult had a political aspect from day one, and it was consciously used as a means of breaking the Danish influence and King Cnut's hold on Norway. In my view, the same can be said for Anglo-Saxon England, where the promotion of St Olav by the country's elite in the 1040s and '50s can be interpreted in an anti-Danish political context. In Norway, the sources are very meagre, but the cult seems to have been in the hands of the kings who promoted St Olav as a dynastic saint. The Christchurch which was built above his gravesite became the royal mausoleum until *c.*1200, with the royal graves surrounding the saint's shrine.

When the new archbishopric of Nidaros was established in 1153, the archbishops and the Church consciously developed the cult of St Olav in liturgy as well as in historiography and hagiography, in close cooperation with the new royal dynasty which were made vassals of St Olav as the eternal king of Norway. This was done in tandem with the large-scale rebuilding of the cathedral which culminated in the construction of the octagonal high choir around the high altar and shrine of St Olav. The choice of an octagon with a centralized plan was undoubtedly consciously made as an imitation of buildings in Jerusalem, especially the Holy Sepulcher Church and the Dome of the Rock, underlining the Christ-like nature of St Olav which became a recurring theme in his hagiography and iconography.

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Notes

[1] The third period lasted from *c.*1220 to 1380 when Norway was united with Denmark under a joint king, and the fourth phase lasted from 1380 until the Lutheran Reformation in 1537. Discussing these two phases as well would demand far more space than is available here.

[2] This daring exploit is only known from Nordic sources, especially a Skaldic poem by Ottar Svarte which Snorri Sturluson partly incorporated in his saga of St Olav from *c.*1230 and the *Historia Norwegie* from *c.*1165-75. It is, however, not mentioned in *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, which has led many authors to assume it is fictious.

[3] Rodulf/Rudolf later became abbot of Abingdon, and manuscript C of *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (British Museum, Cotton MS. Tiberius B iv) probably derives from Abingdon. This is the only version stating that after his death Olav was made a saint.

[4] The main facts about the life of Olav Haraldsson are found in Snorri Sturluson's saga of St Olav in *The Sagas of the Norwegian Kings (*also known as *Heimskringla)* written *c.*1230, but most of the details in this saga are probably literary inventions by Snorri and carry little or no historical value.

[5] The poem was probably longer, but only the section about St Olav has survived.

[6] Matthew Paris reformed the abbey in 1248 and wrote in his *Chronica majora* that it was originally founded by King Cnut the Great as a parallel to St Benet's of Holme, Norfolk. If so, it was soon abandoned (Vaughan 1993: 81).

[7] The tithe was introduced in the 1120s, giving the bishops a regular and independent income. It seems that at this time, the Christchurch was given over to the bishop and became a proper cathedral. Around 1120, King Øystein Magnusson built a new church dedicated to St Nicholas in the royal residence, and I regard this fact as an indication that the Christchurch was no longer a royal church. In that case, the bishops now became the guardians of the saint's shrine. The evidence is circumstantial, but the historical facts fit with this hypothesis.

[8] Adam of Bremen, *Historia* .., Book IV, Ch. 33: «*Metropolis civitas Nortmannorum est Trondemnis, quae nunc decorata ecclesiis magna populorum frequentia celebratur. In qua iacet corpus beatissimi Olaph regis et martyris. Ad cuius tumbam usque in hodiernum diem maxima Dominus operatur sanitatum miracula, ita ut a longinquis regionibus confluant hii, qui se meritis sancti non desperant [posse] iuvari*». Author's translation from Latin into English.

[9] This is found in BL MS Cotton Tiberius B I. The text reads *Her wæs Olaf king ofslagen on Norwegon of his agenum folce, 7 wæs sy***ðð an** *halig*. This means that Olaf was declared a saint, which at this point in history was done by episcopal proclamation and established by a translation. Garmonsway's rendition of *wæs sy***ðð an** *halig* as "canonized" is therefore incorrect.

[10] The other sons were Gyrth, Leofwine and Wulfnoth.

[11] «*..in præsentia Grimkelli episcopi, Einars thambaskelmis et aliorum multorum principum*»

[12] Lund lies in the province of Scania which until 1658 was a part of the kingdom of Denmark.

[13] The two Icelandic episcopal seats at Hólar and Skálholt, which formed part of the archdiocese of Nidaros, were situated further

to the north. Both cathedrals were wooden churches.

[14] The eclipse of the sun took place on the 31st of August, 1030, a month after the presumed date of the battle, but in popular memory the battle and the eclipse were soon merged.

[15] Unfortunately, the translator does not provide the reference for this information.

[16] Text of the seal legend: «SIGILLVM CAPITVLI ECCLESIE SANCTI OLAWI REGIS ET MARTIRIS». The bronze matrix is exhibited in the Archbishop's Palace Museum, Trondheim

[17] The dedicatory inscription is carved on the east wall of the chapel. The full, unabbreviated text reads: «*Nonas ianuarii consecratio huius altaris in honore sancti Stephani protomartyris et sancti Olavi de quorum reliquiis habetur in altari cum compore domini*».

[18] The glimpses that the sagas give of her life leave the impression of a highly independent woman. She was closely connected to the royal families in Norway as well as Denmark, being the first cousin of King Valdemar the Great. She had several husbands and multiple lovers, and according to the saga she finally eloped with a young lover to Constantinople in the 1170s.

[19] I am grateful to Mr. Eirik Steenhoff for pointing out this fact to me.

[20] The available ground plans of the Temple Church are not quite consistent, so this hypothesis ought to be tested by a new and more accurate survey.

Gustav Vasa and the Erikmas in Uppsala. A question of the source for political symbolic value[1]

By Henrik Ågren

Introduction

This article examines religious and political cultural heritage in sixteenth-century Sweden. It focuses on the symbolism that lay behind the choice of location and date when King Gustav Vasa during the early years of his reign held meetings with his subjects to discuss questions like the future of Swedish monasteries (Staf 1935: 68–69) or new taxes (Staf 1935: 83–84). This is best understood from the concept "realms of memory" (*lieux de mémoire*), coined by the French historian Pierre Nora. This term refers to symbols and artefacts evocative of the past, which provide a sense of shared belonging and identity. Originally, the concept primarily referred to specific geographical locations, but any type of object can function as a realm of memory. As examples from France, Nora mentions Joan of Arc, the Royal Court and the Eiffel Tower (Nora 1996: xvii). The present article is concerned with three such realms from medieval and early modern Sweden: the church village of Old Uppsala,[2] Sweden's only royal saint, King Erik Jedvardsson († 1160) and the ceremonies of his feast day, 18th of May. The argument is that among these three realms of memory, the latter two were the most important for supporting a king's symbolical status in front of his people, even though that is not the inevitable interpretation.

Fig. 1: Gustav Vasa, painting by Jacob Bink, 1542. Uppsala University art collection. Photo: Mikael Wallerstedt.

Meeting the people in Old Uppsala

Gustav Vasa (r. 1521–1560) is known for facilitating Sweden's independence from the Kalmar Union between Denmark, Norway and Sweden, initiating the Lutheran reformation in Sweden, and strengthening the Swedish central government (fig. 1). Because of these accomplishments, Gustav Vasa became the king that many later Swedish king has been compared with as the ideal picture of a good, or at least competent, ruler (Johannesson 1998: 355; Alm 2002: 189). Of course, this picture of a great father of the nation is created by the posterity. In Gustav's own time, he was just a usurper who challenged both the Danish crown, the church and his own subjects. His need for all sorts of legitimiacy was therefore great. During the first decade of his reign, which was a critical period in Sweden's history, Gustav convened a number of political meetings in Old Uppsala, which was the location of a famous pre-Christian holy site, the royal residence, and traditional site for both regi-

onal and national meetings concerning political and judicial matters. The aim of this article is to analyse the reasons for Gustav's choice of location for his meetings. Could it be that he sought to benefit from its symbolic power as a realm of memory, hoping to be imbued with the gravity of the cultural heritage of the place? Moreover, if this explains his choice of location, the question then is of what did this symbolic power of Old Uppsala consist in the early sixteenth century?

The meetings in Old Uppsala were always convened on a special occasion, namely the 18th of May, or Erikmas, the feast day of the twelfth-century saint-king Erik. He was arguably the most important of Sweden's patrons in the late medieval period, and his bones had been placed in the cathedral of Old Uppsala before being moved when the new cathedral was built.[3] This feast was not only a religious occasion. An annual fair was also arranged in the days around this feast, which served as a good occasion for the king to meet with his subjects. What is notable, however, is that while the fair of Eriksmas was held in Uppsala, the king met with the people in Old Uppsala, several kilometres away.[4] Moreover, was there a certain reason why these meetings were held at this particular holiday?

First, it should be noted that Gustav Vasa did not only hold meetings during Uppsala's Erikmas. In this period, even national political meetings were convened in different places at different times in the year. Stockholm was beginning to be recognised as Sweden's capital, but meetings were still arranged when and where it was practical (Staf 1935). Fairs were convenient occasions for meetings because many people already gathered from near and far.

It seems, however, that Erikmas in Uppsala held a particular signifiance. Between 1523 and 1532 Gustav Vasa attended and spoke at a number of Swedish fairs. With the exception of the year 1524, for which we have no data, there is only one fair he visited every year: Erikmas in Uppsala (Staf 1935: 54–90). In other words, the king found this to be a particularly suitable occasion for communicating with his subjects.[5]

Reasons for the choice of meeting place

When considering possible reasons for Gustav Vasa's choice of Uppsala as a meeting place, it is unlikely that size and importance could have been decisive factors. Uppsala was an important city in the sixteenth century, but its most visited fair was not that of St Erik, but the Disting Fair[6] in January/February (Ljung 1954, p. 148). A comparison over a longer time period also shows that the Disting Fair was the most popular for political meetings between the years 1436 and 1611, with about 50 meetings convened in this period. Eriksmas is in shared second place together with Knutmas in Enköping (January 13th) and Samting Fair in Strängnäs (1st Sunday in Lent). All these three fairs were the locations for 25 meetings each in the period. For Gustav himself, on the other hand, Eriksmas was by far the most popular fair (Staf 1935: 54–132; Åmark 1935–37: 212–21).[7]

Obviously, Eriksmas was particularly important for Gustav Vasa. Uppsala was Sweden's ecclesiastical centre and according to some contemporary historians, it had preceded Stockholm as the country's capital (Magnus 1620 (1554): e.g. pp. 5 & 7). Therefore, Uppsala was a typical realm of memory and it is easy to presume that meetings held there were seen as extra important. Apart from the practical reasons, there were also symbolic ones. This assumption is strengthened by the fact that the other dominating fair for royal meetings was Uppsala's Disting Fair.

But why were the Erikmas meetings held in Old Uppsala and not in the new city of Uppsala? Also, for this choice we can find practical as well as symbolic reasons. The main practical reason is probably that for one of the days of the fair, most of its participants gathered in Old Uppsala. This was on 18th of May when the clergy of the cathedral performed a procession, carrying St Erik's relics from their shrine in the cathedral in Uppsala city to the former cathedral of Old Uppsala (Bonnier 1991: 102).[8] It seems likely that those visitors of the fair that were able to would participate in such a ceremony, and consequently bring a significant amount of people to Old Uppsala. This made it the perfect occasion to make announcements. Most people were there to hear them, and if the king wanted a response, he could get it immediately. Another practical reason for the gathering in Old Uppsala may be that it could have been difficult to find a convenient place to gather a great number of people inside the city of new Uppsala, but this is more difficult to assess.

We should, however, not discard other possible reasons for holding meetings in Old Uppsala, namely symbolic reasons. To a modern mind, the most obvious such symbolic reason would be the cultural heritage of the place, reaching back to pre-Christian times. Old Uppsala has a prominent role in Swedish

historical awareness, especially in the province of Uppland. Whether that already was the case in the sixteenth century, and if so, on what grounds, cannot be ascertained. The Swedish historian of literature Kurt Johannesson recounts how Archbishop Johannes Magnus, in his history of the Uppsala Archdiocese, describes a scene between himself and Gustav Vasa in an Erikmas meeting at Old Uppsala (Magnus 1557: 123–124). Johannesson comments: "The site is sacred in Swedish history. Here Swedish kings and archbishops had had their residences since ancient times. The time of the year is also sacred, for this meeting took place on St Erik's Day" (Johannesson 1982: 90).[9] In other words, there are in Uppsala a couple of realms of memory that allow us to comprehend the symbolic meaning of the context of the meetings presented: one is Old Uppsala as an ancient cult site and royal quarter, and the other is the fame of St Erik and his day.

To modern Swedes, the first realm of memory is the most obvious. We associate Old Uppsala with the pre-Christian period and pagan rituals and religious practices, especially because of the great burial mounds and the histories that are told about them.[10] However, this symbolic value cannot simply be taken for granted as being a part of the sixteenth-century world-view. At this time Old Uppsala was actually not the important symbol for pre-Christian Sweden which it later became. The reason was not that sixteenth-century historians were less interested in searching for a great past than historians of today, quite the contrary. Their concept of history included a Swedish kingdom with traditions from many centuries BCE and with Uppsala as its magnificent capital. The difference was that the interest was directed more towards modern Uppsala than towards Old Uppsala. For example, the ancient golden temple with its famous human sacrifices to the gods Odin, Thor and Freyr, described by Adam of Bremen, (Adam 1984 (1070): Book IV, Chapter 27) was believed to have been situated in new Uppsala. How could that be possible?

When relating how historians between the middle of the fifteenth and the end of the seventeenth century believed that Adam's temple had been located in new Uppsala, the Swedish professor of intellectual history, Sten Lindroth, claims that the general opinion was that "the place out by the royal mounds supposedly had its short era of prosperity in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, when the new Christian cathedral was located there" (Lindroth 1975b: 311). However, there are reasons to believe that his statement is only partly true and that the picture is far more complicated. By studying the most influential Swedish historical chronicles from the sixteenth century, a strange and contradictory picture of Uppsala's older history is revealed. We see this contradiction in the treatment of both is pre-Christian and early Christian Old Uppsala, when, according to Lindroth, the place was thought to have had its period of greatness. Before discussing the treatment of Uppsala in the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century sources, however, it is necessary to give a short presentation of the Uppsala area's early history as it is known today.

The early history of the Uppsala surroundings

The location of Old Uppsala has long been an important site. The area is filled with ancient monuments (fig. 2). The most famous are the three big royal burial mounds, *Uppsala högar*, from the sixth or seventh century, but there are remains that indicate that it was a central site even earlier (Ljungkvist 2013: 45; Beronius Jörpeland & Seiler 2017: 441–444). From this time at least up until the Viking era it probably was the residence of some kind of king or priest-king who ruled from a royal manor (Duczko 1998: 21–22; Beronius Jörpeland & Seiler 2017). This king led regular ceremonies gathering many people, in connection with the original Disting Fair and the *Thing* (*ting*) for the old *folkland* Tiundaland were held (Ferm 1986: 66). In the middle of the twelfth century, Uppsala was declared an episcopal see and the royal manor was given a Christian cathedral as its neighbour. When Sweden became an independent church province in 1164, the place was chosen as the seat for the archbishop (Lovén 2010: 8). Later, the relics of St Erik, slain in 1160 by a coalition of Swedes and Danes, were placed there. His feast was celebrated on the 18th of May, which still is the name day of Erik in the Swedish calendar (Ahnlund 1954: 114–115).[11]

South of (Old) Uppsala, a port and market place slowly developed into a small town which was called Aros or Östra (East) Aros. Being an important location for trading, Aros gradually came to compete with Uppsala as the main settlement in the area. The king probably owned a lot of the land in the surrounding area and both Tiundaland's *Thing* and the Disting Fair moved from Uppsala to Östra Aros by the mid-thirteenth century (Ferm 1986: 63; Beronius Jörpeland & Seiler 2017). Uppsala was, in other

Fig. 2: The mounds of Old Uppsala. Photo: Henrik Ågren.

words, becoming less important.[12] As a consequence, in 1258 the pope allowed that the archiepiscopal see could be moved from Uppsala to a more suitable location, and that the name should follow the church. Östra Aros was chosen to be the new home for the archbishop and was renamed Uppsala. Thereby, the former Uppsala became Old Uppsala. The translocation took place in 1273, after which the old cathedral became an ordinary parish church (Lovén 2010: 8). In the sixteenth century there was, however, another view of the area's early history, a view that makes it less probably that the site of Old Uppsala in itself was an important realm of memory for Gustav Vasa.

The concept of Uppsala's older history among Reformation era scholars

We know nothing about what common people of the Reformation era knew or thought about Uppsala's origin. In scholarly works, however, an interesting and strange picture is painted. Sources for older Swedish history were scarce and unlike the neighbouring countries Denmark and Norway, no great chronicles or sagas covering the time before the fourteenth century were written until the late Middle Ages (Lindroth 1975a: 92). The origin of this scholarly picture is one of these texts, the *Prosaic Chronicle*, anonymously written in the mid-fifteenth century. It states that the ancient, mythical Swedish king Inge Filmersson had his residence in Old Uppsala at "a heathen temple [which] stood upon the Dome hill where Uppsala cathedral is now situated" (*Sveriges krönika* 1868–1881 (1450): 224). Later details clarify that the temple referred to is the one Adam of Bremen described (*Sveriges krönika* 1868–1881 (1450): 225–226). The statement contradicts itself. The positioning of the temple in Old Uppsala is negated by the claim that it was built on the same spot as the fifteenth-century cathedral.

This latter piece of information was picked up by the most influential source of knowledge about Swedish history during the reformation era: *Chronica regni Gothorum* (*Chronicle of the Gothic realm*), written by the Uppsala cleric, Ericus Olai, around

1470. From that chronicle, several prominent sixteenth-century works on Swedish history based their claims. Two of these were the brothers Johannes and Olaus Magnus, who belonged to Gustav Vasa's inner circle before their loyalty to Catholic beliefs forced them into exile (Lindroth 1975a: 289). Johannes, the last Catholic archbishop of Sweden wrote *Historia de omnibus Gothorum Sveonumque Regibus* (*History of all the Swedish and Gothic Kings*), a national history focused on historical and mythological kings in Sweden from ancient history until the early sixteenth century. Olaus is the author of *Historia de Gentibus Septentrionalibus* (*History of the Nordic People*), which, contrary to its name, is a description of Sweden in his own day, describing economy, folklore, nature, and so on. Even though this book is not primarily historical, there are some passages that deal with Uppsala's past

Two other history-writing brothers in sixteenth-century Sweden were the reformers Olaus and Laurentius Petri. The former wrote *Svenska krönika* (*The Swedish Chronicle*), which was not condoned by Gustav Vasa, probably because of its lack of patriotic sentiments. Olaus' brother Laurentius, on the other hand, wrote a book by the same name that was more characterised by anti-Danish and anti-Catholic sentiments. Neither book was printed in the sixteenth century but disseminated in hand-written copies (Lindroth 1975a: 280–283).[13]

All of these texts reproduce to different degrees the misconception about the site of the old temple, and consequently of the revered capital of the ancient Swedes. The focus of the authors is (new) Uppsala, but Old Uppsala is not completely forgotten. Ericus Olai is very precise in locating the temple and the royal residence at the site of the cathedral of his (and our) day (Ericus Olai 1678 (1470): 1–5). He also mentions Old Uppsala, where he claims that the royal manor later moved, but explains that name thus: "The same place is, however, now called Old Uppsala, because the archiepiscopal see was situated there. Still, what is now called Uppsala, where both the capital and the archiepiscopal see stands and flourishes, is older than the other" (Ericus Olai 1678 (1470): 5).[14]

All other authors mentioned above are generally less precise when introducing the home of the ancient Swedes. Among them, Olaus Petri gives the same exact location as the *Prosaic Chronicle*, more or less citing it (Olaus Petri 1917 (1540): 11–12). His contemporaries, however, seem to have been a bit bothered by that piece of information, something that shows in different ways. Laurentius Petri does not give any precise specification at all considering where ancient Uppsala was located (Laurentius Petri 1828 (1560): 18; 25; 37 e.g.). Olaus and Johannes Magnus paint a more complicated picture. Johannes refers to Uppsala without a prefix when he presents the original royal residence, something that points to new Uppsala (Magnus 1620 (1554): 5). However, later on he states that the temple was built in Uppsala, "in a wide and flat place" (Magnus 1620 (1554): 11). That descripition is more suitable for Old Uppsala, but general enough to be interpreted in many ways. He also mentions royal burial monuments "not far from Uppsala" (Magnus 1620 (1554): 75). If these monuments are the famous mounds, it means a distinction between Old Uppsala and the first, so-called ancient Uppsala. Similar vagueness and contradictions can be found in Olaus Magnus. In one discussion about the contemporary cathedral in Uppsala, he claims that it once was the site of old idolatry (i.e. the temple), but he also states that the cult site could have been located "on certain hills in its vicinity" (Magnus 1909 (1555): 70). In another context he unequivocally states that the cathedral was built on the site of the old temple, but also on a vast plain (Magnus 1909 (1555): 140–142).

These examples show that the sixteenth century had accepted the fifteenth-century description of Uppsala, but that this description caused some confusion. There are further hints about Old Uppsala as an important place, often without mentioning the name. Both Magnus brothers describe a second cult site dedicated to Freyr, one of the gods commonly associated with the Uppsala temple. In this place "not far from Uppsala", human sacrifices were made in pre-Christian days (Magnus 1620 (1554): 13; Magnus 1909 (1555): 136–137).[15] Olaus Petri, on the other hand, states that the mounds in Old Uppsala "without doubts" (Olaus Petri 1917 (1540): 73) are royal graves, thereby acknowledging it as a place of ancient importance.

The picture of Uppsala's oldest history presented by scholars in sixteenth-century Sweden can be summarised thus: The centre of the old Swedish kingdom was (new) Uppsala, where the temple and the royal residence were located. Old Uppsala had traditions from ancient times as well, but not as old or as important. Ericus Olai states that the cathedral and the royal manor for a while had been located in Old Uppsala, but, according to him, this is not the original central place. In his texts, Olaus Magnus seems to be a bit troubled by the official version of history, as if

he was aware that it was incorrect, or at least disputable. The same awareness may be the reason why Johannes Magnus chose his way of discussing the matter, while Olaus Petri seems less disturbed, and Laurentius Petri simply ignored the problem by excluding exact geographical precisions. Running the risk of over interpretation, I understand the matter to be that the Magnus brothers had some suspicion, at the very least, that Ericus Olai was wrong in his description of Old Uppsala, but they decided to reproduce it nonetheless. Regardless of these doubts, (new) Uppsala was a more important realm of memory than Old Uppsala in the historiographical thinking of sixteenth-century Sweden. So far there seem to have been no symbolic reason for Gustav Vasa to hold meetings in Old Uppsala.

The site of the cathedral

As mentioned, Sten Lindroth has claimed that it was generally believed in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries that Old Uppsala's period of glory only lasted a short period, from the establishment of the episcopal see in the twelfth century and to the moving of the see to Östra Aros in the thirteenth. From the excerpts quoted above, Lindroth's claim seems to be correct. To the historians of sixteenth-century Sweden, it was the present-day city that was the location of ancient Uppsala, the original Uppsala, as it were, and not Old Uppsala. On the other hand, it is reasonable to think that in the Reformation era, Christian cultural heritage was more important than pre-Christian cultural heritage. Therefore, Old Uppsala might have had a value as a realm of memory by virtue of being the original seat for the Swedish archbishop.

There is, however, scant evidence that people viewed Old Uppsala in that way either. When it comes to the original location of the cathedral and the archiepiscopal see, the sixteenth-century authors show an even more remarkable inconsistency. There are two details that are relevant for the question of the original location: the founding of the see, including the erection of the cathedral church, and the original location of the shrine of St Erik. Since that shrine was closely connected to the cathedral, the placement of the shrine could also provide a hint about which cathedral church was the original one.

The overall picture is ambiguous to say the least. Johannes Magnus and Laurentius Petri both clearly state that the cathedral church was originally built in new Uppsala (Magnus 1620 (1554): 531; Laurentius Petri 1828 (1560), p. 66–67). Ericus Olai does not mention the early cathedral, but he states that the relics of St Erik were placed in a church built "where the Uppsala-temple of the three gods stood in ancient times" (Ericus Olai 1678 (1470): 168). The statement clearly points towards new Uppsala from his point of view. Olaus Petri, finally, mentions that both the founding of the cathedral and the early elevation of the relics took place in Uppsala, but refrains from specifying which Uppsala. He does, however, mention the old name for new Uppsala, Östra Aros (Olaus Petri 1917 (1540): 56–57).[16] This could mean that he by Uppsala means Old Uppsala, but that is by no means the only possible interpretation.

There seems to be a general uncertainty about exactly where the cathedral church was originally built, and in some cases there even seems to be an aversion to specify the location. What is noteworthy, however, is that the already indistinct precision regarding the original Uppsala cathedral becomes downright contradictionary in the passages where the historians reach the 1270s, when the see was moved. In the case of Olaus Petri, the contradictions are not too remarkable. Since it is possible that he actually meant Old Uppsala when he wrote about the establishment of the diocese, it is no wonder that he tells us that the archiepiscopal see moved from Old Uppsala to new Uppsala in the thirteenth century, especially since he uses the name Östra Aros again (Olaus Petri 1917 (1540): 72). All the other authors more or less clearly placed the original cathedral in new Uppsala. When they therefore describe the moving of the cathedral from Old Uppsala to new Uppsala, they thereby construct a contradictive narrative (Ericus Olai 1678 (1470): 182; Magnus 1620 (1554): 556–557; Laurentius Petri 1828 (1560): 76).[17] This is particularly true in the cases of Johannes Magnus and Laurentius Petri. These two authors openly claim that the cathedral was originally built in new Uppsala, which would make a relocation to the same spot logically impossible. Ericus Olai did not say were the cathedral was founded, which makes his contradiction less obvious. However, by claiming that the relics of St Erik were moved together with the cathedral, he falls into the same trap.

Overall, the picture of how Uppsala's oldest history is constructed seems clear. It is as if the authors feel that the official history-writing, claiming that new Uppsala was the original site of the archiepiscopal see, is questionable and may be incorrect. Yet even so, they choose to ignore these problems as much as possible. When the stories are set in the time when there was only one Uppsala, it is possible

for them to avoid the problem. When the two Uppsala-localities are tied together by the relocation of the cathedral, these sixteenth-century historians have to be more true to the facts, even though that brings about inconsistencies. It is also worth noting that the pre-Christian part of Old Uppsala's history receives greater emphasis than the Christian part, such as the burial mounds, suggestions that the temple and the sacrificial grove *possibly* was located there, and that the pre-Christian royal manor was moved there from its previous location in new Uppsala. Thus, according to the historians of sixteenth-century Sweden, the place for Gustav Vasa's meetings, Old Uppsala, was not considered a place neither of significant pre-Christian cultural heritage, nor of early Christian cultural heritage. In short, to the contemporaries of Gustav Vasa, Old Uppsala was not a realm of memory on account of its distant past.

Traces of a popular tradition concerning Old Uppsala

It is, however, important to remember that among the chronicles cited above, none of them but that of Ericus Olai could possibly have had any impact on the view of Old Uppsala during the 1520s and 1530s. Olaus Petri's chronicle is supposed to be the oldest of the contemporaries, but it was not finished until in the late 1530s at the earliest (Jensen 2002: 51). The aforementioned chronicles may therefore illustrate how Old Uppsala was understood in Gustav Vasa's time but cannot be considered to have affected the contemporary understanding of the place. One also has to remember that the circles in which these scholars lived were hardly representative of the wider Swedish populace. Therefore, when the king met with his subjects at Erikmas, we cannot be certain that these subjects shared the views about Old Uppsala's history expressed in the chronicles.

It is possible that the wider populace embraced another view of Old Uppsala than that of the chroniclers, or that the place had a different meaning to them, apart from its role as the ancient capital of the Swedes. Regardless of how history was written in this era, the place had a factual history, a past that may have survived in the collective memory or in traditions. Concerning what we know of Old Uppsala today, it seems more than plausible that some kind of popular tradition about the place existed in Gustav Vasa's time. It was after all an old meeting place, where the Disting Fair, the Tiunda *Thing* and ancient religious celebrations had been held for generations. If such a tradition existed, it may have constructed a realm of memory and thereby given a symbolical reason to hold the meeting at Old Uppsala.

Signs that any memory of these traditions had survived are, however, weak. While there are several place names in Old Uppsala that allude to its distant past, and although some of these names are old, none of them is from the time of Gustav Vasa or earlier. The small mound where Gustav is said to have spoken to the people is known by the names 'Tingshögen' ('Thing mound') and 'Domarehögen' ('Judge's

Fig. 3: Tingshögen (the Thing Mound) at Old Uppsala. Photo: Henrik Ågren.

mound'), but neither of these names is older than the late seventeenth century (Judge's mound: Rudbeck 1689: 373; *Thing* mound: Peringskiöld 1710: 217) (fig. 3). When Gustav Vasa's own historian, Peder Svart, described the meetings, he only called it "the mound, where the meetings are usually held" (Svart 1964 (1560): 173). The name 'Tingsslätten' ('The *thing* field') for the open field south of the royal mounds is even newer, given to the place by the twentieth-century archaeologist Sune Lindqvist, who argued that this was the place for the *Svea thing* in pre-historic times (Wahlberg 1994: 162).

A second element that could point us towards a popular tradition is the richness of physical historical remains in and around Old Uppsala. At least the royal mounds ought to have been a constant reminder that the place had a special history even in the sixteenth century. There are mentions of these remains in different sources, mostly from the seventeenth century. Some of these sources connect the mounds to ancient times and the pagan temple. The three big mounds were occasionally named after the three gods of the temple, Thor, Odin and Freyr, for example by the historian Johannes Schefferus in 1666 and a decade earlier by the Councillor of the Realm (*riksråd*), Bengt Skytte, while guiding the English ambassador Bulstrode Whitelocke (Schefferus 1666: 366; Whitelocke 1855 (1654): 80–81).[18] This is, however, more than a century after Gustav Vasa's meetings. It should also be pointed out that even if there were a connection between the mounds and the gods of the temple already in Gustav Vasa's time, this does not necessarily imply that the temple itself had been located in Old Uppsala.

Furthermore, Professor Johannes Messenius, who probably had more knowledge about old Swedish history than any other person did in the early seventeenth century, seems to have been oblivious of the associations between the mounds and the gods (Schück 1920: 130). Even more revealing is the nation-wide survey, *Rannsakningar efter antikviteter* (Inquiries for Antiquities), launched in the 1660s. In this, ordinary people all over Sweden were asked if they knew about any ancient remains in their local areas and what they believed to be their origin. The reports from Old Uppsala are strikingly poor. Nothing at all is said about the great mounds. Overall, the annotations from the entire parish consist of a few notations about rune stones and some graves. The description of the parish only occupies a few lines in the printed inventory (*Rannsakningar efter antikviteter* 1960 (1680): 81).

Reports from the late-seventeenth century provide little evidence about how people in the early sixteenth century understood their surroundings, whether they gave divine names to some mounds or neglected the same mounds entirely. The evidence can only be used as a reminder that it is not clear that Old Uppsala meant something significant to the general populace in sixteenth-century Sweden. Therefore, to summarise, it is hard to tell how important Old Uppsala was as realm of memory, either for people in seventeenth-century Sweden or in sixteenth-century Sweden. Some hints exist, but none of them are decisive. There are no attributes that suggest old traditions were tied to the sixteenth century. In any case, new Uppsala seems to have had a considerably more profound symbolic value.

St Erik

In light of all this, it seems as if Old Uppsala's value as a realm of memory had little to do with ancient times. Not because the place was considered to be without an important past, but because that past was heavily overshadowed by the past of new Uppsala. There was, however, one symbol that meant more than anything for Old Uppsala's cultural status in the early sixteenth century. The meetings at St Erik's Fair were held in direct connection to the procession in which St Erik's relics were carried from the new cathedral to the old (fig. 4). It is therefore impossible to neglect what Erik meant for sixteenth-century Sweden.

While the cult of St Erik had began as a local cult at Uppsala, by the fifteenth century it had spread to

Fig. 4: The shrine of Saint Erik in Uppsala Cathedral. Made by Hans Rosenfälth in the period 1574-79 and donated to the cathedral by King Johan III in 1580. Photo: Steffen Hope.

large parts of Sweden through resolute propaganda from the archiepiscopal seat. Thereby, Erik became one of the primary patrons, or national saints, of Sweden (Thordeman 1954: 188; Tjällén 2007: 81; Ellis Nilsson 2015: 89; Oertel 2016: ch. 7) (fig. 5). There was also a political side to this process. During the late Middle Ages 'St Erik's law' became a general name for old and good laws. Even more revealing is probably that in several peasant uprisings, for example the Engelbrekt uprising in the 1430s, the rebels referred to St Erik and the principles he represented as their inspiration. He was perceived as a model for a good king and his time as the golden age that the leaders of the uprising tried to recreate (Schück 1917: 15–18; Ahnlund 1954: 137–138; Ågren 2012: ch. 2.2). Later in the century, Sten Sture and other Swedish politicians promoted St Erik as a specifically Swedish instrument of propaganda against the Danish Oldenburg kings (Reinholdsson 1998: 55). A further sign of Erik's importance is that even Christian II (of Oldenburg) used him to his advantage. After Christian had defeated his Swedish enemies, the council of the realm accepted him as king of Sweden, partly because the councillors were persuaded that he had been appointed according to what was called the law of St Erik, and partly because he was purported to be related to Erik ("Svenska rådets arvsförklaring." 31/10 1520: 623–624). Furthermore, Christian sometimes included St Erik (next to God!) when he formally introduced himself, and during a Swedish rebellion in 1517, the king declared war against the rebels in the name of St Erik (Tjällén 2007: 88; Oertel 2016: 239). Obviously, Erik was a very important source of political legitimacy in Sweden for all parts in the many conflicts.

Fig. 5: King Erik refuses to accept taxes from his subjects. Drawing by Johan Peringskiöld of a now lost wall-painting in the church of Old Uppsala, printed in his *Monumenta Uplandica per Thiundiam*, Stockholm.

For Gustav Vasa the symbolic value of St Erik was important. By Gustav's doing, Sweden had left the Danish-lead Kalmar Union. As a result of the power struggles, national awareness became more and more deep-rooted. In that context, St Erik served well as a figurehead. He was not only a Swedish counterpart to the Norwegian and Danish saint kings Olav and Cnut but was also said to have been killed by Danes. Despite the attempts of Christian II, the sixteenth-century veneration of Erik was not merely political, but even anti-Danish or at least anti-Oldenburg (Lovén 2010: 7; Oertel 2016: 260).

The Erikmas as such was also connected to patriotic sentiments. Gustav Vasa's own historian, Peder Svart, describes how Gustav's troops were preparing to invade Uppsala in May 1521 during the rebellion against Christian II. The city then wrote to the threatening host, asking the commanders not to interfere with the relic procession to Old Uppsala. To this, the commanders replied that the best aid they thought they could give St Erik was to make sure that the ceremony was supervised by Swedish men and not by foreigners (Svart 1964 (1560): 53–54).

St Erik's popularity is evident in historiography, too. Johannes Magnus dedicates several chapters to describe Erik's splendid qualities. His virtues were for example

> so numerous and great that even though he was a mundane king and regent, he still seemed to live a celestial and angelic life. [- - -] Because everything that was just, honest and fair shone from him as from a bright mirror (Magnus 1620 (1554): 528).

When Erik's subjects brought him his taxes, the king, still according to Johannes Magnus, answered: "I am pleased with what is mine, you should keep what is yours. I care little for your taxes and tributes, your children and grandchildren will need them better (Magnus 1620 (1554): 529)."[19]

The Protestant Petri brothers were both a bit more cautious when describing Erik. Their caution was however only directed towards the truth behind the legend and other stories – especially when they tou-

ched upon Catholic beliefs and practices. When it came to the saint-king himself, they were almost as generous in their praise as Johannes Magnus. Both brothers emphasize and praise Erik's justness, his mildness towards the poor, his hard work for spreading the Christian faith, and his general popularity (Olaus Petri 1917 (1540): 55–56; Laurentius Petri 1828 (1560): 64–67).

Erik was, in other words, the quintessential realm of memory, especially for a new and weak regime. He had every characteristic a good king was supposed to have: pious, just, generous etc. and was obviously seen as a specifically Swedish symbol. Whether Gustav Vasa had any such motives for holding his meetings at the Erik procession or not, it is difficult to think that the occasion did not affect the audience's reception of the messages.[20] There is no information that any of the royal measures were made in the name of the sanctified king, but his ceremonial presence must still have been manifest. One has to remember that Gustav was a usurper, without any legal claims to the throne, and that he, on top of that, had a very radical programme for both church and society. He needed all the legitimisation he could get, and, as has been said, St Erik was the quintessence of royal legitimacy in early sixteenth-century Sweden. There are several examples of how Gustav Vasa tried, on other occasions, to link his own person to that of Erik (*Svenska kungliga porträtt i svenska porträttarkivets samlingar* 1943: 27; Berglund 2007: 184–185; Ågren 2012: ch. 5).

The question of which factor meant the most for the ideological impact of the meetings may, however, still be difficult to answer. Place-person (Old Uppsala-St Erik) or present-past (the processions-Erik's reign and martyrdom) are not easy to separate in this case. Much of Old (and new) Uppsala's symbolic value in the Reformation era emanated from St Erik (Lovén 2010: 8). However, it would be to exaggerate Erik's importance to claim that the saint-king was the only realm of memory. The place was important too, but here it gets a little complicated again.

The celebration of a saint was connected, also in the minds of those who venerated him or her, with the place where the celebration took place, and St Erik-Uppsala was no exception (Ellis 2015: 196). However, Erik was and had always been more associated with Östra Aros/Uppsala than with Old Uppsala (Ellis Nilsson 2015: 190–191). The crucial detail is therefore that his relics were carried in procession out to the old cathedral. It was through this procession that Old Uppsala got its main symbolic value as a geographical location. The saint and his ceremonies were more important than the burial mounds or similar ancient remains.

The same can be said about the present and the past. Relic processions were common elements of saints' cults, and in the case of St Erik the procession was an annual tradition to celebrate a saint who had died a long time ago. However, the procession was not only a reminder of a historical event, it was also, and perhaps even more so, a significant event in the present. It is probably not an exaggeration to claim that the procession as such meant more to the participants than the concept of Erik as a living, ruling king in the twelfth century. The procession of St Erik's relics is an example of how traditions can be used to soften the difference between past and present. At the same time, traditions of this kind are also important to create and reproduce stability and feelings of community, especially in periods of crises and change (Kammen 1993: 25; Malmstedt 2002: 160; Selberg 2002: 15). Old Uppsala's greatness in the past may in other words have been considered either important or insignificant. Either way, the rites performed in the present were of the greatest importance for the symbolical value of the context.

Gustav Vasa, St Erik and Old Uppsala

To conclude, there seem to be several reasons why Gustav Vasa favoured the feast of Erikmas as an occasion for holding meetings, and why he favoured Old Uppsala over the new city. Some practical reasons were clearly important. Erikmas was the time of a fair visited by many, where representatives of important families, parts of the country or groups of the population could be found. However, the symbolic setting of the meeting gave extra impact to every message that was delivered there. In the sixteenth century, the meeting place by the mounds did not have the same venerability and historical importance as the city of Uppsala, and not the symbolic value we give it today, at least not judging from available sources. Instead, the cultural reference that certainly was the most influential was the connection to the celebration of the saint and the king of the golden age, Erik.

Were there any symbolic reasons behind the fact that the Erikmas fair in Uppsala was preferred by Gustav Vasa when he addressed his people? Were there any symbolic reasons behind his preference of Old Uppsala as the meeting place? These questions,

asked throughout the article, can in short be given the same answer: St Erik. He was the most important of the realms of memory connected to the meeting. He also tied the place of Old Uppsala and the occasion of the fair together. There is no evidence that Gustav Vasa on these occasions explicitly referred to Erik, like he did in other circumstances or in the same way that Gustav's own name and person have been used later. On the other hand, the king presented his political programmes amidst the glory of the celebrations of the old saint-king. Even though these programmes in the long run meant that the very same cult was exterminated, the opportunity to exploit that cult was too good to pass up.

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Notes

[1] This article is a shorter version of Ågren 2009.

[2] The actual name of the place is Gamla ('Old') Uppsala. Normally, names are not translated, but since the meaning of the prefix is central for the article it has been done here.

[3] The royal annalist Peder Svart explicitly states that Old Uppsala was the meeting place at the Erik fairs in 1526 and 1531 (Svart 1964 (1560): 120 & 173. Nils Staf adds 1529, 1530 and probably 1532. (Staf 1935: 76; 81 & 90). In the other cases, no specific place is mentioned, but Svart's choices of words indicate that the meetings were held in Old Uppsala on those occasions too.

[4] According to Ljung 1954: 152, it has been claimed that the fair was held in Old Uppsala (Lindqvist 1953: 56–57). The evidence for this claim is however extremely weak.

[5] This has also been observed by Herman Schück (Schück 1992: 39).

[6] The Disting was an ancient occasion for an annual *thing* meeting, probably connected to a pre-Christian religious celebration. Around that meeting, a fair was gradually established (Ferm 1986: 66). The Disting fair survived the religious celebration.

[7] The exact numbers are disputed. See Ågren 2009: 40–44 for a discussion.

[8] The last known occasion when this ceremony was performed took place in 1521 (Svart 1964 (1560): 53). There is however no reason to suspect that it was the last time it was carried out.

[9] All translations from Swedish to English are made by the author.

[10] See Alkarp 2009 for an extensive discussion of the modern conceptions of Old Uppsala.

[11] When the enshrinement of St Erik actually was performed is unclear, but it was probably after Old Uppsala had become archiepiscopal see. For more information on the early history of Old Uppsala and St Erik, see Sundqvist 2009.

[12] The earlier opinion that it was abandoned is however questioned today. Old Uppsala seems to have been important for the local royal power even when Aros grew as a settlement (Ljungkvist 2013: 59; Beronius Jörpeland & Seiler 2017: 453).

[13] Whether it actually was Laurentius Petri who wrote the adjusted version is not clear (Hall 2000: 36). Since no other author is known and it is often credited to him, I have here taken for granted that this is the fact. The content is in this case more interesting than the author is.

[14] Quotations of Ericus and of the Magnus brothers (see below) are translated from Swedish publications. The original texts are in Latin.

[15] This place is also mentioned by Laurentius Petri, but without geographical specifications (Laurentius Petri 1828 (1560): 38).

[16] The *Prosaic Chronicle* and Olaus Magnus do not mention either of the subjects at all.

[17] The different presentations are a bit more complicated than I have accounted for here. A more comprehensive account is given in Ågren 2009.

[18] Thor has in Bulstrode's recapitulation been replaced by Tyr and Freyr by the female god Freya. Another interesting fact is that Schefferus thought that Freyr was the first person buried in any of the mounds (Schefferus 1666: 358). Whether Freyr was the same person to Schefferus as to the Magnus brothers or not, this is yet another example of how he was connected to the Uppsala temple.

[19] This quote is almost in every word identical with a passage from St Erik's legend ("Erik den heliges legend på latin, fornsvenska och modern svenska." 1954 (1270): XVIII).

[20] This has also been hinted at by Ahnlund 1954: 131.