Sacred Monuments and Practices in the Baltic Sea Region

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New Visits to Old Churches

Edited by

Janne Harjula, Sonja Hukantaival, Visa Immonen, Anneli Randla and Tanja Ratilainen

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

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PREFACE

JANNE HARJULA, SONJA HUKANTAIVAL,
VISA IMMONEN, ANNELI RANDLA,
AND TANJA RATILAINEN

This book represents the outcome of the "Conference on Church Archaeology in the Baltic Sea Region" held on the 26th–30th of August 2013 in Turku, Finland. The roots of this conference were in the long tradition of Scandinavian gatherings called *Symposium för nordisk kyrkoarkeologi*, "Symposium for Nordic Church Archaeology", started in 1981 in Moesgård, Denmark. The third symposium in the series was held in 1987 in Turku. Over a quarter of a century later, church researchers gathered in Turku for the second time – the 11th time in the series of these events – with a wider scope. The event was an international conference with English as the language of discussion instead of the Scandinavian languages spoken in the earlier, smaller symposia.

The 1987 symposium was organized by the National Board of Antiquities and Turku Provincial Museum. The central figure in arrangements and active in other church archaeology symposiums was Dr Knut Drake (1927–2013), at the time the head of the Turku Provincial Museum. Knut was also adjunct professor in art history in Åbo Akademi University in Turku since 1972 as well as in medieval archaeology in the University of Turku since 1986. After retirement he dedicated his time to full-time research right until the end; his latest research focused on the construction history of Turku Cathedral.[1] Dr Drake was awarded the Oscar Montelius medal by the Swedish Antiquarian Society in 2011. This is the only time the award has been given to a Finnish citizen. The conference and this book are dedicated to the memory of Knut Drake.

The main responsibility in organizing the 2013 conference was taken by the Society for Medieval Archaeology in Finland together with Department

[1] E.g. Drake, Knut. 2006. "Turku Cathedral." Finland and Tallinn. Report and Proceedings of the 151th Summer Meeting of the Royal Archaeological Institute in 2005. Supplement to the *Archaeological Journal* volume 162 for 2005: 56–59.

of Archaeology in Turku University, Turku Centre for Medieval and Early Modern Studies, Mikael Agricola Society, the Finnish Society for Church History and the Institute of Practical Theology, Faculty of Theology, University of Helsinki. The conference was made possible due to financial support by the Turku Centre for Medieval and Early Modern Studies and the Finnish Society for Church History. The conference was also financed by Federation of Finnish Learned Societies, Letterstedtska föreningen, Swedish-Finnish Cultural Foundation and Matka-Hermes Company. Tanja Ratilainen from the University of Turku, Department of Archaeology, carried the main responsibility for coordinating the conference.

In the 1987 symposium in Turku, there were some 50 participants and 15 papers. This time 50 papers plus posters were presented and almost a hundred scholars participated from the Baltic Sea region: Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Germany, and Russia. The two keynote presentations were given by Professors Jes Wienberg and Markus Hiekkanen. Wienberg represents Medieval Archaeology at the Institute of Archaeology and Ancient History, Lund University, Sweden. Among his many duties and projects, the Churches on the Baltic Sea project, which he successfully lead, should be mentioned. Hiekkanen is known as Lecturer in Art History at the University of Helsinki, Finland, and as adjunct professor in medieval archaeology at the University of Turku. He is well-known of the 650 page manual of medieval Finnish stone churches first published in 2007[2], which is a corner stone in the field of Finnish church research. Jes Wienberg's keynote paper *Conspicuous Architecture–Medieval Round Churches in Scandinavia* was reworked to become the first chapter of this book.

The book at hand offers an overview on the contemporary issues in the field of international church archaeology in the Baltic Sea Region. It includes traditional building archaeological studies focusing on architecture as well as new perspectives to churches and ecclesiastical practices in a wider context. The topics of the chapters were selected from, and their content based on the papers presented at the conference.[3] The editors are grateful for the efforts of the authors of the nineteen chapters that form this book.

During the past few decades, the scope of church archaeology has expanded immensely and can presently be described as a multidisciplinary field of research. This book acts as a relevant example of this development.

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[2] Hiekkanen, Markus. 2007. *Suomen keskiajan kivikirkot*. Helsinki: Finnish Literature Society. Second edition published in 2014.

[3] Another selection of papers presented at the conference is published in the electronic journal *Mirator* (16: 1–2), http://www.glossa.fi/mirator/index.html.

Accordingly, the topics are not restricted to monumental building archaeology and church architecture, but cover many other venues of research as well: the church as a space of worship, the study of artefacts and works of art, monastic archaeology, the examination of pilgrimage and the cult of saints, private devotion, burial rites, and the establishment of Christianity in peripheral areas. The research history of church archaeology and the changing values of cultural heritage management are also dealt with. The time-span of the chapters range from the early medieval period up to the modern age, and the extent of sources utilised include textual, visual and archaeological material, reflecting the diversity and the breadth that the contributors represent. At the same time, the chapters evince how Christianity has united Europe since the Middle Ages, and how churches functioned as centres of communities also in the periphery.

The topics are divided into three parts in the book. Part I includes chapters discussing the building of churches and church archaeology more generally. The chapters in Part II approach problems from the viewpoint of specific architectural details, methodology, and heritage management. Questions of the churches as part of everyday life, burials, and material manifestations of domestic devotion are covered in Part III. Every chapter gives a distinctive perspective to the common theme of sacred monuments and practices in the Baltic Sea region. Hence the book offers a unique insight into the study of religious life and its material aspects in the Baltic Sea Region, made available for English-readers for the first time.

Turku, 2017

PART I:

BUILDING CHURCHES IN THE BALTIC AREA

CHAPTER ONE

CONSPICUOUS ARCHITECTURE: MEDIEVAL ROUND CHURCHES IN SCANDINAVIA

JES WIENBERG

Introduction: Enigmatic Round Churches

Round churches fascinate. With their architecture the medieval churches draw attention (Fig. 1-1). There seems to be something enigmatic about churches which have a plan different from the majority. Their presence has demanded an explanation: Thus they have been explained as fortified churches in times of unrest, as churches with special secular functions, or as a symbolic architecture which refers to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem in the era of the crusades. Occasionally the round churches have been related to the Knights Templar.

My aims are here to argue why round churches were built, and also to present the knowledge of Scandinavian round churches. Until now, a current overview of the Scandinavian round churches has been lacking. Too often I have seen obsolete or incomplete surveys in both international and national literature and also on the web. It simply seems to be unknown, outside a narrow group of experts, how many round churches there once were in Scandinavia.

An overview of the Scandinavian round churches reveals that the churches are fundamentally "normal", meaning that they act as other churches except in two respects: round churches were clearly elitist in their social context, and their plan differed from the majority. My simple suggestion for a solution to the enigma of the round churches is that the elite chose a "conspicuous architecture" as a social strategy among peers; the concept of "conspicuous architecture" is inspired by the concept of "conspicuous consumption" introduced by Thorstein Veblen.[1]

[1] Veblen 1899.

Fig. 1-1. The round church of Hagby in Småland. Photo: Jes Wienberg, 10 July 2009.

The solution to the enigma thus lies in the enigma itself, meaning in the deliberate deviation from what was expected. Round churches were unusual in the Middle Ages, as they are unusual today. They attracted and were meant to attract attention.

Around Europe and Scandinavia

Round and square buildings or parts of buildings appear everywhere in medieval church architecture. By far the majority of churches were elongated; fewer were square, cruciform, polygonal, or round. Often round and square elements were combined in creative solutions in the same building, so that no two churches appeared identical. This also applies in the secular realm. However, proper round churches, namely churches where the nave is round or polygonal, have traditionally been separated as a category of their own.

Round churches are found all over Europe – from the Mediterranean to the North Atlantic and from the fourth century up till today. However, even though there are numerous round churches, they only represent a tiny proportion of the total number of churches. Round churches are exclusive.

Central churches, and hence also round churches, exhibit a large variation in size, construction, chronology, and functions. We have everything from the World Heritage church of San Vitale in Ravenna in Italy, built on the initiative of the Byzantine emperor Justinian I with an octagonal plan from the sixth century, to the minor ruin of St. Nicholas in Orphir in Orkney, built as a manorial chapel on the initiative of the local earl in the twelfth century; everything from the twelve-sided castle chapel from the thirteenth century built in Atlit Castle in present-day Israel, to the round and at the same time also cruciform parish church of Rønvik in Bodø in Norway from 1997.

There is only one survey of round churches in medieval Europe, namely *Der Zentralbau im Mittelalter* (The Central Building in the Middle Ages) by the German art historian Matthias Untermann.[2] Untermann systematically investigates different types of central churches, their forms, functions, and distribution. However, the weakness of the book is obvious, as its focus is on the churches on the Continent. In the bibliography a single article represents the British Isles – and an old dissertation covers Scandinavia.[3]

[2] Untermann 1989.
[3] Untermann 1989, 308.

The medieval round churches in Scandinavia have received great attention, especially the group of preserved churches in Denmark and Sweden. Here *Nordens befästa rundkyrkor* (The fortified round churches of Scandinavia) by the Swedish art historian Hugo F. Frölén is still the principal work.[4] This dissertation from 1910–11 in two volumes dominates the field with its thesis, thorough analysis, richly illustrated catalogue, and German summary. Frölén puts forward the thesis that all round churches were fortified. The catalogue includes 23 round churches in Denmark, Norway, and Sweden.

A more up-to-date overview is to be found in the article "Wehrkirchen im östlichen Skandinavien" (Defensive churches in Eastern Scandinavia) from 1985 by the German archaeologist Hermann Hinz. He presented all medieval churches which might be regarded as fortified in Denmark and Sweden, including 29 round churches.[5] Finally, there is an unpublished student paper, "Romanska rundkyrkor i Norden" (Romanesque round churches in Scandinavia) by the Swedish medieval archaeologist Ing-Marie Nilsson, which deserves attention. Nilsson presented 28 round churches.[6]

The research and writing has been activated each time a new round church has been discovered or investigated–most recently in Scandinavia at Klosterstad or Klåstad in Östergötland in the years 1997–2001.[7]

A common notion is found in all mentioned research: The round churches are something unusual, deviant, alien, and mysterious, which needs to be explained. To quote the Swedish archaeologist Hans Hildebrand: "The deviant building form has obviously aroused much attention; it has of necessity evoked all possible attempts to explain it".[8]

Definitions and Facts

A round church is here defined as a church with a rounded or polygonal nave, where the polygon has more than four sides. My overview is restricted to the Middle Ages, and by far the most round churches belong to the Romanesque period. Scandinavia is defined as medieval Denmark, Sweden, and Norway with their archdioceses.

Today (in 2017) 34 round churches are known in Scandinavia (Fig. 1-2; Table 1-1). Of these 19 situates in medieval Denmark, 13 in medieval

[4] Frölén 1910–11.
[5] Hinz 1985.
[6] Nilsson 1994.
[7] E.g. Hedvall 2007.
[8] Hildebrand 1891–93, 239.

Sweden, and two in medieval Norway.[9] For roughly a third of the round churches the patron saint is known. The choice of patron saints does not deviate from the choice at other medieval churches of Scandinavia.

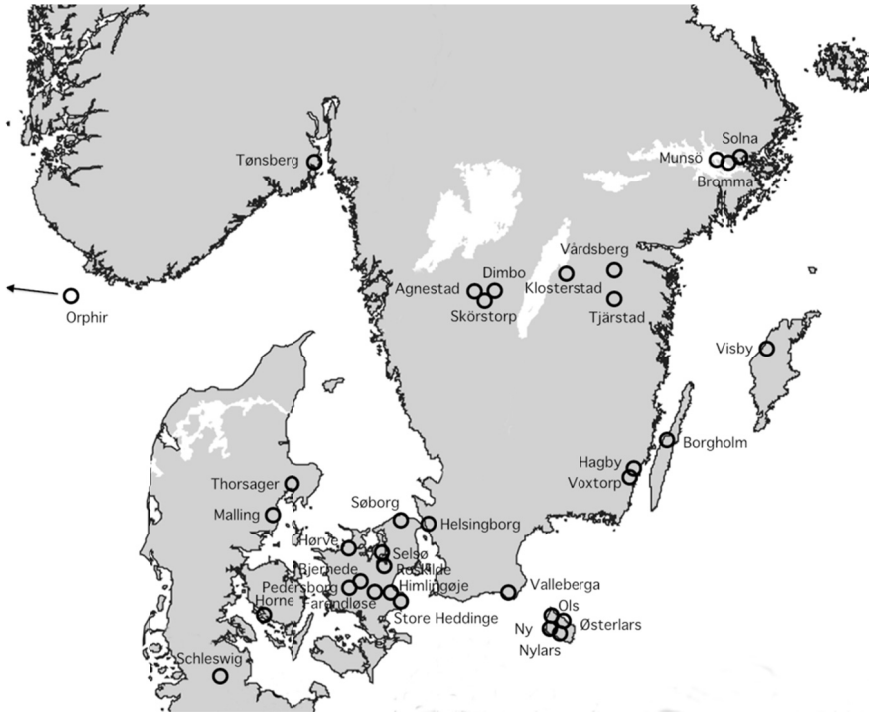

Fig. 1-2. Overview of the medieval round churches of Scandinavia.

The degree of preservation is highly varied and may be divided into four categories. Ten churches are either well preserved (both chancel and nave are preserved) or stand as a major ruin. Nine are partly preserved (apse, chancel, or nave preserved). Five churches are fragmentary (only a minor part preserved). The rest are vanished; they are known only from descriptions, pictures, or excavations.

The majority of these buildings are located in six clusters: on Zealand, Bornholm, at Kalmar Sound, in Västergötland, Östergötland, and Uppland.

[9] See Wienberg 2014 on the number of round churches and their dating with more references.

Of these clusters the four round churches on Bornholm get most attention, as they are well preserved.

Most probably more than the known 34 round churches have existed. Almost half of the known churches appeared as surprise during the demolition of a later building, at a restoration, or excavation. New discoveries of round churches are to be expected where there have been intense Gothic or later renewals; especially in towns, on the islands of Denmark, in Scania, and in Central Sweden. Many more may well be hidden among early deserted churches.

The 34 recognized round churches constitute only about 0.8 per cent of the 4,400 medieval stone churches in Scandinavia. Even if more round churches were discovered it would hardly diminish their exclusiveness. Round churches remain a rarity.

Table 1-1. Scandinavian round churches, their patron saints, and level of preservation.

Localisation	Patron Saint	Preservation
Medieval Denmark, now Germany		
Schleswig	St. Michael	Vanished
Denmark		
Thorsager		Apse, chancel and nave
Malling (?)		Ruin
Horne		Nave
Bjernede	St. Mary & St. Lawrence	Chancel and nave
Farendløse		Vanished
Himlingøje		Only wall
Hørve		Vanished
Pedersborg		Ruin
Roskilde	All Saints	Vanished
Selsø	Holy Cross (?)	Apse
Store Heddinge	St. Catherine (?)	Chancel and nave
Søborg		Vanished
Ny	All Saints	Apse, chancel and nave
Nylars	St. Nicholas	Apse, chancel and nave

Ols	St. Olav	Apse, chancel and nave
Østerlars	St. Lawrence	Apse, chancel and nave
Medieval Denmark, now Sweden		
Helsingborg	St. Michael	Vanished
Valleberga	St. Peter and St. Paul	Apse, chancel and nave
Sweden		
Visby	Holy Spirit	Chancel and nave as ruin
Hagby	St. Olav (?)	Rounded chancel and nave
Voxtorp		Nave
Borgholm		Vanished
Bromma		Nave
Munsö		Nave
Solna	St. James & St. Martin	Nave
Agnestad		Ruin
Dimbo		Vanished
Skörstorp		Nave
Klosterstad		Vanished
Tjärstad		Vanished
Vårdsberg		Nave
Norway		
Tønsberg	St. Olav	Ruin
Medieval Norway, now Great Britain		
Orphir in Orkneys	St. Nicholas	Ruin

Regional Patterns

Different generations of scholars have tried to systematize the round churches of Scandinavia according to their size, plan, and construction.[10] Instead of presenting another scale or typology, I will focus here on

[10] E.g. Frölén 1910–11, I, 55ff, 74f; II, 1ff; Johannsen and Smidt 1981, 53ff; Nilsson 1994, 22f, 30ff.

functions and show how the round churches were "normal" in their regional church topography.

The round churches of Bornholm have or were intended to have three storeys, where the middle floor functioned as a vaulted store and the highest level seems to have been fortified. However vaulted upper storeys are known from all Romanesque church towers on the island and some of the other churches were probably also fortified.[11]

On Zealand the church of Store Heddinge with its upper storey in the chancel is surrounded by unusual churches: Lille Heddinge with three storeys in the nave, Frøslev with an upper floor over a western extension, and a little further away Karise with an upper floor over the chancel.[12] The type of double chapel with two storeys at Bjernede, probably also at Pedersborg and Søborg, is to be found in Ledøje, with a square plan.[13]

The round church of Hagby, with an upper floor which might have functioned as a hall, is only one of many churches at Kalmar Sound with upper storeys. Near Hagby and Voxtorp is Arby, where an eastern tower was planned, and also Halltorp, which once had three storeys.[14]

The three round churches in Västergötland, namely Agnestad, Dimbo, and Skörstorp, show no evidence of upper storeys and are surrounded by ordinary churches.[15] Similarly, the three dispersed round churches of Östergötland, namely Klosterstad, Tjärby, and Vårdsberg, have no evidence of upper storeys, nor do the churches in their surroundings.[16] The three round churches in Uppland, however, which all had upper floors, that is, Bromma, Munsö, and Solna, are also surrounded by quite ordinary churches.[17]

Thus the round churches can be described as functional chameleons which adapted to the regional church topography; or the round churches shaped the regional church topography.

[11] DK VII 1954; Wienberg 1986.
[12] DK VI 1933–35, 469ff; Poulsen 1977.
[13] Cf. DK III 1944, 567ff.
[14] Cf. Anderson 1967; Andersson 1983; Andersson and Bartholin 1990; Anglert 1993; Ullén 2006, 69ff.
[15] Cf. Dahlberg 2002.
[16] Cf. Bonnier 2004b.
[17] Cf. Bonnier 2004a.

Social Context

Most researchers agree upon the social context of round churches as being kings, bishops, and nobility.[18] Sometimes the bishop is mentioned as the prime actor.[19] However, there are also loose speculations on one or another named king, bishop, or nobleman as the builder.

The king and his local representatives are indirectly identified as church builders, where a church is erected at a royal manor or a royal castle. Thus the towns of Slesvig, Roskilde, Store Heddinge, and Helsingborg, and also one district on Bornholm, were so-called "kongelev" (royal estates) in 1231. Also Horne and Thorsager were royal estates according to the Cadastre of King Valdemar.[20] The church of Store Heddinge was located next to a manor, Erikstrup, probably the successor of the royal manor.[21] Helsingborg and Borgholm were royal castles. Also the round church of Søborg must have been built on the initiative of the king. Here the church belonged to the second phase of the castle with a palace, which now is perceived as established *after* the conquest of the castle by king Valdemar the Great in 1161.[22]

In a record of bishops in the Law of Västergötland the bishop of Skara, Benedictus (or Bengt) the Good, is said to have erected the churches of Agnestad and Dimbo.[23] When a round church is located at a bishop's manor or castle it can also be assumed that the bishop or his representatives erected the church. Thus the manor of Selsø from 1288 belonged to the bishop of Roskilde[24] and Bona at Munsö belonged to and was used by the archbishop of Uppsala.[25] Often it has been stated that the four round churches on Bornholm were built by the archbishop of Lund, as he received three of the four hundreds on the island in 1149.[26] However, the reasoning is relatively weak, since Nylars and Ny are in the hundreds of Rønne, which remained with the king. Moreover, the donation to the archbishop does not need to mean more than the right to tax the area. A manor in the parish of Hørve was transferred in 1186–97 from Archbishop

[18] E.g. Frölén 1910–11, I, 136f; Johannsen and Smidt 1981, 53ff; Nilsson 1994, 42f.
[19] Runer 2006, 119f.
[20] KVJ 1, 5, 12, 27f, 95, 102, 117f.
[21] DK VI, 1933–35, 53.
[22] Cf. the reinterpretation of the castle in Pavón 2013.
[23] Beckman 1912, 58ff.
[24] DK II, 1975, 2599.
[25] SvK VI: 1, vol. 73, 1954, 59, cf. SD 96, 376, 467.
[26] E.g. Frölén 1910–11, I, 130f; Smidt 1935, 65.

Absalon to the monastery of Sorø.[27] As a speculation, Thorsager has been linked to Bishop Peder Vognsen of Århus, since he was related to the builder of Bjernede, and these churches are quite similar,[28] even though Thorsager was a royal estate. Finally, a letter from 1533 by Bishop Hans Reff of Oslo stated that St. Olav in Tønsberg was initiated by the "ancestors" of the bishop.[29]

At Bjernede Sune Ebbesen is known as the church builder according to a contemporary inscription over the entrance to the church: "Ebbe Skjalmsen and his wife Ragnhild here built a church, which his son Sune later erected in stone to honour God, St. Mary and St. Lawrence".[30] Sune belonged to a mighty "White" family, the "White" or "Skjalm" kin, which was married into both the Danish and the Swedish royal dynasties, and which counted several archbishops and bishops. More indirectly a noble initiative can be stated when a round church stands at a manor. Pedersborg is supposed to have been built by Peder Thorstensen, who was married to Cecilia, the daughter of Skjalm Hvide.[31] Orphir or "Ørfjara" was the residence of the earl and the round church is supposed to have been erected by the earl Håkon Paulsson.[32] At Klosterstad a manor is known in 1296 belonging to the family Ulv, a branch of the royal dynasty of Folkungarna.[33] At Hagby a villein's farm is mentioned in 1370.[34] In Malling a manor is mentioned in the thirteenth and fourteenth century.[35]

Indications of an aristocratic church building are to be found where rune stones or so-called Eskilstuna sarcophagi are known, that is, monuments to an elite which later during the Middle Ages, but not always (cf. Bornholm and Gotland), became established as nobility: Valleberga[36] in Scania, Ny,[37] Nylars,[38] and Østerlars[39] on Bornholm, Hagby in Småland[40],

[27] DK IV, 1992, 2515, cf. DD/DRB 1 III, 140–141.
[28] Rasmussen 1999, 14f.
[29] DN X 667.
[30] DK V, 1936–38, 352, 359 fig. 14.
[31] Andersen 1998, 12f, where Cecilia wrongly is mentioned as the daughter of Asser Rig.
[32] Ritchie 1993, 110, 112ff, 118f.
[33] SD 1185.
[34] DMS 4: 1, Möre, 45.
[35] Schultz 1945, 97.
[36] DR 337.
[37] DR 389.
[38] DR 379–381.
[39] DR 397–398.
[40] Oral information from Rikard Hedvall.

Klosterstad and Vårdsberg[41] in Östergötland, Bromma,[42] Munsö,[43] and Solna[44] in Uppland and also Orphir in Orkney.

An elite origin has also been assumed with reference to foreign models, where the context is better known: The palace chapel of Emperor Charlemagne in Aachen, the double chapel at the imperial palace in Goslar, and the double chapel of Archbishop and Prince Arnold II of Wied and his sister Hadwig in Schwarzrheindorf in Germany, which resembles Store Heddinge and Holy Spirit in Visby, Thorsager and Bjernede, maybe also Pedersborg and Søborg. Here the princely double chapels clearly appear as a separate church type.[45]

The octagonal churches of Store Heddinge and Visby demand their own presentation. Especially the Holy Spirit in Visby (Fig. 1-3) is controversial regarding its initial name and affiliation. It has been proposed by the Finnish historian Jarl Gallén that its original name was St. James and that it was built on the initiative of Bishop Albert of Riga, who founded the Brethren of the Sword.[46] Recently, however, it has been suggested that it might have been built by the Danish king Valdemar the Great and the Brethren of St. Canute, as was probably also Store Heddinge.[47]

It is known outside Scandinavia that some round churches were built by fraternities related to crusades and the Holy Sepulchre. Thus the Holy Sepulchre in Cambridge was built by a fraternity of three men.[48] In accordance with this it has been proposed that the upper floor at Bjernede and Store Heddinge might have been used as chapels or meeting rooms by the Brethren of St. Canute.[49] At Hagby in Småland there has also been an upper hall.

A connection between round churches and fraternities is likely, although it cannot be proven for Scandinavia. The interpretations of Holy Spirit in Visby are questionable and concrete evidence is absent connecting the known fraternities such as the Brethren of St. Canute and the militia of Vetheman in Roskilde to the round churches.

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[41] SRI Ög 11–12.
[42] SRI U 55–60.
[43] SRI U 12–14.
[44] SRI U 120–126.
[45] Jørgensen 1958; Johannsen and Smidt 1981, 56ff.
[46] Gallén 1972; SvK 184, 1981, 53ff; Yrwing 1982.
[47] Blomkvist 2005, 495ff.
[48] Morris 2005, 232f.
[49] Jensen 2002, 80f; 2011, 228f, 371ff.

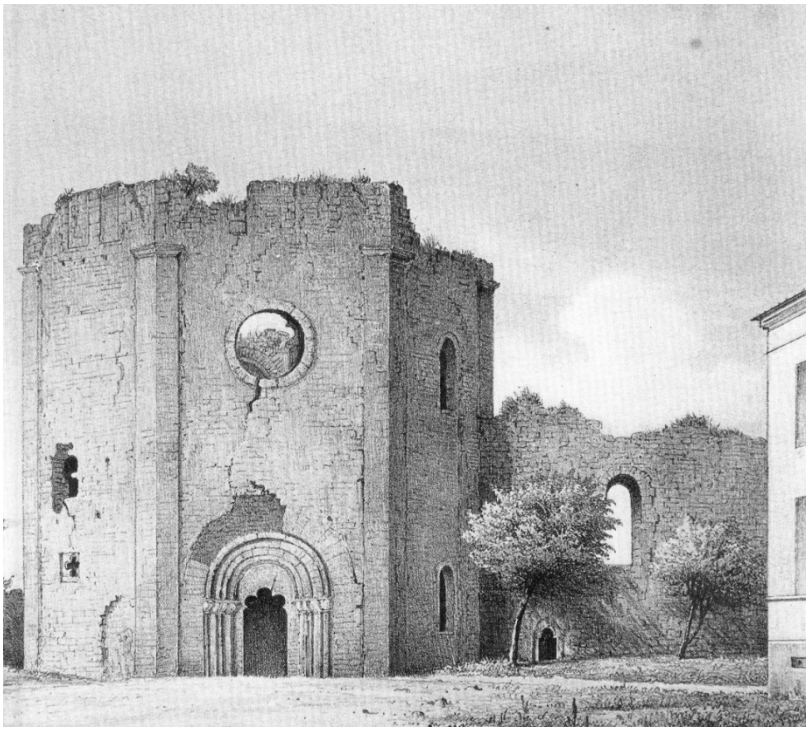

Fig. 1-3. The church of the Holy Spirit in Visby on Gotland. Lithograph by Johan Daniel Herholdt 1852. After SvK 184, 1981, cover.

Finally, did the Knights Templar erect the round churches? Since the nineteenth century it has been a common opinion that the Knights Templar primarily erected central churches, either round or polygonal.[50] A similar opinion, which has achieved great popularity, has also been promoted regarding the four round churches on Bornholm, where Østerlars has been compared to the 16-sided church of the Knights Templar in Tomar in Portugal.[51] However, as several people have pointed out but until now in vain, by far most of the churches built by the Knights Templar *did not* have a central plan, and on closer investigation it can be stated that round and polygonal churches have mistakenly been attributed to the Knights

[50] E.g. Krautheimer 1942, 21; Ödman 2005, 118ff.
[51] Wivel 1989; e.g. Haagensen 2003.

Templar.[52] Furthermore, no medieval Knight Templar is ever known to have set foot on Bornholm.[53]

The round churches of Scandinavia are deviant in that in unusually many cases there are indications of those who took the initiative to the building. Where a social context is visible, it is strikingly elitist – kings, earls, archbishops, bishops, and nobility – and this is no new conclusion. The fact that precisely these groups are expected to appear in the sources does not change the conclusion as the tendency is so clear. Round churches are by and large an elite phenomenon.

Explanations: Fortification, Function, and Symbolism

The enigmatic round churches have been explained with the aid of three perspectives: the theory of the defensive church, the theory of the multi-functional church, and the theory of symbolic imitation.

The idea of fortified churches spread in the eighteenth and nineteenth century and culminated with *Nordens befästa rundkyrkor* (The fortified round churches of Scandinavia) by Frölén in 1910–11. The dissertation achieved great influence: Firstly, the thesis that all round churches were fortified represented a clarification of an already established opinion. Secondly, the thesis was right in time as the question of defence with fixed installations was highly topical with the fortification of Copenhagen built in 1885–94 and the fortification of Boden in Sweden from 1901–16. The defensive church was transformed from being a hypothesis or an interpretation to become a fact. Round churches became refuges for the elderly, women, and children in the parish in times of unrest.[54]

The idea of the fortified church was gradually undermined from the 1950s. After World War II the focus moved from war to trade. It was proposed that the churches on Bornholm had been used as stores in the farmers' trade across the Baltic Sea.[55] Archaeological investigations demonstrated that several churches at Kalmar Sound had been used for habitation, and even as palaces.[56] The turning point came when the perception of both society and churches changed around 1980 from being egalitarian to become more elitist. The theory of the defensive church was attacked and the Swedish medieval archaeologist Marit Anglert introduced

[52] Götz 1968, 298ff; Untermann 1989, 78ff; Naredi-Rainer 1994, 116ff; Morris 2005, 235; Eskildsen 2013.
[53] Wienberg 2002; 2004b.
[54] E.g. Tuulse 1968, 59ff; Tuulse et al. 1960.
[55] Skov 1968, 20.
[56] Åkerlund 1945; Anderson 1960.

the concept of "multi-functional churches".[57] For two or three decades the defensive church vanished with a few exceptions.[58] However, in an age of war, when Scandinavian troops are active abroad, and studies of crusades are enjoying a renaissance, the concept has returned. Now scholars are looking for fortified churchyards.[59]

The idea of Scandinavian round churches as copies of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem was put forward in the nineteenth century.[60] The idea was entangled with ideas about style and typology, as seen in the dissertation by Frölén.[61] An explanation here requires being able to identify a possible model from which the church is copied. The German-American art historian Richard Krautheimer stated in his influential article, "Introduction to an Iconography of Medieval Architecture" from 1942, that in the Middle Ages a copied part of a building might represent the whole. Krautheimer also noted that both round and polygonal buildings were perceived as imitations of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem.[62] The idea of medieval churches and their elements as symbolic copies spread within art history. Round churches being copies of the Holy Sepulchre became a fact.

While the debate about the three different perspectives might be quite heated, I will now, as before, argue that it is not a question of choosing between the first, the second, or the third. All three are needed in different combinations to explain the majority of the deviant churches.[63]

Conspicuous Architecture

The round churches of Scandinavia were normal in most respects, but they deviate in two areas, namely in their social context, which was clearly elitist, and in their exclusiveness. A solution to the enigma of the round churches lies in the relationship between the elite and the exclusive. The starting point must be the fundamental question of why a church was built.

Understanding of medieval church building has shifted between a religious perspective, where actions are motivated by piety – and a secular perspective, where actions are motivated by status, economy, and power. For a long time piety was the obvious answer. Critique arose, inspired by

[57] Anglert 1985; 1993, concept 164.
[58] E.g. Hinz 1985; Lange 1987, 103ff; Lindgren 1995, 94ff.
[59] E.g. Skov 2010.
[60] Hildebrand 1875, 22f.
[61] Frölén 1910–11, cf. Nilsson 1994, 30.
[62] Krautheimer 1942, 2ff.
[63] Wienberg 2004a, 59f.

the Frankfurt School, when church building was perceived as driven by social and economic forces and seen as a manifestation of power.[64] Piety has had a renaissance together with a revival of the archaeology of religion after the fall of the Berlin Wall. Church buildings are compared with the crusades and the forming of a common quest.[65]

The parallel between church building and crusades is thought-provoking in several ways, as here too the perspective of research has fluctuated between piety and power. From my point of view, however, a balance is needed between Heaven and Earth, between the naïve and the vulgar. Both piety and power are relevant for understanding medieval church building.

The medieval elite had a number of attributes which marked their status. The attributes were also visible in the motifs for participation in crusades: religiosity, wealth, and honour. Wealth enabled generosity and conspicuous consumption.[66] Besides, religiosity, wealth, and honour form an analogy to the three floors in the round churches of Bornholm: the church, the store, and defence.

The Norwegian-American sociologist Thorstein Veblen introduced the concept of "conspicuous consumption" concerning the lifestyle of the American upper class.[67] The concept has been used by the Canadian archaeologist Bruce G. Trigger to understand monumental architecture[68] and by the Norwegian archaeologist Jan Brendalsmo to explain the elitist church building of medieval Trøndelag; Brendalsmo claims that all churches were built on the initiative of the elite.[69] Later I have myself reused the concept to understand the Romanesque round church towers of Scandinavia and introduced the concept of "conspicuous symbolism".[70]

Veblen's concept can inspire the coining of the term "conspicuous architecture", because round churches are conspicuous. The solution to the enigma is to understand why the elite initiated a conspicuous architecture: The medieval elite (kings, earls, bishops, and nobility) chose to erect conspicuous architecture, including round churches, in their rivalry for

[64] Cf. Wienberg 2006a.
[65] E.g. Nilsson 2006; 2009, 41ff; Wienberg 2006b, 223.
[66] Nedkvitne 2002.
[67] Veblen 1899.
[68] Trigger 1990.
[69] Brendalsmo 2006, 24ff.
[70] Wienberg 2009, 110f; 2010, 518f.

status[71] – or to keep the necessary "distinction" to use a concept by the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu.[72]

The round churches occur in landscapes where the presence of the elite was dense, that is, where there are many rune stones or Eskilstuna sarcophagi, where there are many magnate estates or manors. The round churches are also surrounded by richly decorated churches with apses, early towers, and galleries.

In the choice of a conspicuous architecture the elite had many possibilities: To build in stone or brick, when these materials were new; to build large, for instance a basilica; to add an eastern, central, or round tower, maybe twin towers; to establish a monastery church; to give rich furnishings and paintings. So why choose a round or polygonal building? Why Jerusalem?

Jerusalem

In the era of the crusades the Heavenly City appears with its walls, gates and churches in countless contexts, both as a metaphor for Paradise and as a concrete material reality.[73] Jerusalem was the centre of the Christian world, as can be seen in medieval maps.[74]

In the imaginations of Jerusalem and in the study of round churches, the Holy Sepulchre (Fig. 1-4) was and still is central. The Church of the Holy Sepulchre has a long and complicated history with a background in round Roman temples and mausoleums. The Holy Sepulchre was built on the initiative of the Roman Emperor Constantine the Great and consecrated in 335 with a mausoleum in the west, i.e. a rotunda, "Anastasis" or Resurrection, over the grave, and a basilica over Golgotha and the crucifixion in the east. The Holy Sepulchre was rebuilt in the twelfth century after the crusaders conquest of the city.[75] The church was imitated throughout the Christian world. The grave building in the middle of the rotunda, the "edicule", was also copied.[76]

[71] Cf. Johannsen and Smidt 1981, 53.
[72] Bourdieu 1979.
[73] Johannsen and Smidt 1981, 100ff; Nilsson 2006; 2009, 46ff.
[74] Harrison 1998, 61ff.
[75] Pringle 2007, III, 6ff.
[76] Johannsen and Smidt 1981, 105ff; Trolle and Pentz 1983; Kroesen 2000; Morris 2005; Krüger 2006.

Fig. 1-4. The church of Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. Photo: Solveig Borgehammar, 6 July 2009.

The burial cave and Golgotha, death and resurrection, are actually recovered in all churches regardless of type, namely in the altar with its relics and crucifix.[77] Thus the round churches followed a general pattern also on a symbolic level in a remembrance of Jerusalem.

It is easy to forget, however, that the remembrance of Jerusalem might cover more than just the Holy Sepulchre. There were other important churches in the city, the octagonal Dome of the Rock on the Temple Mount and the octagonal Church of the Ascension on the Mount of Olives, and many other churches with less conspicuous architecture.[78] Jerusalem also had the Temple of Solomon, described in the Bible, which the crusaders thought they had found in the Al-Aqsa mosque.[79]

Jerusalem also signifies the Crusader kingdom which lasted from 1099 to 1291. In the kingdom there were numerous churches with varied architecture, but outside the capital there were no round or polygon

[77] Johannsen and Smidt 1981, 106.
[78] Pringle 2007, III, 72ff, 397ff.
[79] Pringle 2007, III, 417ff; cf. Borgehammar 2012, 72ff.

churches except for the twelve-sided castle chapel in Atlit Castle, built by the Knights Templar.[80]

Thus Jerusalem is both a broad concept and a broad topography. Jerusalem might mean both a heavenly and an earthly place, referring both to the city and to the kingdom, and it includes numerous buildings with varied architecture to imitate. Jerusalem might be the centre of the world, but it was not the whole world.

Remembering Jerusalem

Were round churches built on the initiative of crusaders or pilgrims to Jerusalem, who wanted to recreate the Holy Sepulchre in their homeland? The answer must be both yes and no.

Memorials and monuments are erected when the living memory of the past is threatened or lost, as the historian Pierre Nora writes.[81] It is a tempting thought that the many round churches might have been built as a memory of Jerusalem in the years, when the city was threatened or lost to Christianity, that is, after 1187. Alternatively, it might concern a personal loss, meaning the memory of a journey to Jerusalem.

Possible reasons why crusaders would erect a round church as a memory were formulated by Hugo F. Frölén and might hold for both round church towers and round churches. Frölen expressed the thoughts of the crusader behind the erection of a round building, thoughts that unite status, piety and conspicuous architecture: “By erecting in his homeland a copy of the Holy Sepulchre he might not only receive a confirmation of an already achieved indulgence, but, what was more important, he himself could rest and receive his death masses in a building which – however smaller and simpler – might be said to depict the Holy Sepulchre of Christ himself. However, other motifs might have played a part as well. By erecting such a memorial at home an abbot or knight could in the best way strengthen his personal reputation and consolidate the memory of his journey”.[82]

The opinion that round churches were built by crusaders returning from Jerusalem is common, and several examples are known. Bishop Landulf built a San Sepolcro in Asti, Earl Simon de Senlis a Holy Sepulchre in Northampton, and Bishop Walbrun of Eichstätt had a copy of the Holy Sepulchre built as a monastery church and inside it a copy of the

[80] Pringle 1993, I, 71ff.
[81] Nora 1989.
[82] Frölén 1910–11, I, 8.

"edicule".[83] In line with this, the Swedish archaeologist Anders Andrén has suggested that Valleberga (Fig. 1-5) in Scania might have been erected as a copy of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem by someone who had participated in the crusades, although not to Jerusalem, but at the Baltic Sea.[84]

Fig. 1-5. The round church of Valleberga in Scania. Photo: Martin Hansson, 2 Aug. 2013.

Recognizing rather recently that the Baltic crusades were also real crusades, it is likely that the elite actors of the round churches all had participated in crusades, even if it only can be verified in a few cases. Thus all or most of the Danish kings in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries participated in crusades or in pilgrimages, which had the same formal status.[85] Sune Ebbesen at Bjernede, like Peder Thorstensen at Pedersborg, participated in the Wendish crusades, as it appears from the chronicle by Saxo, *Gesta Danorum*.[86] And Earl Håkon Paulsson had been on a pilgrimage to Rome and Jerusalem.[87]

[83] Cf. Morris 2005, 223, 230ff; Krüger 2006, 506f.
[84] Andrén 1989.
[85] Jensen 2011.
[86] Cf. Saxo Grammaticus, 2, books 14–16.
[87] Fries 2006, chap. 52.