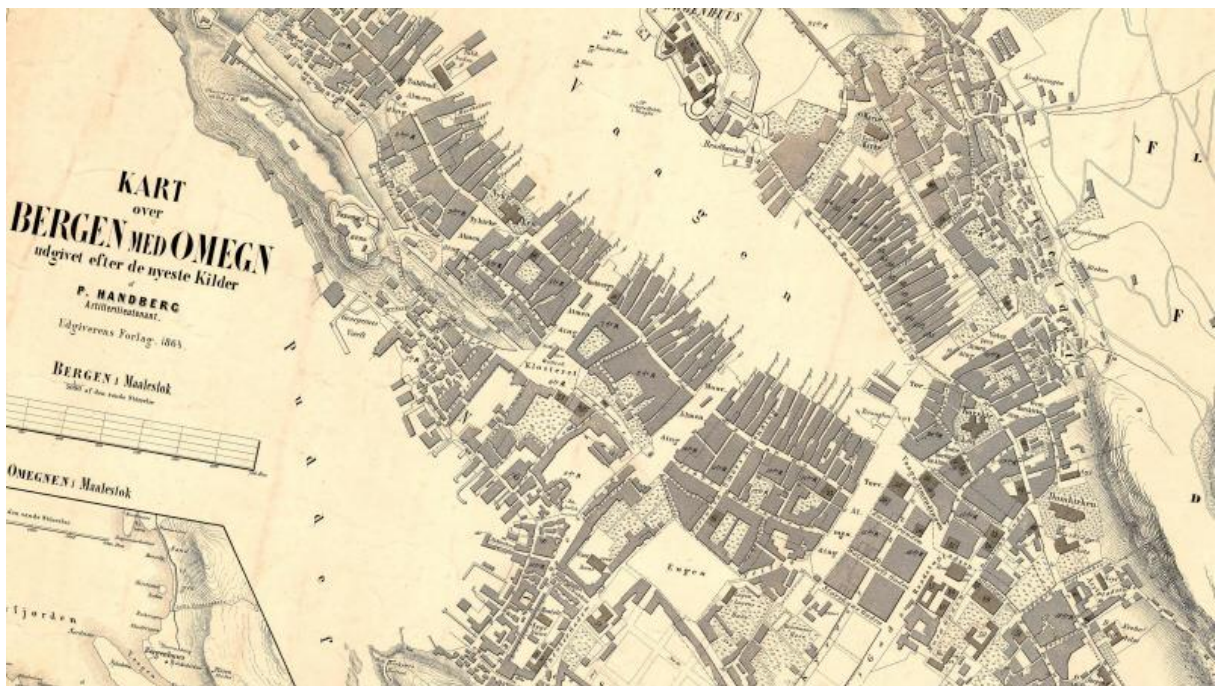


# A Medieval Town.

## A spatial study of the Trading Centre and Episcopal Seat of Bergen, c. 1050-1250.



Stine Arctander Kristensen

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UiO : Department of Archaeology, Conservation and History  
University of Oslo

Cover illustration: *Cutting from a map of the town of Bergen from 1864.* Historiske kart - Kartverket, October 2012 <http://statkart.no/Kart/Historiske-kart/>.

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## Abstract

The present study discusses the royal and ecclesiastical involvement in the emergence and development of the trading centre and Episcopal seat of Bergen in the period AD 1050-1250. The focus of this thesis is to establish what role the King and the Church played in the medieval town through a study of the monumental buildings and the distribution of the ecclesiastical institutions. Two comparative studies view Bergen in light of Sigtuna in Sweden and Oslo in Norway to put things into perspective, and establish whether the initiators had the same idea of organizing the towns. Discussions and interpretations of the town- and church organization in the three towns will be presented.

## Preface

I decided from the very beginning that Bergen was going to be my main topic because I fell in love with the town the three years I spent there as a student. It took a great amount of time to figure out how to approach the diverse material the excavations at Bryggen has provided. The extensive excavations has led to a wealth of publications, so I decided to focus on the royal and ecclesiastical involvement in the town's emergence and development with an emphasis on the Church.

I would never have finished this thesis if it were not for some very special people that deserve some credit. Firstly, I would like to thank my advisor Julie Lund, for her honesty, inspiration and good advice throughout the past year. I could never have done this without you. Secondly, thanks to professor Alf Tore Hommedal, Lotte Hedeager, Per Ditlef Fredriksen and Unn Pedersen for introducing me to literary sources that helped me on my way. A big thank you to Arkikon who allowed me to use print screens from their video on medieval Bergen in my thesis.

I would also like to thank all my fellow master students at Blindernveien 11, especially Eirin Beenberg for the support and the many sessions of playing cards and Jani Causevic and Arild Lunde Teigen for support, inspiration and good conversations. These past years would not have been the same without you all. Finally, thank you to my parents, Heidi and Geir, my sister, Ida, and Camilla, for their encouragement and faith in me.

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*- Stine Arctander Kristensen*





# 1. Introduction

During the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> century, Bergen emerged as the main trade centre in Norway and the Episcopal seat of Western Norway. After being established around 1070, the city grew in size and population, and became one of the most important towns in Norway. At its most Bergen had five monasteries, 20-23 churches and chapels and two hospitals (Hellemann 2003:66). The present study discusses the royal and ecclesiastical involvement in the medieval town. The King was a major actor in the founding and development of the medieval towns, and provided finances and workforce to expand the town area. With the introduction of Christianity in Scandinavia, the Church established itself as a powerful actor next to the King. The Church continued the building activity the King started, and contributed to the further development of the medieval towns.

The studying of the distribution of ecclesiastical institutions in the townscape contribute to a better understanding of the role of the religious powers in the medieval town, as well as the planning of the town. This study views the ecclesiastical distribution in relation to the surroundings and the King. The medieval towns of Oslo, Tønsberg, Trondheim and Bergen are the largest continuous automatically preserved cultural monuments in Norway. Very little is visible above the ground, however a few buildings have been preserved since medieval times, and some are still in use today. Other buildings were torn down in the Middle Ages or more recently, but are still visible as ruins (Molaug 2002:7).

To gain a better understanding of the medieval town, a comparison of different medieval towns from approximately the same period and/or with similar functions in the society, is an essential method. Analyzing the medieval town in a comparative study put things into perspective. This study compares Bergen with Sigtuna in Sweden and Oslo in Norway. There are several similarities between the three towns, for instance the concentration of trade and production, dense settlements, religious organization and a planned street-system. In addition, all three towns became Episcopal seats however; the development in the townscape took three different turns. Bergen and Oslo continued to be important towns into modern times, while Sigtuna lost its importance when the Episcopal seat moved from the town in the mid-12<sup>th</sup> century.

## 1.1 Aims and the structure of the thesis

With this thesis, I will examine the presence of the King and the Church in the development of the trading centre and Episcopal seat of Bergen from a historical-archaeological perspective. The different monuments that were built during the Middle Ages are physical remains that can help explain the role the two actors played in the townscape. I will analyse where in the townscape the different monuments are located, how they are placed in relation to each other, and the use of space in the town in general in order to get an understanding of how the initiator planned the town and the nearby areas. The whole process of the town development will also be further examined through a comparison with Sigtuna in Sweden and Oslo in Norway. Written sources is also an area that I will investigate to get a better understanding of the medieval towns. The aims of my thesis are the following:

1. I claim that the King and the Church were important factors in the emergence of Bergen. How can we study their role in the emergence and the development of the town in the spatial landscape?
2. The townscape in Bergen was characterized by all the ecclesiastical institutions that were erected there. Where are the different monuments located in the town, and in relation to each other?
3. A great number of towns emerged in the Middle Ages. Are there any similarities and/or differences in the town planning in Bergen compared to other Scandinavian towns?

I wish to investigate the developments that took place in the town. In order to do this the focus will be on the period between 1050 and 1250 AD. This period is chosen because it will include the first stages of the town and the major factors that contributed in developing the town, before the Hanseatic (German merchants) became an important part of the townscape. As mentioned earlier, Bergen grew to become the main trade centre in Norway. The trade and crafts will not be examined in this thesis because my focus is on how the Church and the King contributed in the developments of the town. It would also create a tremendous amount of workload.

## *Structure of the thesis*

In chapter 2, I introduce some of the previous research about medieval towns and the urbanizing process. Each of the following chapters will also present previous research within the theme they deal with. Chapter 3 presents the theoretical and methodological reflections used in this thesis. Chapter 4 discusses the emergence of the medieval towns and whether Bergen was founded or grew organically. In chapter 5, I deal with the King's presence in the town and his relation to the Church. Chapter 6 discusses the different ecclesiastical institutions in the townscape. I discuss their distribution, relation to each other and the role they played in the development of the town. In chapters 7 and 8, I compare Bergen to Sigtuna and Oslo. The main themes for comparison are the town organization, church organization and the King's role in the town. The gathering of the discussions and summary is found in chapter 9, while chapter 10 concludes the thesis.

## 1.2 What is a town?

Several archaeologists and historians have compiled a set of criteria that has to be present to term a place a town. Knut Helle and Arved Nedkvitne developed two: 1) The place has to function as a centre in comparison to a periphery/smaller surroundings, 2) It has to be a village compared to the surrounding districts. Even though certain places could be small and insignificant, its contemporaries could see it as 'urban' (Helle & Nedkvitne 1977: 190-192). There seems to have existed a variety of locations that could be regarded as a distinctive, central place, but that some continued to acquire an urban character, while others went back to being 'normal' rural settlements (Astill 2000:28). Places can be central on different levels or in different contexts, and could have changed over time (Sindbæk 2009:99). The towns were different from the market places because they developed in an interplay with the surroundings, and because they cared for economic, administrative, cultural and religious functions for these surroundings (Sigurðsson & Riisøy 2011:88-89). According to Jonas Ros a town "...may be defined as a densely settled permanently built up central place inhabited by men, women and children" (Ros 2009:259), while Åke Hyenstrand said, "A centre is characterized by a functional interaction between ideological, political and economic systems and a powerful king" (Hyenstrand 1990:76) [translation by author]. No definition is more correct than others are. They all have their strengths and weaknesses. The King was not always present in all central places; it could just as well be a powerful lord or simply a rich

merchant. There are no absolute standards to what needs to be present to term a place a town or a centre. This changes from area to area and country to country, and needs to be considered.

Martin Biddle (1976) claimed that there were twelve different criteria that could be used to determine whether a place could be defined as a town: (1) defences; (2) a planned street-system; (3) a market(s); (4) a mint; (5) legal autonomy; (6) a role as a central place; (7) a relatively large and dense population; (8) a diversified economic base; (9) plots and houses of 'urban' type; (10) social differentiation; (11) complex religious organization; and (12) a judicial centre (Biddle 1976:100). Heiko Steuer (2007) presented a set of characteristics that can be identified in the archaeological records: (1) an easily accessible location on inter-regional routes (by both land and water); (2) a concentration of trading and craft production; (3) a dense population; (4) separation from the surrounding countryside (often by means of a fortification); (5) infrastructure facilities for the inhabitants (such as systematic layout of plots, a system of roads and paths, open squares for markets, bridges, quays and other port facilities); and (6) specialized building types to meet the needs of craftsmen and merchants (differing from the farm structures required for agricultural use). The religious or sacred structures, such as churches, monasteries and convents, come in addition to this (Schofield & Steuer 2007:134). The built environment of a city is often considered as a concentration of buildings of different types (churches, houses, monasteries, hospitals, etc.) in different materials (stone, wood, bricks, etc.). Moreover, the building density is one of the factors that separate the city from the countryside (Vannieuwenhuyze et. al. 2012:224-225).

If a place fulfils one or several of these criteria or characteristics it does not prove that it was a town, but it provides certain indications that need to be considered in order to establish the function of the place. In the early phases of a town, only a few criteria might be present, but as it develops and grows, more of these criteria appear. Biddle's 'checklist' is problematic and can make us only accept places that match certain criteria. Some criteria might be seen as more important than others might, in other words that if a place '*only* has this or that criteria' it could not have been a town. It can also lead to a generalization of places with similarities, like saying that if a place has similarities to Bergen or Sigtuna it must have been a town, or that Viking Age towns and medieval towns had the same characteristics. Being dependent on this set of characteristics can also contribute to the dismissal of places that actually that its contemporaries considered a town. This kind of list should not form the basis of the study of towns, but can serve as a guideline. When considering the criteria along with the archaeological material, they can prove to be important tools in the study of the

towns. However, I would stress the importance in using the archaeological sources, even though the proportion of most towns excavated is relatively small. The excavated evidence can show us the diversity of a town through information about the Churches, defences, tools and the inhabitants (Astill 2000:27). The more criteria a place had the more urban it seemed to be (Schofield 2007:111). Several sets of characteristics to explain what a town is have been developed. This simply means that there is not set formula as to which places can be termed a town. It would be of greater value to identify the different types of places that existed in the past, and what kind of functions they had for their contemporaries, rather than only distinguishing the towns from the non-towns. Dagfinn Skre (2007) stresses the distinction between *definition* and *description*. A definition should comprise all towns from all periods and must therefore be broad, while a description is merely a collection of characteristics from a specific town, area and period (Skre 2007a:46). It has been difficult to find one general definition that can fit all towns, because there are so many variances in the medieval towns. Some towns seem to have developed from central markets, while others emerged in areas with no previous activity. Describing and comparing different towns is therefore a valuable method in learning more about them.

Written sources can contribute to investigating towns from the past. The sagas mention many Scandinavian towns and this at least, tell us they existed or were considered as urban centres by its contemporaries. The sagas also mention several events that took place in the towns, however the details about them and the time they happened varies from the different written sources. Many other characteristics are present in the written material, like sagas, diplomas, inscriptions on everyday objects and law codes however, in many instances, we need archaeological material to prove or support them. Historians can be qualified to investigate and interpret written sources, but to be able to understand the physical remains from craft production, trade and settlements an archaeologist should be involved. The written sources can state the names of different areas, farms and locations from the past. The place-names, in combination with archaeological material, have served archaeologists as a helpful tool since the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. They can provide information about for instance the cultural landscape and settlement developments (Albris 2011:22). Place-names are a special source of information because they are locally based and because they originally were passed on orally (Albris 2011:3).

### 1.3 Geographical setting

Bergen is a town and a municipality in the county of Hordaland on the west coast of Norway. The town grew around the *Vågen Bay*, and the area could be reached from the mainland by horse or on foot (fig. 1). However, the easiest way to get to Bergen was by boat. The landscape is rugged and the ‘seven mountains’ (de syv fjell) surround the city centre as well as the districts. The town’s original name was ‘Björgvin’, which means ‘the green meadow between the mountains’. In the Middle Ages, Bergen’s hinterland was relatively rich in arable land compared to local standards, and fishing and hunting could supplement agriculture (Hansen 2005:20).

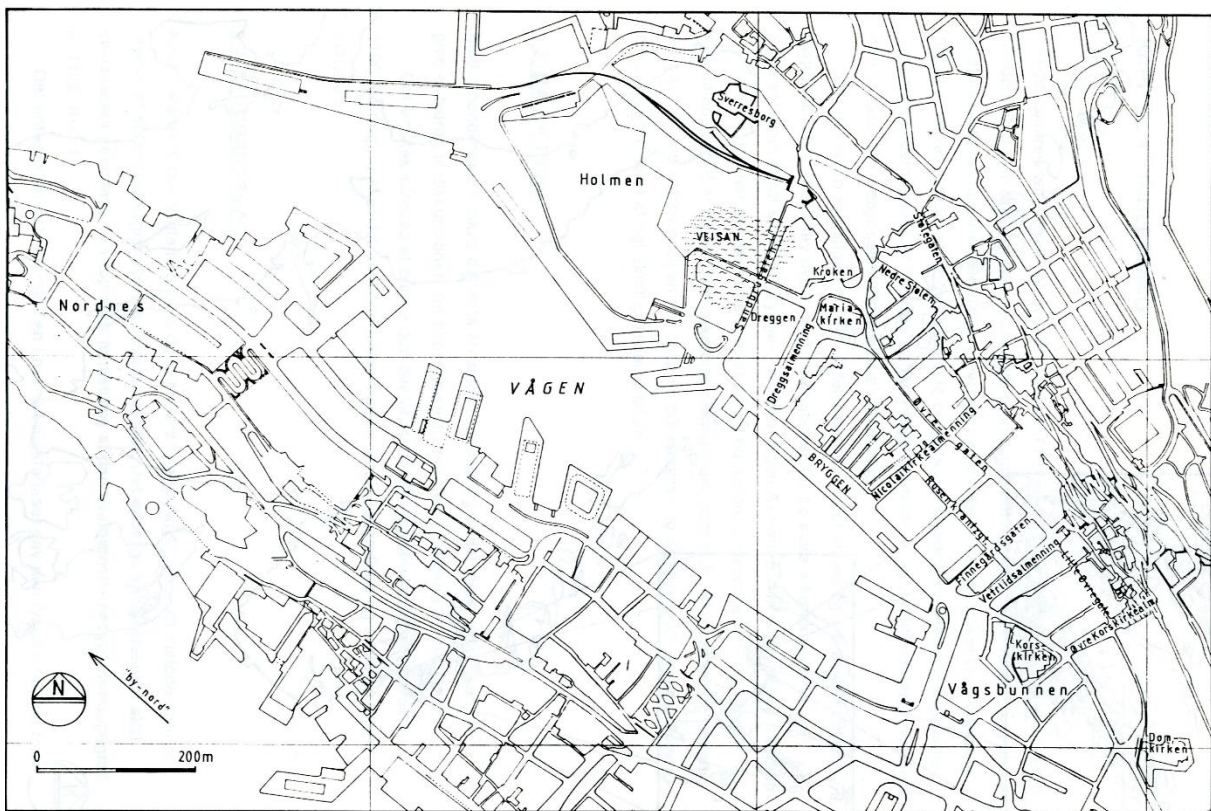


Figure 1 Bergen city centre today. After Hansen (1994).

## 2. Previous research

*Medieval towns* and the *urbanizing process* has been a popular field of study in Norwegian research since the 16<sup>th</sup> century. In later times, the historians still have an interest for the medieval towns, with a focus on the history, development or certain elements of a town seen in a comparative way. During the 20<sup>th</sup> century, monographs have been published of the four most important towns in Norway (Oslo/Kristiania: Bull 1922, Tønsberg: O. A. Johnsen 1929, Trondheim: Blom 1956 & Bergen: Helle 1982). Up to World War II, historians and art historians did the research on the medieval town's history. For a long time the research concentrated on written sources and topography (i.e. Lorentzen 1952; Schiørring 1993), however the archaeological material, whenever present, was taken into consideration. At first, it was used as illustrations for the interpretations of the towns, but gradually the archaeological material became more important as a starting point in the historical processing of the medieval towns (Helle & Nedkvitne 1977:189). The archaeological dimension changed after the war, and town archaeology was developed as an own discipline. The comprehensive excavations in the medieval towns have provided archaeologists with large amounts of material. Among these are Oslo (i.e. Molaug 1990, 2008; Schia & Molaug 1991), Sigtuna (i.e. Allerstav et.al. 1991; Ros 2009; Tesch 1990), Lund (i.e. Hervén 2008), Tønsberg (i.e. Eriksson & Thoresen 1976; Ulriksen 2008) and Bergen (Hansen 2005; Helle 1982; Herteig 1985). The study of the material in combination with the written sources, topography, landscape, etc. has made it possible to produce more nuanced interpretations of the settlement history (i.e. Herteig 1990, 1991; Iversen 1999, 2008; Moldung 2000).

From the middle of the 1980s, several studies of artifacts from the excavation at Bryggen in *Bergen* were published. They include, among others, the buildings (Herteig 1990, 1991), coins (Skaare 1984) and runic inscriptions (Dyvik 1988; Seim 1988a; Seim 1988b). The extensive work in Bergen after the fire at Bryggen in 1955 has inspired a line of researchers and produced amounts of publications. The focus in this study will be on the how the town *emerged*, the role of the *Church* and the *King* in the development of the town and two *comparative studies* with two other Scandinavian towns, Sigtuna and Oslo. Exploring the physical appearance of the town at its emergence is important in order to identify the developments and expansions that took place. The original size of the town can explain which areas that were considered important, and the expansions can show how other parts were incorporated in the townscape. This could also contribute to a better understanding of which activities that were important for the development of the town. The first settlements in Bergen

seem to have appeared around the Veisan inlet, while eventually the settlements were concentrated around the Vågen Bay. The town's development was usually linked to one or several initiators. In most cases, the initiators were people with power, as can be seen in all the different monuments erected by them. After the royal kingdom was established, the King sought to expand and develop the towns, in addition to showing his powers to the people. We know that in the 12<sup>th</sup> century the Church played an important role in the town, so it is natural to examine how it contributed to the developments. When working with the medieval period, archaeologists can compare written sources and archaeological material. The written sources will not be a focus in this thesis, but serve as a supplementary source in the different chapters. Trade and exchange is another aspect that could contribute to this research, but is not examined due to the amount of workload it would produce.

This leaves us with four main themes this thesis will analyze: The emergence of the town (chapter 4), the King in the town (chapter 5), the sacral urban space (chapter 6) and comparative studies (chapter 7+8). The themes will include the early stages of the town and the developments and expansions in which the Church and the King contributed.



### 3. Theories and methods

#### 3.1 Theoretical reflections on landscape

The term 'landscape' is very loosely used, and has been applied in different ways in cultural geography and archaeology (Cresswell 2003:269). Today, there are landscapes of almost anything (i.e. criminal landscape, religious landscape, etc.). The word is understood in a broad sense as 'the open land', but also as something that is limited (Albris 2011:41). 'Landscape' is a singularly complex and difficult concept with multiple meanings. It can mean the topography and landforms of a given area, a terrain in which people live or a fragment of a land, which can be overseen from a single vantage point. On the other side landscape can also be an object, an experience or a representation (Thomas 2001:166). A landscape is "an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of action and interaction of natural and/or human factors" according to the European Landscape Convention (Carver 2009:86). A cultural landscape is a landscape transformed by human activities, and exists by virtue of being perceived, experienced and contextualized by people (Ashmore & Knapp 1999:1). The concept landscape is important in archaeology as well as geography. Both disciplines incorporate an analytical opposition between physical or natural landscapes on one side and human or cultural landscapes on the other (Falconer & Redman 2009:2).

Matthew Johnson (2007) presented two elements involved in how archaeologists in the Western traditions view landscape: (1) The physical: the land itself, the humanly created features and their natural context, and (2) the mental: how the land is viewed and understood within certain cognitive systems (Johnson 2007:3-4). The combination of the world as an image and object, and that of humans as external observers, provide the conditions for the creation of the modern western notion of landscape (Thomas 2001:167). Archaeologists used to focus on what people did to the land and how it aided and constrained them (i.e. topography and resources), rather than what the people thought and felt about the landscape (Ashmore & Knapp 1999:7). A gendered gaze has characteristically been the way we look at landscape. Western paintings define men as the active producers and viewers of image, while the women are passive objects of visual pleasure. This sexualized way of looking is troubling within archaeology, because we make use of a series of spatial technologies (Geographical Information System (GIS), satellite imagery, air photography) which seek to lay bare and penetrate the land (Thomas 2001:169). Ashmore & Knapp (1999) have reviewed four different themes in the archaeological study of landscapes. These are (1) landscape as

memory, (2) landscape as identity, (3) landscape as social order, and (4) landscape as transformation (Ashmore & Knapp 1999:13). Seeing the landscape as memory is particularly associated with how the Aborigines of Australia view their landscape. The landscape is a part of the collective memory of the people that live in it. This also indicates a continuity in the landscape, often through re-use, reinterpretation or restoration and reconstruction, as can be seen at Stonehenge, Machu Picchu or Persepolis. Even if these monuments and places are in use today, it does not mean that they are ascribed the same meanings now as in the past. Ritual, symbolic or ceremonial terms sometimes maintain some places or regions, and these places create and express sociocultural identity. The features that are ascribed special attention can range from architectural constructions to rock markings. Social roles, relations and identities are mapped on the land, so the landscape can be a key to understanding or interpreting a society. It is a way to get a better understanding of the link between minds, meaning and social order in the prehistoric context. Distinctions such as gender, sex, age, kin, group, class and ethnicity are examples on different social orders that can change how we view the archaeological record. The last theme reviewed is landscape as transformation. A landscape can change in time, as social orders change. There is generally a focus on the erection of monuments and their use, but the 'afterlife' can be just as important. Abandoned monuments are still part of the landscape. Some places were important places of pilgrimage in the past, while today they attract amounts of tourists as symbols of the past (i.e. Teotihuacan in Mexico and Trondheim in Norway) (Ashmore & Knapp 1999:13-19).

The human beings transform a 'space' into a 'place'. The archaeologists are therefore at liberty to investigate past landscapes as aggregates of landforms, soil types and vegetation patterns in the first instance. It is only later that we can turn to how these phenomena were perceived by past people. The technology available to us now gives access to a stratum of reality, which was unavailable to the people in the past (Thomas 2001:171). "Lived space, as opposed to measured geometric space, is defined by the qualitative attributes of direction and closeness. Both of these are relationships, brought into being by human beings" (Thomas 2001:172). Only when we have the distinction between 'near' and 'far', can we measure the distance between two objects. The cartographic space is therefore secondary to and derived from the everyday space that we inhabit. Being close or far away from something is not only a matter of physical location, but also part of human beings' life experience, and relationship to others (Thomas 2001:172-173). Let me give an example: My childhood home is in closer proximity to its new owners, but seeing as I lived there for most of my life, I have gained a closeness to the house that they do not have (yet). "The landscape is the familiar world within

which people perform their everyday tasks...” (Thomas 2001:175).

The aspects that are important for this thesis are the following: the concept landscape as two disciplines: the physical/ natural landscape and the human/cultural landscape, and the way human beings create their own landscapes by transforming a ‘space’ into a ‘place’.

### 3.2 Methodological aspects: Archaeological sources in the landscape

Several methodological aspects affect how we interpret archaeological sources, especially when they are compared or contextualized in a landscape. The preserving matters are depending on natural and cultural processes. Natural processes are natural events, like the gradual burial of artifacts by wind-borne soils, while cultural processes involve human activities, for instance the making and using of artifacts and the construction and abandonment of buildings. These processes can disturb or destroy the primary context of the archaeological material. As an archaeologist it is therefore important to know whether certain archaeological evidence is the product of human or non-human activities (Renfrew & Bahn 2008:54-57). There are three techniques of landscape survey: (1) Looking at maps (cartography), (2) looking at the surface of the ground (surface inspection), and (3) looking from the air (aerial photography). Maps can show the landscape before major events like the industrial revolution or natural disasters took place. Surface inspections can produce amounts of finds, including monuments and everyday objects, while the aerial photographs can show regularities from human management, like field boundaries interrupted by later roads or traces from previous buildings (Carver 2009:65-70). Gansum et. al. (1997) stress that any landscape inhabited by humans has a visual, archaeological and cultural structure, and by examining the archaeological and visual landscape, it is possible to reconstruct the cultural (Gansum et. al. 1997:10). We perceive the landscape on several different levels, the individual level, the professional level, and the cultural level. Some perceptions will vary from person to person (individual), but people within the same occupation or profession will have certain values in common (professional). In spite of the individual and professional differences, a set of common perceptions culturally determined (cultural) exists. Perception is individually and culturally determined, which is an important point for archaeologists. The way we view a landscape today is not necessarily, how people perceived it at all times and in all cultures (Gansum et. al. 1997:11). Gro B. Jerpåsen (2011) emphasizes the use of Archaeological

Landscape Analysis by Visual Methods (ALAV). Viewing the landscape as a surface and regarding it from a human perspective is essential in this method. The visual context and aspect are important when discussing the location of large and visible monuments (Jerpåsen 2011:125). There are two concepts developed for analysing the cultural structure of landscape: *man-to-land relationship* (the relationship between an individual site or monument and certain landscape elements) and *man-to-man relationship* (how sites and monuments in the landscape relate to each other) (Jerpåsen 2011:127).

Landscape archaeology does not only concern itself with the physical environment *onto* which people live out their lives, but also the meaningful location *in* which lives are lived. This includes physical objects, like trees and rocks, as meaningful things in people's lives and practices. Landscape archaeology is an archaeology of how people saw the world, how they changed their surroundings and did things due to their locational circumstances (David & Thomas 2008:38). The interpretation and dating of the archaeological finds are part of how we perceive different places in a landscape. Sometimes it is possible to give a precise dating, while in other cases we have to accept wider timeframes. Another important aspect to keep in mind is whether the archaeological material is a result of a single event or actions that have taken place over a longer period of time (Albris 2011:12-13). When the extensive excavations at Bryggen in Bergen took place between 1955 and 1979, there was a larger focus on stratigraphic excavations and thorough documentation of all layers. In this method of relative dating, the important principle is that the underlying layer was deposited first and earlier than the overlying layer. The artifacts, structures and organic remains found within these layers are what archaeologists mostly want to date, and not necessarily the layers or the deposits themselves (Renfrew & Bahn 2008:122). Archaeological material are remains from human activities and gives archaeologists the possibility to study the human patterns of behaviour. The actions we find traces from can be intentional, like the production of tools, or unintentional, like the production of layers of waste (Albris 2011:36-37). Investigating prehistoric monuments have proven to be very productive, because it gives us the opportunity to study, among other things, the details of architecture, mortuary activity and depositional practices in the context of the surrounding topography (Thomas 2001:177). Critics have pointed towards archaeologists deluding themselves if they think that they can gain access to the meaning of places and features from the past. However what archaeologists are doing, is entering the same set of material relationships in which people found themselves in the past, and producing own interpretations (Thomas 2001:180).

Modern states make their mark on the landscape with the intention of creating large,

visible, and enduring symbols to their abilities to harness not only nature but also vast amounts of human labour. Katharina Schreiber, anthropologist, argues that state works transformed the landscape in such a way as to leave metaphoric monuments to their power. She characterizes such “great projects” by four criteria: (1) They are exceptionally large, (2) these projects involve large amounts of labour input, (3) these works are visible and transform the landscape, and (4) they are durable, often outliving the society or state that produced them. Many of these monuments still have a meaning in the modern world. These include obvious examples such as cathedrals or the Egyptian pyramids, but also roads and agricultural systems. However, the intentions of the monuments were not always to serve as metaphors of the powers of the society, but could just as well be out of economic necessity (Schreiber 2009:73-74). The many and towering churches in Bergen makes an impression on many today, and we can only imagine the impact they must have had on the people in medieval times. They created a new physical landscape as well as a cultural landscape, changing the way people experienced the town. A topographic study of Bergen can provide a deep analysis, and possibly shed further light on the question of the relation between the different ecclesiastical monuments in the townscape.

In order to get a better understanding of a town, a comparative study can be an essential method. Sigtuna (i.e. Edberg 2000; Ros 2009; Tesch 1989a, 1989b) is Sweden’s oldest medieval town in the eastern part of the country. In the 11<sup>th</sup> century, Archbishop Adalbert of Bremen made Sigtuna an Episcopal seat, and the town was a central place for the establishment of the Church in Sweden (Tesch 2008). Oslo (i.e. Bull 1922; Keller & Schia 1994; Molaug 2008) emerged around the mid-11<sup>th</sup> century and became an Episcopal seat in eastern Norway. The main reason for choosing these towns is because they all became Episcopal seats. By comparing Bergen with Sigtuna and Oslo, similarities and differences, providing a better understanding and interpretation of the two towns.

Middle Age archaeologists have one advantage compared to archaeologists working with prehistory; the use of the written sources and the archaeological material in interaction. The written sources are part of the philological tradition that deals with the study and deciphering of different text materials and language studies (Andrén 1997:120-125). Bergen has a relatively rich amount of written material (i.e. law codes, manuscripts and letters). Comparing the different written sources with each other, in addition to the archaeological material, can provide us with valuable information about the medieval town. The writing of the documents or texts took place long after the events, so it is important to maintain a critical perspective when working with them. The texts are generally not representative for the whole

community because they were for and about the elite.

To sum up, I will use several methods in order to fulfil my aims in this thesis. The first method is to examine and analyse the landscape and topography of the townscape, and in that way understand the planning and the location of the different monuments better. The focus will be on the cultural processes that have formed the landscape. The second method is the study of the medieval monuments. Some of these buildings and structures are still a part of today's landscape. I will examine their relationship to the landscape as well as to each other. The third method is a comparative study of Bergen and Sigtuna.

## 4. The emergence of towns

In Norwegian research, two models have explained the emergence of towns, known as ‘the organic town tradition’ and ‘the founded town tradition’. The historian P. A. Munch claimed that most Norwegian towns originated from previous trade-, market- or fishing places. The town could then develop further with more comprehensive building and township status from the King (Munch 1849; also i.e. Helle & Nedkvitne 1977; Knagenhjelm 2008; Ulriksen 2008). In 1899, the historian Gustav Storm opposed this view on how the towns originated. He agreed that some towns started as marketplaces, but stated that the more important towns, like Bergen, Nidaros and Oslo, originally were royal farms that the King intended to make towns (Storm 1899). His hypothesis does not involve towns in general, only the three mentioned. This model is partly based on the Norwegian royal sagas in “Heimskringla”, that states that the King founded several of the Norwegian towns (Hødnebo & Magerøy 1979a, 1979b, 1979c). The archaeologist Hans Andersson summarizes some of the points from the articles presented in the fifth volume of *Universitetet i Bergen Arkeologiske Skrifter (UBAS)*. He states that the archaeological evidence found in the oldest towns, from around the 10<sup>th</sup> to the mid-11<sup>th</sup> century, are traces from agrarian activity and connected to early manors. The case for the later towns is that they often were new creations on the site where they would later develop (Andersson 2008).

Christian Koren-Wiberg, historian, suggested that Bergen developed from a number of farmsteads located at the foot of Fløyfjellet, with boathouses along Vågen and roads down to them. Then, eventually, the place grew when the King released his properties, gave it laws and administration and built churches (Koren-Wiberg 1908, 1921). The King founded several of the medieval towns to serve as a meeting place for local and long-distance traders, and for production of agricultural goods in the areas surrounding the town (Schofield & Steuer 2007:142). Bernt Lorentzen, historian, supported Storm’s theory about the town’s development. He found evidence in written sources like *Bergen Fundas*, the sagas and the book of letters from Munkeliv Benedictine Abbey that supported the idea of the area around Vågen being royal property, and that the King must have initiated the founding of the town (Helle 1982:133-134; Herteig 1985; Lorentzen 1952:38-39;). No diplomas or other written sources can state that the King owned the land in the Bryggen area, because the farms here were from the first stages of the town. In the Nordnes area, the story is quite different. The oldest farms here were from the 13<sup>th</sup> century and contemporary with the first diplomas. Some state that the King was the owner of the properties they were located on (Lorentzen 1952: 38-

39). In his PhD thesis, the historian Geir Atle Ersland argues that Bergen was planned and founded physically, most likely by Olav Kyrre, but in an area with a village character. This could have been done juridical, or by parcelling the area into plots. Every medieval town was composed of different plan units, which appeared in the different stages of its development. One unit can represent a period in the development where the royal factors were the most important, while other units represented periods where the military or political factors were the most dominant (Ersland 1994:44-64). Several of the functions of the King and the Church were located in the town. In general, most researchers agree that most towns originated in places that had older centre functions, that the royal power at an early stage contributed to further development, and that the Church, as an independent town developer, functioned from around 1100. Generally, the different factors and how far they had come in the different phases of the town's development, are what scholars disagree on (Helle & Nedkvitne 1977:208; Schofield & Steuer 2007:136).

Gitte Hansen contributed to the discussion about the settlement topography in 12<sup>th</sup> century Bergen, with her thesis from 1994. She considered the new material; archaeological, natural topographic and written sources, systematized it and presented it cartographically. Her first step was to reconstruct the natural topography in the town-area from the time before the foundation of the town. Further, the written sources were analysed in comparison to the archaeological and topographic sources. The dating and dating-methods are important to interpret the archaeological material, so she presented and discussed the methods used on the material from Bergen. After analysing the material, she concluded that there were dense and continuous settlements along Vågen from Vetrlidsalmenningen all the way out to the area around the Veisan inlet (Hansen 1994:132).

Archaeologist Sten Tesch was part of the team that performed the largest excavation in Sigtuna in Sweden (1988-90) and has worked and published extensively on the medieval town (i.e. Tesch 1990, 2001, 2007). One of the more astounding discoveries made when excavating in Sigtuna was evidence that pointed towards the town being *founded*. There were no earlier settlements or a marketplace, and the first action taken in the area was to clear away the vegetation and divide it into plots (Tesch 2007:90). It is clear that Sigtuna from the beginning was a founded and planned town, not just because of the boundary ditches uncovered, but also because of the regularity of the plots and settlements (Tesch 2007:93). Several Viking Age towns and marketplaces have these features. However, they all have in common that they did not exist in the Middle Ages. Sigtuna holds a special role in the research on Swedish towns, because it is the only town dated to the period between the



Viking Age and Middle Ages (Tesch 1996:114).

As presented in chapter 1.2, Martin Biddle proposed twelve criteria that could help determine whether a place was a town or an urban settlement. Biddle worked with Anglo-Saxon towns and developed the criteria for that purpose, but these criteria are relevant for the Scandinavian towns as well. Several of the criteria are present in almost every medieval town we know of today. John Schofield claims that the more of these criteria a place has, the more urban it may be regarded (Schofield & Steuer 2007:111). This also points towards a sense of continuity. In the initial phases, an urban settlement could have only one or two of the criteria present, but as it expanded, more criteria developed. There are sets of characteristics we can identify in the archaeological material (see chapter 1.2). These characteristics can help distinguish a town from a village.

Archaeologist Erik Schia presented four main theories on how Norwegian towns emerged. Firstly, that the towns developed from organically grown marketplaces in locations with centre functions. Secondly, that the King founded the towns, as centres for defence, administration and collection, often in places without old centre functions. Thirdly, that the royal power organizes a previous, old marketplace, in other words a combination of the first and second. Lastly, that the Church as founder, by the clergy gaining the surplus of the farmers labour and thereby providing work for the others in the town (Schia 1991:144).

In summary, there are several different models of how the Norwegian medieval towns emerged, and they all have elements that can explain how Bergen became a town. A combination of the models is also a possibility. It is possible that there was previous activity in the area, but that does not necessarily mean that Olav Kyrre did not found the town. In Sigtuna, on the other hand, the town was founded on 'virgin soil', which proves that there is no universal model that fits every town or marketplace.

## 4.1 Founded or organically grown town?

A central question in the origin of several towns has been whether someone founded them or if they grew organically. The sagas state that Bergen was founded during Olav Kyrres reign (1067-1093), and 'Heimskringla' specifically states that Olav Kyrre himself founded the town (Hødnebo & Magerøy 1979a:549). Gitte Hansens (2005) extensive work on the emergence of Bergen has provided a new view on how the town developed. Based on the archaeological material she argues that an agrarian settlement most likely occupied the area from the time

between the 9<sup>th</sup> century and c 1020/30. A post from a landing-place for boats, located in the middle town area, dates to c 900 AD. This shows that there was activity in the area, but does not tell us what extent this activity had. We can see a similar situation in Copenhagen, Denmark where the founding of the town usually is set to 1167, when bishop Absalon of Roskilde according to written sources built a castle on one of the islets close to the town. However, archaeologists have found waste layers indicating permanent settlements in the area from the end of the 10<sup>th</sup> century (Gabrielsen 1999:9). Potentially, Bergen and Copenhagen were not considered as towns until the King or the bishop invested and made plans for them, but archaeological evidence show that there were settlers here. The occurrence of permanent installations other than houses can show that a site was permanently settled (Skre 2007b:453).

In the first wave of urbanization, which began around 800 AD, the towns were closely associated with kings, but were not seats of power in the form of residences of kings or petty kings. It does not appear that any apparatus that exercised administrative functions was present. When the second urbanising wave came around AD 1000, the town became a place of interest for those in power. The King and the bishop built their residences here, and the towns became royal and ecclesiastical centres (Skre 2007a:45). Chapter 5 discusses the King's role further. There were settlements and traces from agrarian activities prior to the founding and through botanical investigations, botanists have identified three general types of environments predating 1070. One of these is agricultural environments with traces of cultivation and grazing (Hansen 2005:40).

According to today's Norwegian laws, the municipalities can appoint towns themselves. Theoretically, a municipality with several villages can decide to call them all towns. In a sense they are not founded, they simply gain a status. In the Viking Age or Medieval times, the proper documents that gave the village a status as a town might not be present, but its contemporaries considered it a town. I find this as clear indications that this is enough to call it a town, even if the written sources do not specifically call Bergen a town until the 12<sup>th</sup> century.

In summary, there are different explanations for the emergence of towns. Some written sources claim that the King founded the town, while the archaeological material imply that they grew organically. One of the differences between the founded town and the organically grown town is whether they were planned from the beginning or not. When a town is founded, there is usually an initiator present with certain plans for it. The initiator could divide the area into plots that were established when the settlement was founded. When an organically grown village becomes a town, there were usually no plans to have a town there.

Potentially the settlers there saw a potential in the area and found all the resources they needed to survive in the proximity. In this model more and more people settled down there, and it developed from a settlement to a village and in the end to a town.

## 4.2 Discussion

A number of towns emerged in the 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries. Ordericus Vitalis mentioned six of them when he wrote about Norway around 1135. Bergen was one of these towns. The reason he only mentioned these six could be because they were the largest or most important (Helle & Nedkvitne 1977:206). Ordericus Vitalis did not mention any of the other well-known urban localities in Norway, such as Vågan, Stavanger, Hamar or Kaupanger. Potentially this was because they only were seasonal market places, that they no longer existed in the Middle Ages or that the contemporaries not considered it a town.

### *Organically grown*

If we aim to establish if the town grew organically it is of interest to find out if there was previous activity in the area before it became a town. A town does not suddenly appear unless someone founded or planned it. A settlement or a village could grow and develop over time, and gradually expand until its contemporaries considered it as a town, or the central power decided to give it town privileges.

Gitte Hansen's volume of *The Bryggen Papers*, a series of publications about the finds and excavations at Bryggen, from 2005 focuses on the emergence of Bergen. She emphasizes the relevance of investigating the plots and plot systems in the area to understand how the town emerged. Unlike seasonal market sites, the town areas of the Viking Age towns of Hedeby, Birka, Kaupang and Ribe, had plot-divisions that were quite stable over time (Skre 2007b:454). If Bergen emerged in an area with previous activity, it is likely that the plots were the first move towards an organized village or town. As some settlements perish, new ones might emerge with a different layout of the plots. The original plot could have been subdivided into smaller properties or parts may have been rented out (Hansen 2005:33). Finds of plots in different layers from the period before 1070, indicates that there was activity in Bergen before Olav Kyrre founded it. Through boundary structures and diagnostic structures, Hansen argues that it shows that the widths of the plots in the northern town have followed

the same model with a width of 11.5 m. Whether this had the character of a village or similar is difficult to establish, but it points towards that the town grew organically. It is first when the land in Bergen was divided into plots that written sources mention Bergen as a town (Hansen 2005:21; Helle 1982:3; Helle & Nedkvitne 1977:206).

Traces from daily activities and some groups of artifacts, such as tools, can aid in determining whether settlements on the town plots were well established and had a permanent character. It can also aid in establishing if the plots were used seasonally for a limited period of time, or by people that just was passing through (Hansen 2005:218). One of the most important resources that needs to be available for surviving is food. Traces from food and beverage processing suggests well-established settlements, because it depends on the presence of extensive facilities such as large containers and access to a fireplace where large amount of water could be heated. Food preparation was important on seasonal sites as well, but less time-consuming foods, like boiling porridge, were most likely dominant (Hansen 2005:177). The identified tools are sausage pins – used to process meat into sausages, and skewers – used to dry fish and grinding slabs, along with a cross possibly used to process milk. Sausage making presupposes that the animals were killed and dressed at the site (Hansen 2005:177). The time-consuming process of making sausages indicates that the settlement at the site had a permanent character. Archaeologists found evidence from beer brewing from the period between 1070 and 1100, but was considered too uncertain to be further discussed.

### *Founded*

The second way a town can emerge is by someone founding it and investing in it, and the key word here is *invest*. The town would not develop the way it did without someone providing finances and resources to erect buildings and churches. Hansen (2005) suggests that the King donated the land to the town and laid out plots, wharves and streets, but that the plot owners themselves could construct and develop the townscape. According to the trends in the material she analysed, it took a long time before a majority of the documented plots in the northern and middle town area were settled and used (Hansen 2005:223). The similarities in the buildings at Bryggen could imply that all the owners of these plots had access to the same economic resources. A more likely situation is that the King himself invested in this area. The sagas state that the King often visited Bergen and stayed for periods of the year, so he must have had a secure base there where supplies, food and accommodation, were available for himself and his army. People would work on this residence all year round, and these people

needed houses to live in. These could have been the first settlements leading the King to decide to found a town here.

When the King gave Bergen town privileges and laid out plots, he most likely did it with the intention of founding a permanently settled urban community. Only when the building process and development of the townscape was well on the way is it possible to speak of a town. I suggest that this could be why the written sources do not mention Bergen until the 12<sup>th</sup> century. By that time, it could have developed enough for the contemporaries to consider it a town. If this was the case, then Bergen could have been founded in an area with little or no previous activity. When people with power and money take interest in a place and invests in it, it grows and develops faster. I support Hansen's theory that Olav Kyrre founded Bergen, but that it already was a place with an urban character. "The King(s) must have had sufficient resources not only to materialise the physical infrastructure of the planned town, but also to make people use the town" (Hansen 2005:228-229).

There have been no finds of artifacts dated to the Viking Age in Bergen. Two plausible causes for the lack of finds from this period are a lack of investigation or because there were no Viking Age settlements in the area. Botanical evidence found in the marine deposits at the Bryggen site identified as latrine and other household waste (kitchen and brewery refuse) dates to the period c 800-1020/30. Some of the excavated layers contained grain types, which did not grow in Norway, indicating import (Hansen 2005:40-41). The waste-layers were dumped directly into the sea, and one theory suggests that it was dumped from boats anchoring for the night in the sheltered inlet of Veisan. If there was a settlement in the town, this indicates that it was a pre-urban rather than an agrarian settlement because the latter would have used the waste as fertilizer. Hansen argues that the household waste in the marine sediments at the Bryggen site indicates a surplus of waste in relation to fields (Hansen 2005:41), and that there was an agrarian settlement at Holmen (Hansen 2005:130).

Due to the original name of Bergen, *Bjorgvin*, the historian Gustav Storm argues that the town originated from a farm belonging to the King (Storm 1899:433-36). Philologist D. A. Seip thought the name could belong to a group of -vin names, which had already been introduced at the beginning of the Viking Age (Helle 1982, 1985). The proposed settlement at Holmen could perhaps be the Bjorgvin farm.

## 5. The King, the town and the archaeologists

Archaeologist Asbjørn Herteig gave the King more credit in the planning and development of the town in his publication *Kongers havn og handels sete* from 1969, than previous research had done. He pointed out that the King made building codes that forced the settlements to follow the strict rules of the double tenements (Herteig 1969). If the King was the founder, it must mean that he at least granted land and plots, that he gave guidelines for the trade, and possibly set the boundaries for the town. In this sense, the King is not only an initiator, but also a founder and organizer of the town (Herteig 1969:141).

### 5.1 The King in the town

The creation of towns and the kingdoms was a long process (Hansen 2000:12; Tesch 2004:30). Gitte Hansen (2000) reviews the different models used to explain the phenomena of towns arising in the medieval times. The archaeological research has resulted in two models for how towns emerged. The difference between the two is, among other things, which factors that we consider as dynamic and primary, like the importance the King had in the towns (Christophersen 1982:104; Hansen 2000:3). The evolutionary model considers the royal power as a secondary factor in relation to the mercantile activity's primary meaning. On the other side, the genetic model considers the royal power as a primary factor in explaining the developments of the towns, because it sees the towns as an attempt from the King to centralize the trade to certain favourable locations (Christophersen 1982:104-105). The dominating model for the towns' uprising in Scandinavia was for a long time the evolutionary model, 'the older model', where improved roads, trade and profits from agricultural products were considered as the reasons why towns developed. The uprising of towns were a product of active individuals that saw the profit in regular trading towns in favourable locations. The King's role was to protect the market peace and the royal interests were attended to through contracts between equals (Hansen 2000:5). The genetic model, 'the younger model', emerged in Sweden in the 1970s. This model sees the urbanizing process in connection with the state formation and the rise of the central kingdom in the early Middle Ages. A more developed variant of this model considers the royal power as an expression for certain fundamental structural changes of the society in the transition to historical times. The towns were, from the beginning, considered as a result of the newly established royal power's need to centralize the trade and craft to localities with favourable locations for transport and communication. The

medieval towns' productive activity, the urban craft, form the basis for this interpretation. Later, archaeologists interpret the towns as an answer to the royal power's need for regional power and administrative centres (Christophersen 1982:105; Hansen 2000:5-6). The way we define the limits of a historical phenomenon is deeply rooted in an understanding of what a town is. In the first instance, what its outer features are (regulated settlements, royal estate, church, streets) and what its social functions are (productive central craft, centre for mercantile activity – trade, administrative centre, centre for religious activities) (Christophersen 1982:105). The archaeological source-material relevant for the development of the craft is partly the finished craft products, partly the remains from the production process and partly the varying selection of tools (Christophersen 1982:109). We can view the royally founded town centres as instruments with which the kingdom could exert control over the region, and administrate and concentrate the products of the soil gained by collecting land-rent and taxes (Christophersen 1982:118).

The establishment of an absolute monarchy marked the emergence of a power institution that was more stable and had power over a larger territory. The royal power established a new layer of power above the chiefs, and embraced the new religion that was widespread in the rest of Europe. The emergence of a royal power and a feudal land-nobility changed the agrarian productional conditions and the mechanisms for gaining and distributing the agrarian surplus. Land rent and taxes channelled the production surplus to the feudal upper class, and a condensation of goods and values took place around these instances, which made it possible and necessary to sell the products they did not consume themselves. Axel Christophersen (1982), archaeologist, believed that these developments explained the emergence of the early medieval towns in a larger social perspective. Namely, as royally founded installations with the aim to function as centres for physical and administrative control with important regions in the young kingdom. These kinds of royally founded towns can be viewed as an instrument with which the kingdom could exert control with the region, and administer and concentrate the products of the soil gained through the collection of land rent and taxes. This function could be the reason why many early towns are located in such favourable locations, with good communications to the regional surroundings (Christophersen 1982:118-119). In Bergen and Oslo, there are traces of settlements and previous activity in the town area before it became a town, possibly market places. The residences attracted other central functions in the local community: administrative, economic, religious, etc. (Sigurðsson & Riisøy 2011:60-61). The King established several important institutions in these towns, the Church (which in the early medieval times functioned as an important theological supporter

and spiritual defender of the secular kingdom without being an independent instance of power), the royal estate (where the King's-men were placed) and mints (Christophersen 1982:119).

The farm Alrekstad (now Årstad), about 2 km southeast of Vågen, had the best location in the proximities to the town, and could have been a royal farm. Graves from the area indicate agricultural activity here since the Migration Period (c 400-560/570), and it is natural to link graves to farming settlements in the area (Helle 1982:71, 1985:13). The sagas state that several of the Kings often spent time at Alrekstad when they were in Hordaland. The farm must have had the capacity to house all the men that travelled with the King, so it must have been of size. This also means that large amounts of people worked for the King, to provide for food, clothes and weapons. They all had to have a residence, so it is likely that there were settlements surrounding the farm. It is unlikely that the plot division happened on private property due to the allodial rights to the private land, which most of Western Norway had before Bergen became a town. The owner could not simply sell or give away parts of the land. The allodial heirs had the right of pre-emption and could redeem soil transferred without the owner getting the opportunity to use this right. They also had the right of pre-emption to rent the allodial land. However, if the land had come in the hands of the Church or the King, it was different. They could dispose of the land more freely and facilitate the development of the town (Helle 1982:76-77, 1985:14). Hansen states that in a stratified society initiatives were taken from the top-down and bottom-up. Resourceful actors with a central position in the society took the top-down initiatives. These actors had an opinion on how to form the society and possibly the resources to realize these ideas (Hansen 2005:32). Examples on sources that Hansen claims can indicate top-down decisions are the constructions of the monumental buildings like Christchurch Cathedral and Christchurch Minor in Bergen, the Church of St. Hallvard in Oslo and Christchurch Cathedral in Nidaros. These churches were sizeable and elaborate, indicating that a prominent actor in the society took part in the erection of them. The Church was hardly an independent factor prior to the middle of the 12<sup>th</sup> century, so only the King and his representatives belonged to this group of actors (Hansen 2005:32). She also claims that the plot divisions can indicate top-down decisions. Central representatives for the King or the Church probably made the superior premises for how the new town topographically and physically were organized. The secular buildings on the plots in town reflect the bottom-up initiatives. People from lower levels of the society, the 'townspeople' and the visitors of the town, took these initiatives (Hansen 2005:221). Artifacts, cultural layers and distribution patterns show the activity that took place on the



plots, in other words the daily activities and everyday-life. The infrastructure, such as the plots and the ecclesiastical topography, were already laid out, but the activities and expansions on the plots reflect that the townsfolk accepted the idea of establishing the town (Hansen 2000:13). There are several indications that the King owned the land where Bergen emerged. Firstly, that Olav Kyrre built several churches and Øystein Magnusson built a royal residence at Holmen, which makes it clear that the King must have owned this land. Secondly, Magnusson founded the Munkeliv Benedictine Abbey (Munkeliv kloster), and gave it plenty of land. The King probably plotted the land and gave it to farmers, artisans and other people to expand the town (Helle 1982:77-78).

Hansen (2005) finds it likely that the initiator had plans for a town and not a seasonal marketplace when laying out the land, because Bergen eventually developed into a permanently settled urban centre. If the King owned Bergen, it is likely that only he could have the authority to divide the land into plots (Hansen 2005:221-222). According to the sagas, Olav Haraldsson (later St. Olav), founded the town of Borg (now Sarpsborg in eastern Norway), so it is possible that he had the resources to establish a town in western Norway as well (Hansen 2005:222; Helle & Nedkvitne 177:212). The archaeological sources do not support the idea of Olav Kyrre founding the town, but rather that he invested further in an already established townscape, founded new ecclesiastical institutions and included areas that previously had not been in use, as suggested by Hansen (2005:222-223). There is no reason to doubt the information in the sagas that Alrekstad was one of the manors in Western Norway. The King took land rents on farms like this, and travelled from farm to farm consuming the locally produced goods. It is reasonable that Alrekstad and other centres like this was the source of denser settlements and more specialized and diversified enterprise than in other Norwegian villages (Helle 1985:13-14). This indicates that there was a development in the Vågen area prior to the establishment of the town by Olav Kyrre. Several of the kings after Olav Kyrre seems to have continued the development of the town. Øystein Magnusson founded a large timber hall at Holmen as well as the Church of the Apostles (Apostelkirken), and Harald Gille (Gilchrist) built the Church of St. Olav on the Hill (Olavskirken på Bakkene) (Hansen 2005:225-226).

To sum up, I find good arguments in claiming that the King played an important role in the foundation and development of the town: He had the resources to divide and plot the land, and build monuments like churches, chapels and halls. The constructions of the different institutions in the town created work for plenty of people as well as showing the royal powers. It is likely that the King owned the land and then gave it to magnates and allies in order to

keep them on his side. Olav Kyrre gave Bergen the status as a town and started the work on the two Christ-churches at Holmen and the plotting of the land east of Vågen. His grandson Øystein Magnusson continued the development of the townscape by moving the royal estate from Alrekstad to Holmen, founding the Church of the Apostles, a great hall and the convent Munkeliv. During his reign, the export of stockfish started to establish itself.

## 5.2 The relation between the King and the Church

The Christianity and the transition from a country with several small kingdoms to a united country with one king, contributed in keeping the kingdom together. In some places, where the royal power was weak, the King established administrative, political and ideological centres, which eventually became Episcopal seats (i.e. Lund in Skåne, Roskilde on Zealand, Trondheim in Trøndelag and Sigtuna in Uppland). In these areas, the Kings minted coins with their own portrait on one side and the Christian cross on the other to confirm their powerful position, and eventually these places became bishoprics (Tesch 2004:30). Territorial gathering under a central royal power and a new religion replaced the old tribal society, with its territorial divisions in kingdoms, the sacral chiefdom, the Norse religion, the social community in kinship relations and the sacrifice. We can criticize the evolutionary model for the uprising of towns for reducing the towns to an element in the history of the flow of goods. On the other hand, we can criticize the genetic model for reducing the town to an instrument for the central kingdom (Christophersen 1989:113; Hansen 2000:6). The two models give a somewhat simplified view of the town-emerging process. The evolutionary model provides a representation, where the individual acts, seemingly without considering the social context in which they are. The genetic model describes the emergence of towns as a product of the 'system', and the individuals present are representatives for the system (the King) (Hansen 2000:6).

The conversion of pagan societies between 800-1200 started with rulers and elites, and from that level, Christianity spread down to ordinary people. The Christianity was the most influential factor in the integration of different ethnic groups, cultures and territories in early medieval Europe. The significance of the Church in the 8<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries can be described as one of formation in many different areas, such as (1) the establishment of close links with political hierarchies, (2) consolidation of the Church's administrative framework and construction of a representative range of buildings, (3) introduction of monasticism under Benedictine rule, (4) expansion of Christianity into partly Romanised or non-Romanised

areas, and (5) transformation of settlement patterns in towns and countryside (Ślupecki & Valor 2007:379). The royal power was the most important driving force for the introduction of the Christianity in Norway. The most important issue was to convert the chiefs, and eventually the ordinary people would follow due to the personal bonds between chief and peasants. There was an existing understanding in Europe that the King was the leader of the Christianity. Subject to the King were the bishops leading the priesthood. The decree called *Dictatus Papae* (1075) published by Pope Gregory VII, contained the official declaration concerning the superiority of the Pope over the Emperor. This document generated serious confrontations between both institutions and resulted in the conflict known as the ‘Investiture Controversy’, which was the most significant conflict between church and state in the Middle Ages (Ślupecki & Valor 2007:382). Reformers with two main aims brought about the changes in the Western Church. The first aim was to free the Church from lay control by ending the private ownership of churches, the Church to appoint its own priests and bishops, and to free the clergy from secular jurisdiction. The second aim was to assert the superior authority of the papacy (Sawyer & Sawyer 1993:112). One of the canons in the decree by Pope Gregory VII claimed that the deposal of an emperor was under the sole power of the Pope, that God alone founded the Roman Church and that the Papal power was the sole universal power. The Lateran council in February the same year decreed that the Pope alone could appoint or depose churchmen or move them from one see to another (Appleby 1999).

After the establishment of the archbishopric in Nidaros in 1152/53, the Church under the archbishop emerged on the political scene. As of now, the King and the Church were the two most powerful political actors in the country. The two institutions separated, but were mutually dependant on each other. The Church needed protection from the kingdom, and the kingdom needed the Church to justify its position (Sigurðsson & Riisøy 2011:95). The ecclesiastical reform-movement aimed to bring the Church and the convents back to their spiritual responsibilities, because they had lost their focus on their religious tasks. After the Pope became the leader, their main goal for the movement was to create a church under direct control of the Pope, and thereby reduce the power the secular leaders had over the Church. In 1152/53, the first division into bishoprics took place in Norway. The five bishoprics, Nidaros, Bergen, Stavanger, Oslo and Hamar, formed the Norwegian church-province along with the bishoprics at the Isle of Man, the Orkneys, the Faroe Islands, Iceland and Greenland, under the leadership of the archbishop in Nidaros. The Church demanded full control over their own lands and judgements in internal cases. Prior to this, the King organized and built the Churches, but now the Churches became a self-governed unity within the common Church

ruled by the Pope. The archbishop was directly below the Pope. The organization gave the Church a spiritual power over the society, and as one of the greatest landowners an economic grip on large parts of the population (Sigurðsson & Riisøy 2011:134).

### 5.3 Discussion

The complete town-emerging process was more complex than the evolutionary and genetic models show. Listing the main historical events or reconstructing the evolution of the main sites and buildings cannot outline this process. More scholars now agree that organic town development did or does not exist. There was a constant change in the townscape due to top-down actions as well as bottom-up reactions (Vannieuwenhuyze et. al. 2012:228). The King divided the land into plots, and it seems that the owners of the plots could build on it as it pleased them (Hansen 2005:223). The building of private churches can serve as an example on this. The King set the boundary for the plot, but it was up to the plot-owner to decide the shape and number of the building(s) erected on it. These plots and the buildings on them did not appear all of a sudden. They were expanded, transformed and adapted in accordance with the changing demographic, political, economic and spatial evolutions within the town (Vannieuwenhuyze et. al. 2012:228).

If we consider why the towns emerged in the first place, I claim that a plausible reason is the King's need to centralize the trade and craft to favourable locations. The integration of the country into one political and religious unit favoured the establishment of towns (Skre 2007b:469). In this way, all the incomes from one area could be collected in a town area, rather than having to travel to many distant and smaller places to collect them. These locations would also attract merchants from near and far increasing the turnover. The King could use these incomes to invest further in the town. These arguments point in favour of using the genetic model to explain the emergence of the towns. The King's power and administrative centres were located in the towns and the royal residence could house him and his men whenever they were in town. The centralization to the towns made it possible for the King to exert control over the region and realize products of the soil. At first, the towns were the places in which the exchange of the income the King and the Church obtained from their lands and other sources took place. Eventually, when the people of the town became more engaged in their administration, households and other activities, the towns grew and attracted more and more people, making it possible for the King to reach large amounts of the population in the towns (Skre 2007b:469). These were arenas where he could show off his

powers and wealth, which he did by, among other things, building many churches and chapels. Buildings like these demanded a tremendous amount of resources that only a ruler could have. The building-activity initiated by the King indicates that the King owned the land. With the plot-division and establishment of trade and crafts in the town, the King created work for many people, and thereby showed his powers. The archaeological material mainly reflects local trade and production and to a much lesser extent long distance trade, illustrating the local and regional significance the towns had. Some of the Norwegian towns from the medieval period (Oslo, Bergen and Trondheim) were major ports for people and goods coming into the kingdom, and in this way had both a local and regional function as well as a border zone function (Skre 2007b:469).

The neighbourhood to the royal farm at Alrekstad (now Årstad) is one of the interesting suppositions for the town-development at Vågen. If we consider the agricultural conditions, Alrekstad had the most favourable location of the farms in the close proximity of the town. The location and the name indicates that Alrekstad was an old farm. The first component of the name has been interpreted as the name Alrekr, connected to a petty king at Alrekstad. However, the name could be a construction based on the farm-name, and has been interpreted as the name of the mountain today called Ulriken. Around 2500 farms in Norway has the second component –stad (staðir) as part of its name, and are considered to come from the Iron Age (c 600-1050) (Helle 1982:71). Due to the size of the royal farm, and all the people housed in and around it at all times, it is likely that the farm was the starting point for the town development of Bergen. The establishment of the royal estates has been seen as a strategy to secure an economic foundation for the central kingdom (Hansen 2005:20). The King had many types of incomes, but not with such variation that it covered all of the needs for him and his men. Therefore, the King had to trade his own products for other merchandise from other parts of Norway and other countries. In this way, it would benefit the King to centralize the craft, trade and sea transport. In other words, it is reasonable to view the royal farms as the origin of the denser settlements and economic specialization and diversity. The introduction of Christianity as the official religion in Norway took place during the reign of King Olav Haraldsson (1015-1028). Researchers have seen the official conversion as a means for central kings to strengthen royal territorial control over Norway. The central King was the leader of the Church and probably used the Church to administrate the land (Hansen 2005:20). The Church shaped an ideology that consolidated the kingdom as the only allowed system of government. This ideology can be found in the Norwegian educational text *Konungs skuggsjá* (King's Mirror) from c 1250, where the King is described as God's

representative on Earth (Kongespeilet 2000:138-140). The King and the Church had a dependency relationship in the Middle Ages. The Church was an important factor in the consolidation of the royal power. When the Church gained the right to administer its own property and income, and appoint church leaders and other clergy in 1152/53, it took an important step towards independence from the Crown (Hansen 2005:21). Through the Church's organized activities, Norway became a kingdom and eventually a state. Norway did not have the typical Central-European village, with feudal lords with major rights over the population, economic and juridical. The juridical government stayed with the kingdom and the Church. The parish priest became the most important public officer for most people in the villages. The people learned about the Christian faith, but also had to endure penance and punishment, and leave a fair bit of economic means through land rent, tithe and fines. Through the parish system and the bishoprics, the King with the Church, had a very efficient tool to keep control over the population (Tryti 1994:25). In this way, there are good arguments that the King had an interest in spreading the Church organization, though there sometimes were tough struggles for power between the two.

The two most prominent ecclesiastical building-complexes when sailing to Bergen were the archbishop's large farm at Nordnes and the Episcopal seat next to the royal estate at Holmen. The Church dominated the eastern and most of the northern part of Holmen, which was the centre for the Church's ritual life as well as its economic, juridical and political operations (Tryti 1994:30). If we accept the theory that the King owned the land in Bergen, he most likely gave plots to build the Episcopal residence as well. I claim that providing plots in close proximity to his own residence could indicate at least two things. Firstly, that the King and the bishop collaborated well initially and stayed close to each other to show their powers to the people. The King wanted to centralize the two most powerful actors in the society and expand the Church in order to strengthen his kingdom. The King was the first instance to establish and expand the Church, so it would benefit the Church to cooperate in order to develop and grow. Secondly, that the King wanted to keep a close watch over them when the Church became independent. By staying close to the bishop, he could observe them closely and take action whenever there were discussions about important matters that could affect him or his kingdom. The Church established itself well in the medieval society. In the first instance the King wanted them close because they collaborated well, in the other because the Church was the one actor in the society that could threaten his powers.

## 6. The sacral urban space/ecclesiastical institutions

The Churches were important in the townscape and in the development of the medieval towns. The Church-history of Bergen is an important part of the town's history. This chapter will introduce some of the most important medieval churches in Bergen and discuss their distribution within the townscape and in relation to each other. Several different sources can tell us about the medieval ecclesiastical institutions in Bergen, such as saga literature and physical remains of churches. Three of the Churches are still standing today (the Church of St. Mary, the Church of St. Olav and the Church of St. Cross), parts of a fourth are still visible (Nonneseter's Church of St. Mary), and remains of several other churches have been excavated and examined. The engraving of Bergen (*Scholeussticket*), made by Hieronymus Scholeus around 1580, depicts a number of the Churches that have disappeared today.

### 6.1 Previous research

The historians Hans-Emil Lidén and Ellen Marie Magerøy's volumes on the Churches in Bergen provides a thorough review of all the known churches from the medieval period to recent times (Lidén & Magerøy 1980, 1983). They used previous registrations of the inventory and gravestones, and previous excavations to establish the history of the different Churches. The two volumes present each church and the sources that have helped archaeologists and historians to determine the location and appearance of them. In the book *Kirken mellom de syv fjell* (2003), theologian Audun Hellemann presents the most important features of the ecclesiastical developments in Bergen from the time of Olav Kyrre (1067-93) until the 20<sup>th</sup> century. He states that the ecclesiastical history of Bergen was an important part of the town's history and that a large part of the present history has its background in events from the past (Hellemann 2003:19). The work on the first centuries uses Knut Helle's *Bergen bys historie* (1982) as a basis, and is more or less a rendering of it, but with a focus on the ecclesiastical institutions.

The archaeological research does not only involve the visible monuments, but also the remains below today's ground, as well as the graveyards (Tesch 2007:101). Sten Tesch points towards the importance of also studying the foundations as well as the façade and inventory of the Churches. If there are general features of how the foundation technique changes over time, we can use it archaeologically to date the different sections of a church. This could also

contribute to the construction-history of the Church, and as a comparison to other churches (Tesch 2006:201). Archaeologist Jonas Ros discussed the Churches in the late Viking/Early Middle Age town Sigtuna in Sweden in his publication *Sigtuna. Staden, kyrkorna och den kyrkliga organisationen* (2001). Ros aimed at placing the Churches in a historical context by accounting for the burials and gathering places for the Christians during the oldest times of the town, previous research on the Churches in Sigtuna, new hypotheses about the Churches' position and the ecclesiastical organization (Ros 2001). He points out that the early medieval Church-ruins in Sigtuna are monuments of the past that hides a complex, and to a large extent forgotten history. There are very few written sources from Sigtuna, which makes it difficult to see the Churches from a historical point of view. He therefore claims that the Churches should be analysed in perspective to the surrounding countryside (Ros 2001:132). One of the aims of this thesis will be to locate the different churches of Bergen in the townscape.

Art- and architectural historians have traditionally interpreted churches. The basis for dating them were mainly their art and architecture. The stylistic dating will be misleading because it dates the style, and not the building. Ann Catherine Bonnier (1987, 1989) has studied the Churches in Uppland, Sweden. She examined the written material about the Churches, archives, photos and scale drawings, as well as visiting most of the Churches. Stone-built churches point towards an economic and organizational maturation. Transport, building material, the diet of the builders and the arrival of different specialists, has led to incomes for the settlers in the towns (Bonnier 1989:9-10). Bonnier claims that the town's economic and demographic development is visible in the building of the Churches (Bonnier 1989:12). I aim to establish what role the Church played in the development of the town.

## 6.2 Distribution

Towards the middle of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, Bergen had five monasteries, 20-23 churches and chapels and two hospitals (Hellemann 2003:66). According to written sources up to 32 churches and chapels existed in Bergen, in a shorter or longer period, from the medieval times to the 18<sup>th</sup> century, but are no longer present in the townscape. Some churches are still standing, others located and identified through archaeological excavations while a third group only appear in the written sources with no physical remains present. All the town fires that affected Bergen are the reason for many of the Churches' disappearance (Lidén & Magerøy 1980:134). The town fires in 1198 and 1248 are of importance to this study.



1. *The fire in 1198* mentioned in Sverris saga. The Baglers rowed a boat to Bryggen and set fire to three houses on different locations in town. All the settlements below Øvregaten from the Church of St. Cross to Sandbru were lost in the fire. The Church of St. Mary and five other churches burned down in this fire. The other five churches could have been the Church of St. Cross, Church of St. Nicholas, Church of St. Columba, Church of St. Peter and Church of St. Olav on the Hill (Hødnebo & Magerøy 1979b:216-218).

2. *The fire in 1248* mentioned in the saga of Haakon Haakonsson and the chronicles of Matheus of Paris. Matheus came to Bergen just after the fire, and was an eyewitness to the destructions (Lidén & Magerøy 1980:134). The saga states that on June 10<sup>th</sup> 1248, a fire broke out in the middle of the town. Due to the dry weather, the fire spread rapidly. The Church of St. Peter, Church of St. Mary and Sverresborg burned down. According to the saga, many men were unable to get out from Sverresborg and lost their lives (Hødnebo & Magerøy 1979c: 256). Matheus wrote that the whole town except for four convents, the royal estate and the royal chapel burned down. Eleven parishes burned.

The following sub-chapter will give a short presentation of some of the most important and most known ecclesiastical institutions, and their distribution in the townscape (fig. 2).



Figure 2. Overview of the most important institutions in medieval Bergen, c 1250-1300. Screenshot. After Arkikon/Byantikvaren i Bergen, <http://www.arkikon.no/>.

### *The early town (c 1067-1100)*

The towns grew fast when Olav Kyrre reigned in Norway (1066-93), and Bergen was no exception. According to the sagas, Olav Kyrre built *Christchurch Minor* and started the work on *Christchurch Cathedral* at Holmen, a headland northeast in Bergen (Hødnebø & Magerøy 1979a:549). Christchurch was the common name for the Episcopal Churches in Norway, with the exception of the Church of St. Hallvard in Oslo (Hellemann 2003:26), leading archaeologists and historians to believe that Olav Kyrre planned to make Bergen an Episcopal residence. Christchurch Cathedral was probably the first Church that appeared when approaching Bergen by sea and its size showed that this was the cathedral of Bergen. The first time written sources mentioned the Church in use, was during King Magnus Erlingsson's (1156-1184) coronation in 1163. By then it was almost 40m long and 20-21m wide, and larger than Olav Kyrre's Christchurch in Nidaros (now Trondheim, Norway). Medieval cathedrals tend to be large buildings and the size usually reflects the size and prosperity of the associated diocesan area. Generally, the larger the city, the larger the cathedral church (O'Keefe & Untermann 2007:408). A further expansion of the eastern part of the Church took place later in the Middle Ages. Christchurch Minor was visible behind the cathedral, and to the right the royal residence was located (fig. 3). It was originally a wooden church, but after it burned down a stone church replaced it.

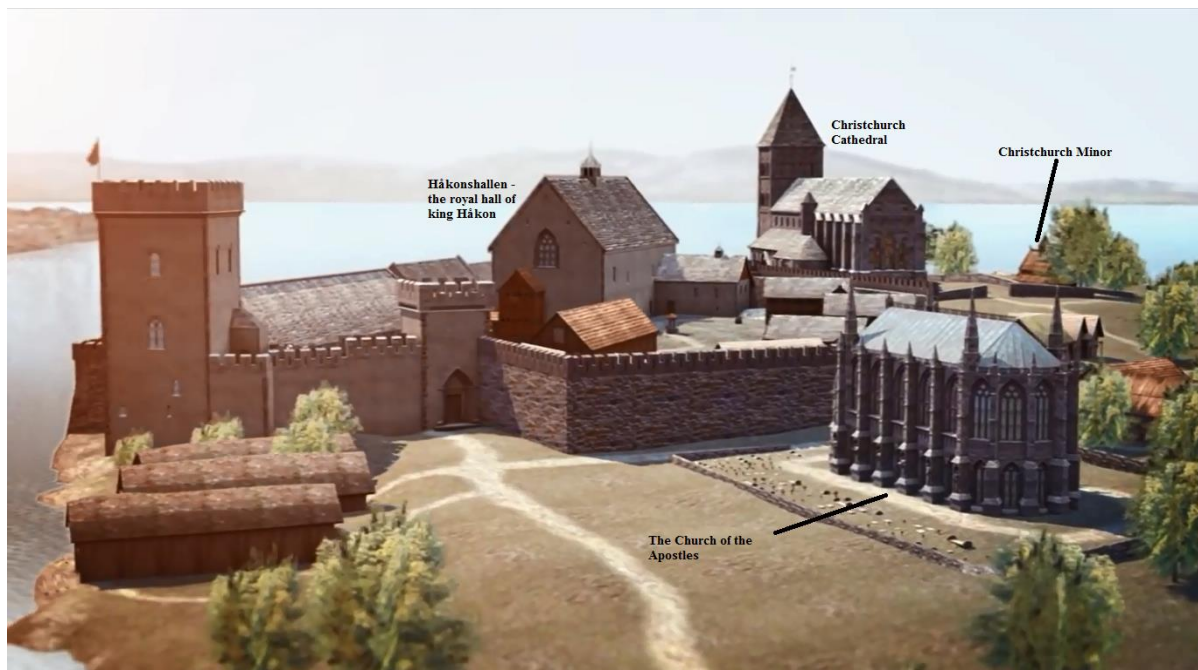


Figure 3. Reconstruction of the castle constructions at Holmen, c 1250. Screenshot. After Arkikon/Byantikvaren i Bergen, <http://arkikon.no/>.

### *The 12<sup>th</sup> century*

In the 12<sup>th</sup> century, the number of churches in Bergen increased significantly. As many as 13 new churches decorated the townscape. In contrast to the low wooden settlements in town, the Churches were easily visible in the landscape. On the eastside of the royal residence the royal chapel, the *Church of the Apostles*, was probably located. In the northern town area (southeast of Holmen) the *Church of St. Mary*, which is the oldest medieval church still standing today, is located. With its whited towers in contrast to the rest of the Church, which is grey ashlar, it stood, and still stands out from the rest of the surroundings (Lidén 1985:79). Another church that dominated the northern town area was the *Church of St. Nicholas*, which towered on the top of Øvregaten below the mountainside. The Church was stone-built and had a large western tower (Hellemann 2003:34; Lidén 1985:83). The Roman style-details of the Church were similar to the ones of the Church of St. Mary (Helle 1982:139). The tower had a view of most of the town area, so the town-watch was located here (Helle 1982:587; Lidén & Magerøy 1980:158). Their task was to notify whenever a fire broke out or enemies approached the town. The Church of St. Cross was the visual endpoint of one of the most important streets in medieval Bergen, Øvregaten, while the Church of St. Mary was the other (fig. 4). Originally, it was located on a protruding headland on the eastside of Vågen. The location is similar to the Church of St. Mary, founded on a moraine consisting of gravel and

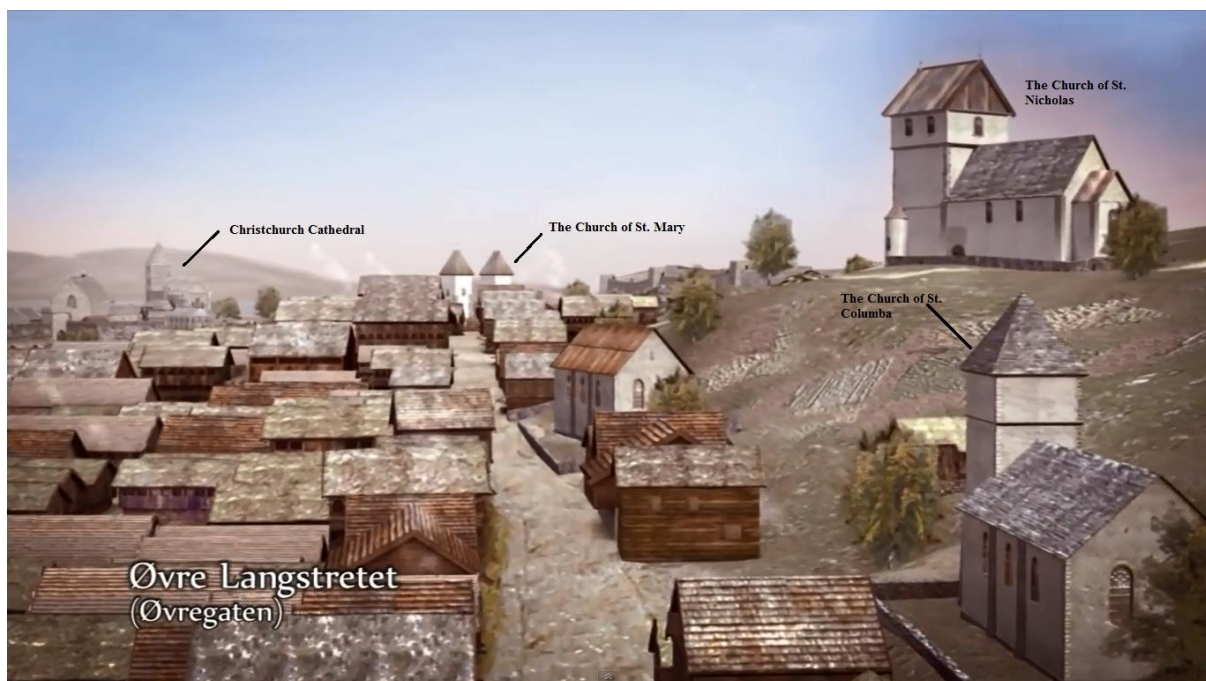


Figure 4. Reconstruction of Øvregaten, c 1250. Screenshot. After Arkikon/Byantikvaren i Bergen, <http://arkikon.no/>.

clay. Striking similarities in the technical and ornamental details, suggest that the same team of constructors worked on both of these churches (Helle 1982:144). *The Church of St. Olav in Vågsbotn* (fig. 5) is located on the beach ridge on the eastern side of Vågsbotn. In medieval times, it was located in the outskirts of the town area, close to the road from the south. It was a parish church, and Franciscan monks must have taken over the Church sometime during the reign of Haakon Haakonsson (1217-63), and built a convent next to it (Lidén & Magerøy 1983:9-13) (fig. 6). Written sources state that the barefoot brothers (Franciscan monks) made their entrance in Scandinavia in 1232, and contain a list of six Franciscan convents in Norway (Molland 1969:2-3). The list is in topographical order and mention the following names: *Kongeldis* (Konghelle), *Marstrandis* (Marstrand), *Opsloia* (Oslo), *Thwnsbergis* (Tønsberg), *Bergis* (Bergen) and *Nidrosia* (Nidaros). The saga of Haakon Haakonsson states that the King built the Church of St. Olav and the convent, however it is unclear whether this was the Dominican Church and convent at Holmen, or the Franciscan Church and convent in Vågsbotn (Hødnebo & Magerøy 1979c:341). In addition to the *Franciscan Convent of St. Olav*, three other convents appeared in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, *Munkeliv Benedictine Abbey* and *St. John's Augustine Abbey* at Nordnes and *Nonneseter Cistercian Convent* at Alrekstadvågen. We know very little of the internal life in the convents in Bergen (Hellemann 2003:41). There were five different orders present in Bergen in the Middle Ages, Cistercians, Benedictines,



Figur 5. The Church of St. Olav, 2013. Photo by Stine Arctander.



Figure 6. Reconstruction of the Franciscan Convent of St. Olav (Gråbrødrekløsteret), c. 1250. Screenshot. After Arkikon/Byantikvaren i Bergen, <http://arkikon.no/>.

Franciscans, Dominicans and Augustinians. The *Cistercians* had a standard way of organizing their convents. The nave bound the monastic yard in the north. From the chancel, an eastern wing stretched south with dormitories and assembly rooms for the monks or nuns. The southern wing housed the dining area and kitchen, while the western wing was reserved for the lay brothers or lay sisters that became a permanent institution to help with the practical tasks the convent undertook. We know little of the buildings of Nonneseter, other than it most likely had the same construction as other Cistercian convents (Helle 1982:606). The foundation of the younger Cistercian order that Nonneseter belonged to happened to revive the Benedictine order in its original form, and was more firmly organised (Helle 1982:608).

The two oldest convents in Bergen, Nonneseter and Munkeliv, belonged to orders with a life striving for Christian perfection as its aim. The monks at the *Benedictine* convent of Munkeliv were bound to the convent, and were only to leave if the abbot sent them on a mission or gave them permission to leave. They were to live a life in chastity, and better lives than the people did on the outside. Their time consisted of services, meditation and spiritual and physical work. In addition, the monks had to participate in missionary work and counsel (Helle 1982:607). The other convents in Bergen were not monastic in the same sense as Nonneseter and Munkeliv. The *Augustinians* at St. John's were a collegiate of priestly consecrated clerics (Helle 1982:608). The *Franciscans* and the *Dominicans* were not considered as regular monks despite calling them black-monks or grey-monks after the colour of their clothing. They were not bound to the convent they lived in, but could move to other facilities of the same order to study or perform other tasks. Both were a society of clerics with one main goal, which was to spread the word about the Christian faith by preaching to people. For this reason, they were located in towns, because here they could reach large amounts of people. Usually, the convents were located near the approaching roads to the town (Helle 1982:608). They were mendicant orders, which made their location in Bergen and other towns favourable. The town housed most people and more people means more incomes (Helle 1982:609). The naves in the Churches of both orders, where people gathered to hear the interpretations of God's words, were more important than the chancel (seen in the today's cathedral – the nave is exceptionally long).

Major churches were often powerful proprietors within towns (Barrow 2000:133). In Bergen, some of the convents had large estates, especially Munkeliv which was the largest and richest convent in Norway. Written sources from the 15<sup>th</sup> century and property-registers provide information about the extensive amounts of land and properties Munkeliv had in their possession (Helle 1982:285). Other ecclesiastical institutions could have played an important

role in the property-market as well, but very little source-material regarding this exists. Nonneseter most likely had a significant property, like Munkeliv, at its disposal (Helle 1982:287). One of the farms at Bryggen is named *Søstergården* (Systra garðr), and the name could only refer to sisters meaning nuns, and it is the sisters at Nonneseter convent this most likely refers to. Another farm at Bryggen is *Brødregården* (Broedra garðr) (Helle 1982:290). I claim that this most likely belonged to one of the convents with brothers/monks. Out of the oldest convents, St. John's is the one we have least information on. However, it most likely had the disposal of the land where it was located. When the town took over the properties of the convent, it included the Church, the cemetery and a piece of land of 4.5 acres (Helle 1982:290). Originally there are reasons to believe that the convent had a property close to Vågen, because we hear of *Jonsbryggen*, a wharf which it is reasonable to believe was located just below the convent (Helle 1982:290).

Other churches constructed in the 12<sup>th</sup> century were the *Church of St. Peter*, which was a parish church. Diplomas mention several of the farms belonging to its parish (Lidén & Magerøy 1980:170). *The Church of St. Lawrence* was probably a chapel due to its small size (8,4x10m). *The Church of St. Olav on the Hill* was a votive church, erected by Harald Gille after his victory over King Magnus (1134-35), behind the settlements from Sverresborg to the Church of St. Nicholas. *The Church of St. Columba* was most likely not a regular parish church because written sources do not mention any properties as belonging to its parish (Lorentzen 1952:162).

### *The 13<sup>th</sup> century*

In the 13<sup>th</sup> century, several smaller churches appeared in the townscape. In the northern town area (from Holmen to Nikolaikirkealmeningen), the Dominican Convent with the *Church of St. Olav* north of the Christchurch Cathedral at Holmen and the *Church of St. Katarina* and its hospital at Sandbro between the town area and Holmen were located. In the middle town area (between Nikolaikirkealmeningen and Vetrilidsalmeningen), the *Church of St. Martin* was located where the school of Kristi Krybbe is located today. In the southern town area (Vågsbotn), the *Church of St. Hallvard* between Kong Oscar's gate and Lille Øvregate, the *Church of St. Michael in Vågsbotn* west of the Church of St. Cross and the second *Church of St. Katarina* behind the Church of St. Olav in Vågsbotn appeared. The building activity continued throughout the century with expansions and improvements of older institutions, and the town-fires made it necessary to rebuild several churches. The map (fig. 7) shows an

overview of the existing and disappeared churches from medieval and modern times.



Figure 7. Overview of the existing and disappeared churches in Bergen from medieval and modern time. Crosses mark churches where the exact location is uncertain, and where remains have not been found. Cross in a square marks disappeared churches where remains have been found. Medieval churches that are still standing are marked with black, while two churches from modern time, Nykirken and the Church of St. John (Johanneskirken) are marked with a hatched outline. 1. Christchurch Cathedral, 2. Christchurch Minor, 3. Øystein Magnusson's and Haakon Haakonsson's Church of the Apostles, 4. Magnus Lagabøte's Church of the Apostles, 5. The Dominican convents Church of St. Olav, 6. Church of St. Catherine, 7. Church of St. Olav on the Hill, 8. Church of St. Mary, 9. Church of St. Lawrence, 10. Church of St. Peter, 11. Church of St. Nicholas, 12. Church of St. Columba, 13. Church of St. Martin, 14. Church of St. Hallvard, 15. Church of St. Cross, 16. Church of St. Michael in Vågsbotn, 17. The Franciscan convent's Church of St. Olav (present cathedral), 18. Church of St. Katarina (after it was moved in 1266), 19. Church of St. Jørgens Hospital, 20. Chapel of St. Jacob, 21. Nonneseter's Church of St. Mary, 22. Church of All Saints, 23. Church of St. John, 24. Munkeliv's Church of St. Michael, 25. Church of St. Paul and 26. Church of St. Margareth at Nordnes. After Helle (1982).

“It is the origin of our, the Frostating men (Gulating men, etc.), laws, that is the origin of all good, that we should hold and have the Christian faith” (NgL 1915:17) [translated by author]. This is the opening line in the country law for Western Norway in the Middle Ages. The eastern orientation was ever since the old Church, established as the Christian prayer orientation, as a reminder that paradise – which the humans were to return to – was located in east, and as a reminder that Jesus would resurrect a second time from the east (Landro 2013:124). This is also the main reason why most churches were oriented east-west. In this way, the congregation could see Jesus Christ resurrect when they attended church.

To sum up, we see that there were tremendous building activities in Bergen in the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries. Several churches were renewed, expanded or improved. One reason for this were all the town-fires that affected Bergen. We can identify at least three types of churches in Bergen in the Middle Ages; parish churches, votive churches and privately built churches. In addition to the excessive erection of churches, several convents emerged during the 12<sup>th</sup> century. Five different convents existed in Bergen in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, of which only remains of two exist today, Nonneseter and St. Olav in Vågsbotn.

## 6.3 Discussion

### *The Churches role in the development of the town*

In several parts of Europe, churches are often the key to explaining the revival or emergence of towns in the earlier Middle Ages. The Churches continued to dominate smaller towns or were powerful forces in larger ones, as proprietors, consumers and patrons of the arts, also after the towns were well established. Architecturally, the Churches were usually the most important features in the landscape (Barrow 2000:127). More than 20 churches towered over the low wooden settlements in Bergen in the High Middle Ages, highlighting the ecclesiastical power and authority (Tryti 1994:21). Christianity was the only religion allowed in the society of the High Middle Ages. The Church was a part of the daily life and aimed to adapt to the peoples’ needs and already existing customs, while the people aimed to adapt the religious message into their world of thought, and daily life (Bagge 1998:101). At the time of the introduction of Christianity in Norway, it was integrated in the secular society, and was responsible for keeping the social order and ensure good fortune and welfare in the worldly life. For that reason, it had to take part in every important social event, and had to develop rituals of its own (i.e. drinking bouts) to attend to worldly needs (Bagge 1998:102).



Eventually the Church gained the rights to pass laws and law enforcements in internal, and to an increasing degree external affairs, to the rest of the society. In this way, the Church was a political power in the society, next to the kingdom. It played an important social role in medieval people's lives (public education and literary-, building- and visual art). The Church took part in all the important stages of life, following people from their birth to their death. Through spiritual guiding and social activities, it was a foundation in the minds of the people. A larger part of the land the ecclesiastical institutions owned, were penances, given not only from the top of the society, but also from a great number of regular people (Helle 1982:570-571). The settlers had to pay a tenth of their incomes to their parish church, tithe, and a fourth of this went to maintaining the Churches. During the reign of Sigurd the Crusader (*Sigurd Jorsalfare*) (1103-30), the introduction of tithe took place in Norway. After the reformation in 1536/37, the King received the tithe.

The older Churches (i.e. Church of St. Nicholas, Church of St. Peter and Church of St. Columba) were located in areas associated with older settlements. The increasing population demanded more churches to attend to their religious life. There was a close link between the erection of the large churches and the expansion and economic activities in the area where they were constructed. The congregation Churches owned little land in the rural areas, and were served and maintained through incomes from the town itself. The ecclesiastical institutions contributed to the growth of the town – through tremendous building activities and the workforce it demanded, estates and incomes, an increasing number of clerics and their households. The Episcopal seat and the convents were especially important in developing the town. In these institutions, the number of the clergy and their helpers were largest, the construction particularly extensive, and these institutions brought incomes to the town from most of Western Norway (Helle 1982:150-151).

There were long traditions in Europe for using stone as building material for the Churches, and it represented the status and wealth of the initiators. Therefore, the King and the bishop wanted the ecclesiastical institutions constructed in stone. In a letter from 1271, King Magnus VI (*Magnus Lagabøte*) praised the inhabitants of Voss, a village in Western Norway, for choosing to build a stone-church rather than with wood (Lidén 2008:16). In Norway, it was customary to use wood due to the access to good timber. The barren economic situation many places in the country created a building tradition that provided many beautiful wooden churches (Lidén 2008:16-17). When the construction of the first stone churches in Scandinavia started towards the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> century, the building techniques were unknown for the local artisans. In order to construct larger structures, such as the royal hall at

Holmen and the Churches, large groups of artisans had to work for several years, sometimes for generations. Eventually these groups became permanent institutions, consisting of a master-builder and several trained artisans and apprentices. At first, they must have been foreigners, but eventually Norwegians learned the skills of the art. The monasteries also had a tradition of building with stone. They had their own artisans with special competence in stone building. The erection of new and large convents were significant for the establishment of artisan- and builder-environments.

In summary, the construction of the many ecclesiastical institutions in Bergen created large amounts of work for construction workers. The people who worked on the different building projects needed shelter, food, clothes and other everyday items, creating incomes for the artisans, tradesmen and farmers in the town. The economic contributions from the people ensured the Church the finances to develop and expand. Behind every church, there are decisions about location, size and shape, decisions that reflects the economic and social structure of the congregation, the ownership, the degree of organization and the access to labour (Bonnier 1987:217). Many of the institutions we hardly think of as ecclesiastical today, developed in the Middle Ages. The school belongs to this category, as well as the institutions for the poor and sick. Even the political institutions, such as the parliament and the city council, have their roots in ecclesiastical matters (Fröjmark 1997:19).

### *The relation of the Churches to the town and each other*

Some churches are dominating in the landscape and out in the open, while others are small and squeezed in between the houses (Lidén 1985:82). The building of churches took place in close interaction with the development of the town and there were strong developments through the 12<sup>th</sup> century. The Church of St. Nicholas was oriented and placed in relation to older settlements and roads, which might indicate that the area between Holmen and Vågsbotn could have had denser settlements as early as, and possibly earlier, than the northern town area. The Church of St. Peter and the Church of St. Columba were also located in relation to older settlements on each side of the Church of St. Nicholas (Helle 1982:149). Larger churches made an impact on the urban scene because they took up space. All major churches required large areas of land for their buildings, graveyards and to house the members of their community and servants (Barrow 2000:132).

Two complexes were prominent at Holmen when sailing to Bergen, the Episcopal seat

and the royal farm. The facilities of the Episcopal seat were located next to the royal farm. Several churches dominated the eastern and most of the northern part of Holmen, Christchurch Cathedral, Christchurch Minor, the Church of the Apostles and the Dominican convents Church of St. Olav. This area was the centre of the Churches' economic, judicial and political operations. The Episcopal complex was comprehensive, a grand residence in European fashion. Parts of the building had two storeys, the complex had its own prison, chapel and summer hall. The bishop and his household needed localities where they could live and work, meeting rooms, houses for the servants, provisions and other. The bishop's farm had its own wharf and boathouse in the inlet towards Bontelabo (Helle 1982:147-148; Hellemann 2003:45; Tryti 1994:30-31). The bishop had many important tasks, such as proclaiming and administering the sacraments, educating priests and consecrating churches. He was the administrative and economic leader of the bishopric and had ecclesiastical authority in many important cases. Much like the King and other princely dignitaries, the bishop was a "chief", which meant that he also had a household of his own serving him personally and administratively. (Helle 1982:147-148; Hellemann 2003:45). At Holmen, the King and the bishop held their councils and formed the political strategies for the kingdom and the Church. They kept the accounts with an extensive economic operations ranging from the export of dried fish to the administration of royal and ecclesiastical lands in the small surrounding villages (Tryti 1994:29).

Lidén pointed towards some factors that had to be present in order to name a church a main-church. Firstly, it had to be central in a way that shows that the surrounding settlements and the roads were fitted to the Church. Secondly, a relatively large cemetery had to surround it, since it was a burial church. Thirdly, it had to stand out from the other churches in the town, by its size and shape (Lidén 1985:89). I would claim that at least two churches in Bergen fit these descriptions, the Church of St. Cross and the Church of St. Mary. They are both, more or less, oriented east-west on each side of the two widest shorelines east of Vågen, and were the visual endpoints for the town's two most important streets, Stretet (Øvregaten) and Sutarestretet (Kong Oscars gate). The Churches were clearly the largest town churches, and excavations have shown that the cemetery of the Church of St. Mary was significant in regards to its size. It seems that the town had two main parishes with the Church of St. Mary and the Church of St. Cross as parish churches. This points towards the town being *planned* from the start. Their location indicates that there were two different centres for the town development, thereby suggesting that the town grew from the two ends towards the middle (Lidén 1985:91-92).

The privately built churches stand in contrast to these main-churches. Only a minority of the Churches were regular parish churches. Private people constructed the other churches – individuals with pious regards or groups or corporations finding it profitable to erect a church. The largest amount of churches are located in towns with a large influx of visitors. In many cases, these people were regular visitors to the town, but did not have an affiliation to a parish as the settlers did. A solution to this problem could be that a group of visitors with similar background built their own church (Lidén 1985:86). The Scandinavian places are most similar to the English places with a high density of churches. A dominating thought has been that the many town-churches are merchant-churches (*no. kjøpmannskirker*), churches that served the travelling merchants whenever they were in town (Andrén 1985:34).

In the 14<sup>th</sup> century, letters and diploma mention the different parishes in Bergen. The shoemakers living below Kong Oscar's gate belonged to the Church of St. Michael in Vågsbotn, while the ones above Kong Oscar's gate belonged to the Church of St. Hallvard. Further north along the western side of Vågen the following parishes were located: the parish of the Church of St. Martin from Vetrlidsalmenning to Nikolaikirkealmenning. The parish of the Church of St. Peter was between Nikolaikirkealmenning and Bugården in the middle of the Bryggen area, and to the farthest north, the parish of the Church of St. Mary consisted of the northern town area on both sides of Øvregaten from Bualmenning and north. At Holmen, Christchurch Minor was the parish church for everyone who lived permanently at the royal residence. It is unknown whether the parish division was the same in the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> century (Lidén 1985:86-87). Andrén states that there were no regular parish-boundaries, but rather parishes constructed around street sections with belonging settlements. Several contemporary English and Danish towns had the same parish division, especially London (Andrén 1985:39). In Bergen, some settlements did not necessarily belong to the closest church. For instance, the settlements at "Stranden" (the western side of Vågen) belonged to the Church of St. Cross, even if the Church of St. Michael in Vågsbotn and the Church of All Saints were closer.

The Church of St. Peter was far smaller than the two main Churches mentioned. The Church was located in an already densely settled area and oriented northeast–southwest, clearly fitted to the surrounding buildings and street. The cemetery was very small, on the southern side there was no more than 4m between the Church and the cemetery walls. The graves lay in several layers above each other. I would claim that these observations points towards that the Church *not* was primary in relation to the settlements, and that the existing property boundaries decided how and where the Church was constructed. The Church must therefore have been a privately built church (Lidén 1985:90). The Church of St. Olav on the

Hill was located in the outskirts of the town, and was, according to the saga, erected as a votive church after Harald Gille won over King Magnus (Hødnebo & Magerøy 1979a:598). If not built with pious regards, at least it was a fulfilment of a promise. The Church of St. Lawrence must have been similar. The excavated ruin measures 10x8.4 m, and could only have served as a chapel. This church was also oriented after the settlements indicating that it was privately constructed. We know little of the Church of St. Columba apart from getting the name after the Irish missionary-saint Columba. This dedication to an Irish saint could indicate that the builders of the Church were from the West, or had close links to the Western Isles/Ireland. Harald Gille came from Ireland to Norway when he claimed to be the son of King Magnus Barefoot (*Magnus Berrføtt*). Harald often wore Irish clothing, short and light garments, and spoke fondly of Ireland (Hødnebo & Magerøy 1979a:584-586). I claim that there is a possibility that Harald Gille erected the Church of St. Columba and dedicated it to the patron saint of Ireland, a country he often spoke of and emphasized. The Church of St. Nicholas was located in the outskirts of the settlements, on a ledge in the steep terrain above Øvregaten. The cemetery was relatively small – 13m wide – on the front-end. It was oriented north-northeast – south-southwest (fig. 8). The Church of St. Nicholas and the Church of St. Columba were not parish-churches for any of the properties at Bryggen, so they do not seem to have been parish-churches at all (Lorentzen 1952:162). The Franciscan Church of St. Olav and the Church of All Saints were located on the outside of the town. Both of the Churches' status changed in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, when the Church of St. Olav became a convent-church, and the Church of All Saints became a royal hospital-church (Lidén 1985:91). When fire affected some churches, other ecclesiastical institutions could take over their functions as congregation or parish churches until their restoration was complete. Some churches decayed and disappeared, such as the Church of St. Katarina and its hospital at Sandbro and the Church of St. Nicholas. It is therefore reasonable to believe that their original function became redundant. After the fire in 1248, practically all the town churches needed rebuilding or repairing. The privately constructed Church of St. Peter gained status as a parish church after the fire (Lidén 1985:92). Christchurch Minor at Holmen functioned as a royal burial church while Christchurch Cathedral was still under construction.

In summary, we can see that the building of some churches apparently were planned and they were erected in a suiting area, while others were fitted to the already existing settlements. This affected their orientation as well. Traditionally, all churches are oriented east-west whenever that is possible, with the main entrance in west and the altar in east. The west represents the world and is where the sun sets, while the east is where the sun rises and



## 7. Comparative study; Sigtuna

The assumption that towns within a larger, but geographically limited area, belongs to a cultural community forms the base of the comparative method (Ersland 1994:25). This assumption is probable, but hard to document. The main reason for comparing Sigtuna with Bergen is that both towns became Episcopal seats in medieval times. Sigtuna is well suited for comparison to other Viking and Middle Age towns, because a relatively large part of the settlement area has been examined. Because Sigtuna is the only town dated to the period between the Viking Age and the Middle Age, it has a key-role in Swedish urban research (Tesch 1990:25). In the following chapter, I will examine the location, organization and development along with the ecclesiastical institutions in Sigtuna, in order to identify similarities and differences to Bergen.

### 7.1 Town organization

Sigtuna was established c 980, when the urban functions of the Viking Age town of Birka ceased. “Odin settled at Mälaren, now called Gamle Sigtuna; he arranged a great place of worship and sacrifice there, which was custom with the Æsir. He took possession of all the land there that he named Sigtuna” (Hødnebo & Magerøy 1979a:16) [translation by author]. The building of the first houses in the block Trädgårdsmästaren has been dated through archaeological finds and dendrochronology to c 980, and the oldest settlements there are representative for the foundation of the town (Ros 2001:15). The town emerged on “virgin-soil” on the southern edge of a peninsula in the northern part of Lake Mälaren in the eastern part of Sweden (fig. 9). The area consisted of hills, forests and marshes, and the closest surroundings were not particularly suited for cultivation. From a communicative point of view, the location at a waterway that united large parts of Uppland with direct contact with the Baltic was well-chosen (Tesch 1990:28). Archaeological investigations have shown that Sigtuna was founded and that the town area was plotted and the borders between the plots marked with ditches in the existing ground surface (Ros 2001:15). The rapid expansion of the town is an indication that the town was founded (Tesch 1989b:130).

The town is located along an east-west-going main street, Stora Gatan, which ran parallel with the shoreline, giving the town an S-shape. On either side of Stora Gatan, there were inlets adjacent to the course of a brook. These inlets would make a perfect landing place for the late Viking Age and early Middle Age boats (fig. 10). In the north, the elevation

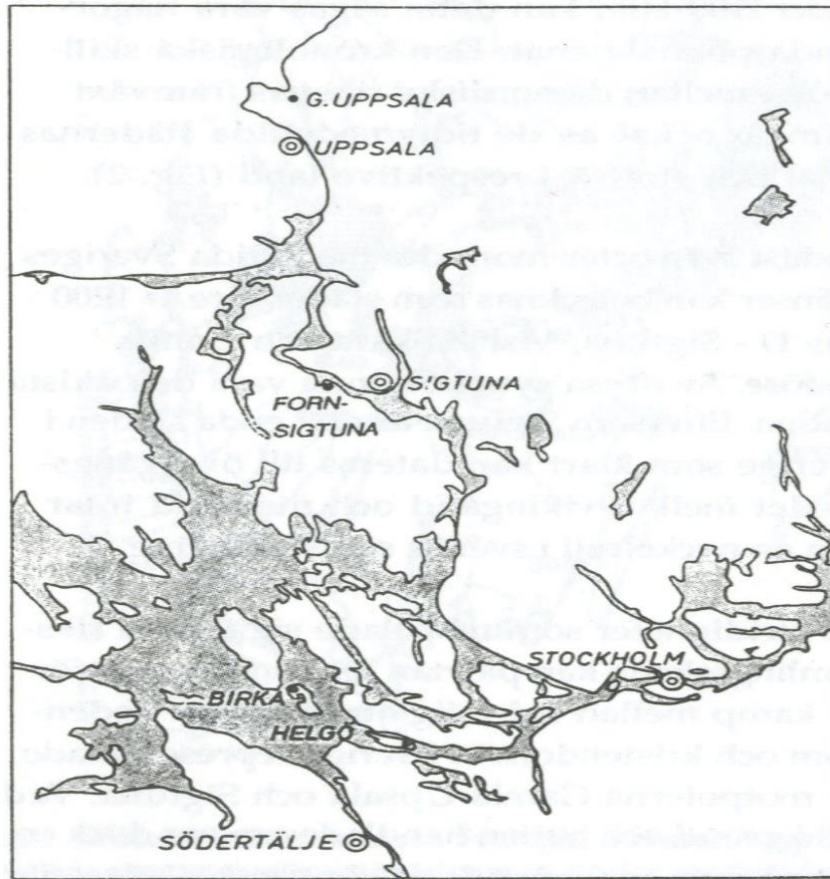


Figure 9. The Mälaren area. After Tesch (1990).

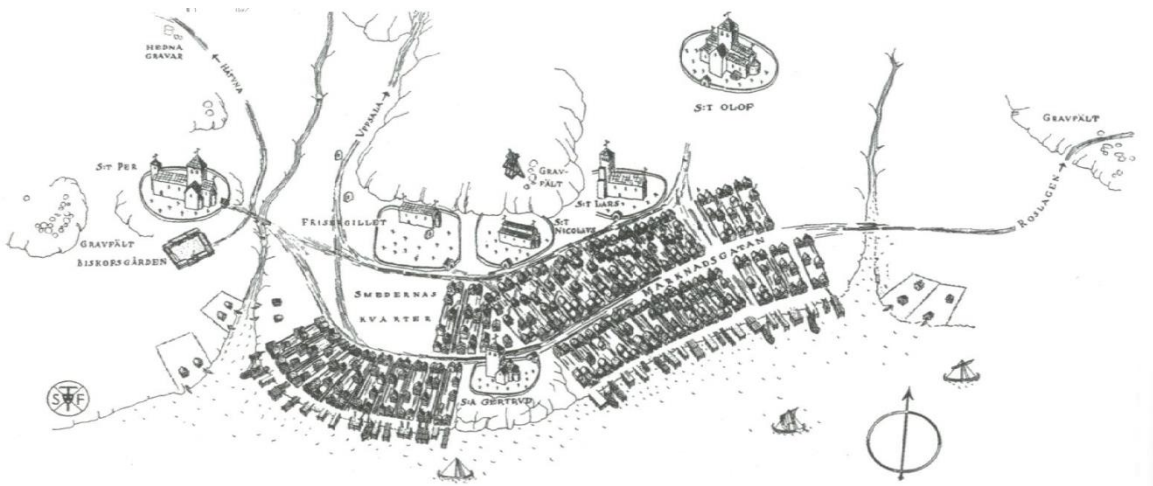


Figure 10. Reconstructed picture of Sigtuna in the mid-12th century. A market street with town houses. Note the jetties along the shore. The Church of St. Per is believed to have been the Episcopal Church and St. Lars the town Church. After Ros (2001).



named Klockbacken limited the settlements, and it was here most of the Churches were located (Ros 2001:77, 133). On both sides of the main street, there were 7-8m wide and 30-40m long narrow plots. According to Tesch, the short end of the plots was facing the street (Tesch 1989b:130). Along the street on both sides, there were dense settlements of stalls with workshops and Stora Gatan functioned as a market street (Ros 2001:15). The closeness to the water was not a primary interest at the foundation, and the town's primary function in the oldest phase was not a trading-place. The early medieval places' emergence and size have been interpreted from an antagonism in the royal structure of power between the areas with family-estates and the areas with crown-estates. In areas where the royal power was strong with mainly family-estates, there was no need for a centralized structure of power, which led to the growth of several small places. Where the royal power was weak with mainly crown-estates, there was a need for a centralized political control in order to assert the royal claims, which led to the growth of a few, but larger places (Tesch 1989b:130). The present layout of the town is similar to the one from early medieval times (fig. 11). The only difference is that the alleys that cross Stora Gatan were much denser. The many alleys led down to a number of jetties. This could have given the impression of a "flowering market-town" (Tesch 1989b:127-128).

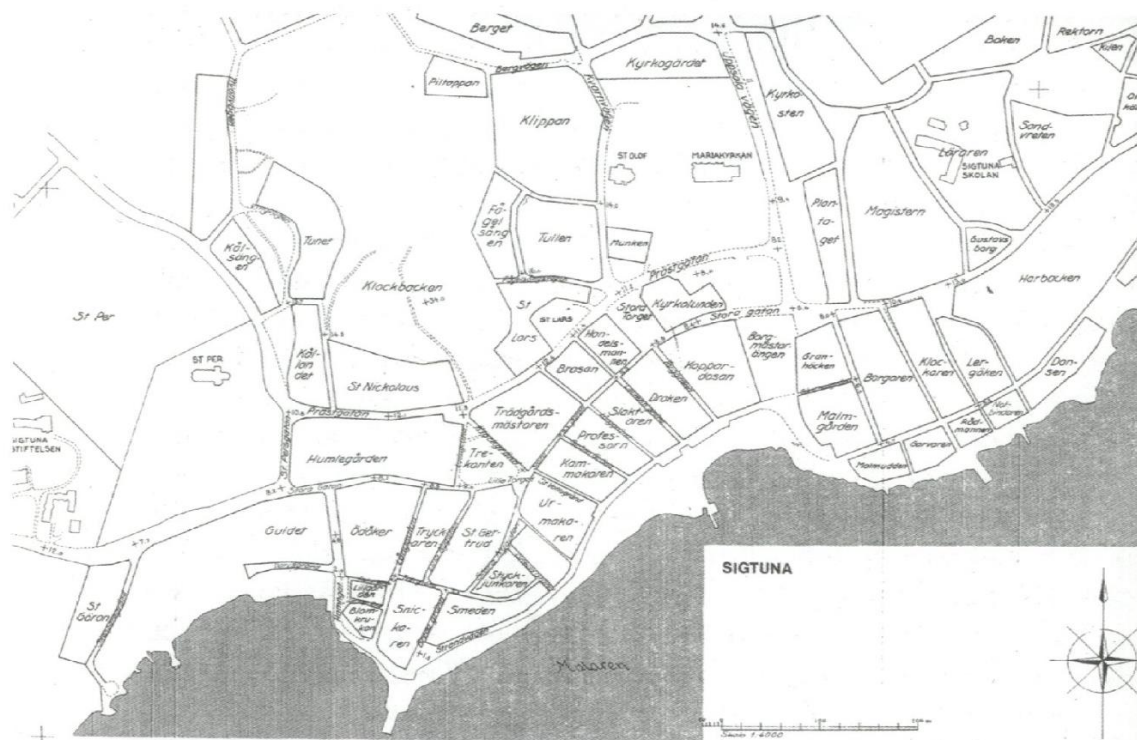


Figure 11. The town of Sigtuna with the present division into blocks. After Ros (2001).

In the middle of the town area, on a plot today named S:ta Gertrud where Sigtuna Museum is located today, the King had a plot of his own. Remains of a large hall, a small wooden church and several small storages and workshops have been located here (Ros 2001:78). Sometime in the mid-11<sup>th</sup> century, it is assumed that the King gave this property to the Church, and a bishop-church was erected here, first a wooden one, later replaced by a stone church. During the 12<sup>th</sup> century, major changes took place in the town area. Along a new street, five or six new churches were built and St. Per is assumed to be the King's own Church (Ros 2001:79, 125).

Accumulations of cultural layers in Stora Gatan indicate that the houses located here were in use over longer periods. Traces from specialized crafts fortify the image of Sigtuna as a strictly regulated community without similarities to a more seasonal settlement (Carlsson 1989:18). The settlements were from the beginning fitted to a town plan with long and narrow plots in a certain pattern. A few of the plots are consistent with plots in the current town (Tesch 1990:29). The different types of houses include houses for the townspeople and workshops for the many specialized crafters on many of the plots (Tesch 1990:36).

Remains from settlements dating to the 11<sup>th</sup> century were located in the block of Humlegården, but no later settlements. This has led to assumptions of the town diminishing over time (Gräslund 1989:35). Sigtuna became the Episcopal seat of Sweden, but when it lost this position sometime between 1130 and 1164, the town lost its importance. Excavations and investigations of the settlements from the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries have been extended to include a 700m long and 100m wide strip. In this period, there were settlements even on the other side of the hills previously considered as the settlement-boundaries. The settlements in the outer areas do not comprise more than 2-3 settlement phases. It seems that the town quickly grew to its full width, gradually shifted towards the east, and latest around the middle of the 12<sup>th</sup> century the settlement-area diminished (Tesch 1989b:116-117).

Most of the ecclesiastical institutions are located outside the medieval settlement area. The Churches we know the names of are St. Per, St. Nicholas, St. Lars, St. Olov, St. Gertrude and St. Mary that belonged to the Dominican convent. There was also a hospital with its own church, St. Göran's hospital. In the east, outside the town area, Viby convent belonging to the Cistercian order was located (Ros 2001:16).

## 7.2 Church organization

Olav Skötkonung's coin from the beginning of the 11<sup>th</sup> century indicates that Sigtuna was a place of importance for the Christianity – "Situne Dei" (God's Sigtuna). Adam of Bremen mentioned Sigtuna as "civitas" (Episcopal seat) in the 1070s and the place is mentioned in the so-called Florence-document (a list of the ecclesiastical classification in the Nordic) from the 1120s (Bonnier 1989:9). The medieval ecclesiastical institutions known by name in Sigtuna are, *St. Per (Peter)*, *St. Nicholas*, *St. Lars (Lawrence)*, *St. Olov*, *St. Gertrude* and *St. Mary* that belonged to the Dominican convent. *St. Göran's* hospital probably had a chapel (Ros 2001:133). All the known Church buildings, except for *St. Gertrude*, is located outside of the original town-area, which probably means that due to the ownership the plots in town were not accessible when the Churches were erected (Andersson 1977:118; Bonnier 1989:10).

The developments of the medieval places' economy and increase in population is usually visible in the ecclesiastical buildings. A sign that the town was of importance in the 13<sup>th</sup> century was the establishment of the Dominican convent and its church, *St. Mary*, that functioned as a grave church for a larger part of the high nobility of Uppland (Bonnier 1989:12). *St. Per* and *St. Olov* are considered the oldest stone Churches in the Mälars valley (*Mälardalen*). Gunnar Redelius claims that *St. Per's* general character is Norman in terms of

plan and height. He considers that the construction of the Church took place sometime between 1060 and 1120 (Ros 2001:149). It has a central tower and an apse-fitted chancel, two apse-fitted transepts, nave and a later constructed western tower with double stairs (fig. 12 & 13).



Figure 12. Photograph of *St. Per* from southeast. Photo by Gunnar Redelius. After Ros (2001).

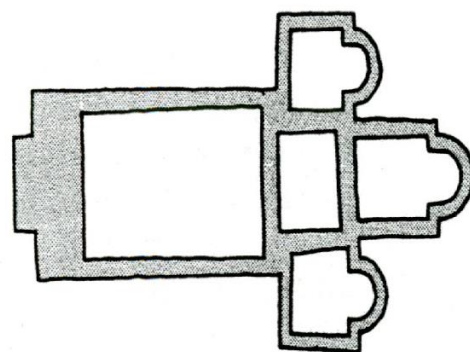


Figure 13. Plan of *St. Per*. Scale 1:600. After Ros (2001).

South of the Church, there was a vestibule. St. Per was appointed cathedral in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. It has similarities to the cathedral of Linköping and Gamla Uppsala. The transepts show that it was constructed for several alters, and the central tower is a feature found in churches with a high position within the ecclesiastical hierarchy (Bonnier 1989:11). The second Church with a central tower in Sigtuna is St. Olov. It probably had a predecessor in wood, because the oldest remaining part seems to be a small room in the south with a hagnoscope (peephole) towards the chancel (Bonnier 1987:19). The first time written sources mention it, is in a testament from 1286 as *ecclesia* (Ros 2001:168). St. Olov is a three-aisled church with transepts and a central tower (fig. 14 & 15). Unlike St. Per, the transepts does not make bounded rooms, and they do not have apses. Architecturally, the Church is like a monumental stave church built in stone. It is relatively short and seems pressed together. Archaeological investigations of the Church has shown that the plan was to make it bigger. During the excavation of the Church of St. Olov in Sigtuna in 2001 and 2002 some remarkable discoveries were made inside it – a

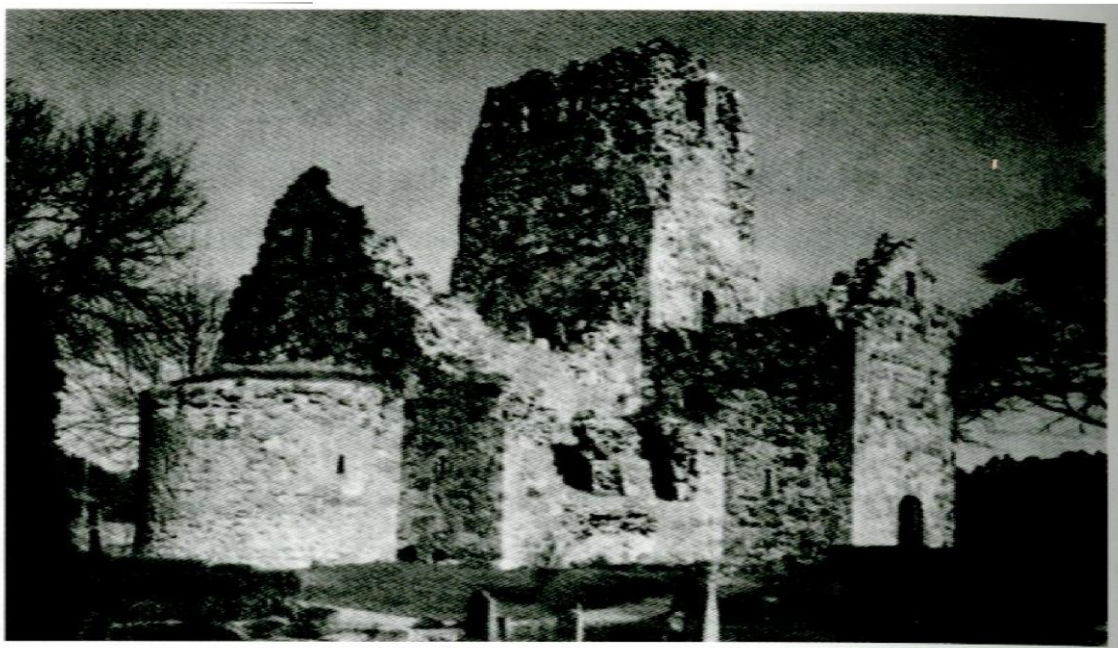
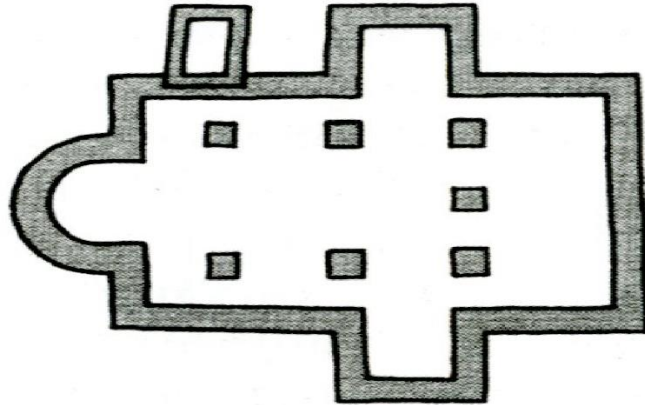


Figure 14. Photograph of St. Olov from southeast. Photo by I. Anderson. After Ros (2001).

masonry basis with the same width, depth and as well made as the foundation of the Church. This could mean that the Church of St. Olov had a predecessor, even if archaeologists consider it as one of the oldest stone Churches in Sweden (Tesch 2006:215-16). St. Olov is the northernmost Church in Sigtuna, and was possibly located in the outskirts of the medieval settlement area. In many towns the Olov-churches were located north in the town, i.e. Lund and York, but it is uncertain why they were located here (Ros 2001:164-167).



*Figure 15. Plan of St. Olov in Sigtuna. Scale 1:600. After Ros (2001).*

Ros suggests that it could be connected to the ecclesiastical processions at religious festivals. On Sundays, the processions were carried out inside the Churches from altar to altar, and through the northern or western portals then around the cemetery and in through the southern portal. In England, the processions went from the mother Church to the subordinate churches, and Bonnier claims that St. Olov could be intended to be the mother-church in Sigtuna (Ros 2001:168). The two Churches have been compared to Anglo-Norman and Anglo-Saxon architecture. They have features that witness of ignorance about the new building material. Because there was no stone-building tradition in Uppland before the introduction of the Christianity in Sweden, it is likely that architects, master-builders and artisans hired from other places (Bonnier 1987:20-21), constructed the first stone-churches.

Along with St. Per and St. Olov, the Church of St. Gertrude is considered to be of the oldest Churches in Sigtuna. This is the only Church within the medieval settlement-area, so the building-master must have owned the plot or bought the plot it was constructed on (Ros 2001:185). The plan of the Church is unknown so its origin cannot be determined. Excavations in 1983, showed that the area the Church was located in, was occupied in the start of the 10<sup>th</sup> century, During the 11<sup>th</sup> century there was a change of the plots in the area, possibly to make room for the Church. Someone had the power to change the plots (the King?), or the place reached a stage and organization that made plot regulations possible. Its location made it visible for the people arriving along Stora Gatan. If the Church was whitened, it was a contrast to the profane wooden settlements and easily spotted from afar when arriving by boat (Ros 2001:185). A fragment from a baptismal font found in the ruin dates to the last quarter of the 12<sup>th</sup> century, showing that the Church was in function latest at this time (Bonnier 1987:21; 1989:10). This church had to be dedicated to a different saint earlier,

because St. Gertrude was not worshipped until in the late Middle Ages. Dating of the plot-regulation and establishing what type of church that existed here is of great significance. It could be the oldest or the youngest of Sigtuna's churches, a royal church, cathedral or a congregation church for the town's settlers (Bonnier 1989:10). We know very little of St. Lars. Today, only the western tower is visible above the ground. The first time written sources mention it, is in a testament from 1311. This church seems to have been the first and the largest Church in Sigtuna. A rune-stone with preserved paint were used in the walls of the Church. Bonnier believes that the Church was constructed at the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> century, or in the first half of the 12<sup>th</sup> century (Bonnier 1987:21). Lars Redin examined the Church archaeologically, and reconstructed its plan (fig. 16). St. Lars has been proposed as the cathedral of Sigtuna because it has the same patron-saint as the cathedral of Gamla Uppsala (Bonnier 1989:11; Ros 2001:160-161). From depictions of St. Nicholas it is evident that the Church was a basilica with three naves and three apses on the chancel. This type of church was unknown in the rest of medieval Sweden (Bonnier 1987:21). It is unknown when this church was constructed or what position the Church had. Today, it is only an underground ruin. The first time written sources mention it, is in a deed-of-gift from 1304 (Ros 2001:172). It is assumed that the Church was constructed in the mid-12<sup>th</sup> century, a date that is based on building fragments of red sandstone believed to belong to the Church. The Church was no longer in use when the reformation took place, and was destroyed in the 17<sup>th</sup> century (Ros 2001:175).

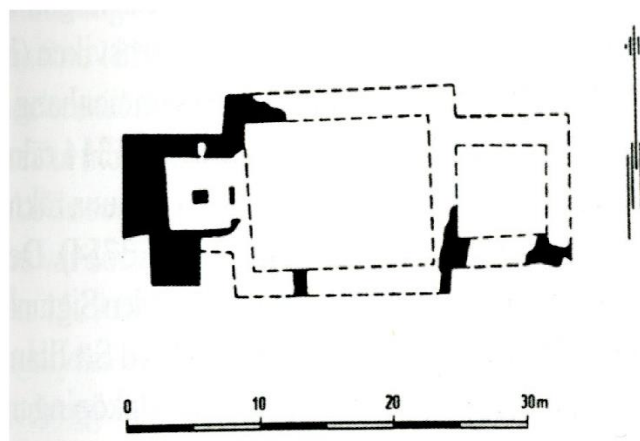


Figure 16. St. Lars in Sigtuna. Reconstruction by Lars Redin of the original plan of the church. The parts of the walls that still stand and have been investigated are marked in black. Scale 1:600. After Ros (2001).

The only complete Church from medieval times is St. Mary, the Dominican convent's Church from the middle of the 13<sup>th</sup> century. This church has gothic architecture and was constructed in brick around 1247. It has a longhouse with three naves and a narrow straight

chancel (Bonnier 1987:26). Compared to the Swedish material, the convent-church in Sigtuna is a unique and distinctive church. The chancel is remarkably long and arched. The longhouse has the shape of a hall-church with three naves. In its entirety and details, the Church has features, such as the shape of the western façade and the stairways in the north-western corner of the Church, not found anywhere else in Sweden. In 1237, the convent in Sigtuna emerged and the archbishop was buried here rather than at the cathedral (Redelius 1989:76-77). There was also a hospital in Sigtuna, with its own church *St. Göran*. A number of guilds existed in town, and they could have had their own churches. The Cistercian convent in Viby outside of Sigtuna also had a church.

It is unknown which church was the cathedral of Sigtuna. Due to the lack of written sources, several different interpretations and hypotheses about the roles of the different Churches in Sigtuna have been presented. St. Per and St. Olov are the only known Uppland-Churches that had Roman northern portals. The cathedral at Gamla Uppsala also had a Roman northern portal (Bonnier 1987:153). Bonnier believed that the early cathedral was a wooden church, and never built in stone. A search for a predecessor under St. Per should therefore be conducted. St. Per is located in the western part of the medieval settlement-area and is the Church that is placed furthest to the west. There are examples that the Churches are located in a west-east sequence in for instance northern France and England. In several Anglo-Saxon convent-areas there are similar parallels, where churches are located on a west-eastern line. The main Church in a place like this is normally dedicated to an apostle, usually St. Peter, St. Paul or St. Andrew. The subordinate Churches can be dedicated to Virgin Mary or other inferior saints. These similarities with the situation in Sigtuna can support the interpretation of St. Per as the main Church in Sigtuna (Ros 2001:151-152).

### 7.3 Discussion

The area of Sigtuna's location consisted of hills, forests and marshes. The closest surroundings were not particularly suited for cultivation. The settlers had to find arable land outside the town area. The landscape in Bergen is rugged and the whole district surrounded by the 'seven mountains'. However, Bergen's hinterland was rich in arable land, and the town's original name 'Bjørgvin' meaning 'the green meadow between the mountains' shows that even in town there were possibilities of agriculture. Both towns were located at the water with easy access to other trading towns and with possibilities for exporting/importing goods. The two towns are not located directly at the coastline. They are protected by islands, but still easy

to access by boat. No wall or mound surrounded the town areas, however west of Sigtuna there is a 150m long wall of stone. It is located between two mountains and probably functioned as a roadblock (Ros 2009:61). A ring-wall surrounded the royal residence at Holmen in Bergen, but no other fortifications surrounded the town area. In terms of the layout of the town, the settlements and shops were located on both sides of a main street, Stora Gatan in Sigtuna and Øvregaten in Bergen. These main streets functioned as market streets and stretched from one end of the town area to the other along the shoreline. In Sigtuna, the settlements were limited by the two inlets on either side of the town area. Bergen developed on the eastern shoreline of a natural harbour, and was limited by the mountains surrounding it. The plots closest to the shoreline were the most attractive ones because this was where the merchandise arrived. The closer to the merchandise, the shorter distance to move the goods. The settlements were long and narrow with their short ends facing the main street and the shoreline, with several jetties serving as landing places for the ships docking with merchandise. Craft had a prominent position in both towns, proven by the amounts of waste found in the town area. Several of the streets and blocks have names referring to different crafts (i.e. Skostredet, Kammakaren, Urmakaren). This indicates that artisans of the same craft were concentrated in the same areas. One area was reserved for the shoemakers, while the smiths had another.

A striking difference from the two towns is the location and number of churches. In Sigtuna, only one of the known Churches, St. Gertrude, was located in the town area, while the others were outside the settlement area. It was located on the plot assumed to be the royal farm in the middle of the settlement area. The remaining Churches were located north of the settlements. We know of only six ecclesiastical institutions from Sigtuna, and neither of them function as churches today. St. Per, St. Olov and St. Lars are ruins, St. Nicholas is an underground ruin, we know little of the exact location and position of St. Gertrude, and St. Mary was located outside of the town area and will not be discussed here. Three of the medieval Churches in Bergen are still standing, St. Mary, St. Cross and St. Olav (today's cathedral), and over 20 of the medieval ecclesiastical institutions have been extensively excavated and examined.

The known Churches from Sigtuna were all oriented more or less east-west. They were located outside the settlement area and did not have to be fitted to already existing buildings, which was the case several places in Bergen. This way the Churches could easily expand whenever the population increased. When times were good, modernizations and decorations with new inventory often took place. For small and poor congregations it was



natural to build small and simple churches, while rich congregations could aim for churches with challenging architecture and decorations (Bonnier 1987:217). It is clear that all the construction work on the churches affected the townsfolk, even if they did not initiate the work. The transport of building materials, food and shelter for the construction workers and the arrival of different specialists have meant new possibilities for incomes for the settlers (Bonnier 1989:10). There was no tradition for building in stone in Uppland before the introduction of the Christianity. It is therefore likely that architects, master-builders and artisans hired from other places or countries constructed the first stone-churches in Sigtuna.

The wide western tower of St. Per has led to the interpretation that the King was the builder of this church. The Church was constructed over several periods, and was according to Gunnar Redelius started when Inge Stenkilsson, also called Inge the Elder, ruled over Sweden (c. 1080-84) (Ros 2001:149-150). It was a general feature during the early Iron Age and early Middle Ages that the people who were kings or earls resided close to central-places and towns (Ros 2001:19). To understand why Sigtuna emerged, it is important to understand the political geography. At Fornsigstuna (now Signhildsberg), 4km west of Sigtuna across the inlet Håtunaviken, the royal farm was located before Sigtuna emerged. The area was still in use after the royal farm ceased to exist, causing destruction or obliteration of large parts of the remains (Damell 1991c:88). There are no archaeological or written sources indicating that there was a royal farm in the town of Sigtuna. The first part of the name, Sig, is a common transcription for Odin, Sigfaðir, Sigmundur, Sigtryggr and more. The name therefore gives associations to Odin, associations enhanced by Fornsigstuna being a royal farm and thereby linked to the Ynglinga family that considered themselves as descending from Odin himself (Strid 1989:106, 1991:16). Ros claimed that the King did not found Sigtuna to expose himself, but rather to create a new centre to unite the three districts Uppland was divided into (Tiundaland, Fjädrundaland and Attundaland) to one administrative district (Ros 2009:192).

In summary, we see that the towns of Sigtuna and Bergen are rather different though they both functioned as Episcopal seats in each of their countries. Archaeologically, it is documented that Sigtuna was founded on “virgin soil”, while the emergence and development of Bergen seem to have taken place over time. The town organization is similar with long and narrow settlements facing a main street. The number and location of the Churches in town is one of the main differences between Bergen and Sigtuna. Sigtuna’s Churches are located outside the settlement area (except St. Gertrude), while Bergen’s Churches are located in the middle of and surrounded by settlements. Andrén points out that the number of Churches in a town has to be explained in regards to the economy and organization of the place (Andrén

1985:41). The more Churches a town has the more important and well organized it is. This theory is not fitting for Sigtuna, where we know of only six churches and yet the town became the Episcopal seat. In both towns, the King played an important role in expanding and developing the town area.

## 8. Comparative study; Oslo

The extensive archaeological investigations in Gamlebyen in Oslo from the 1870s were important for the development of Norwegian town-archaeology as a discipline. From this point on the archaeological material became more important than the written sources and topographic relations in the historical interpretations of the medieval towns (Helle & Nedkvitne 1977:189). Oslo emerged around the mid-11<sup>th</sup> century and became an Episcopal seat, which makes it a good comparison to Bergen.

### 8.1 Town organization

According to the sagas, Harald Hardråde founded Oslo around 1050; however, earlier events mention it as well. Harald often resided here because of the ample supplies and the rich arable land surrounding it (Hødnebo & Magerøy 1979a:516). Dendrochronological dating and ar traces show that there were activities in the area before it became a town, which Molaug calls the pre-urban period. The oldest remains of town settlements are assumingly from the second quarter of the 11<sup>th</sup> century. The excavations in 1971 uncovered graves from c 1000 or the first half of the 11<sup>th</sup> century (Molaug 2008:76-77). Medieval Oslo was located under Eikaberg (now Ekeberg) by the water, east of the present town area. Bjørvika limited the area in the west and Alna River (*Alnaelva*) in the southeast. In the north, Hovin Creek (*Hovinbekken*) was the limit of the regular settlement area. It could have been a market place before it became a town, and trade and crafts could have been the means of livelihood for many of the settlers (Nedkvitne & Norseng 1991:71). The valley where Oslo is located is an area with good arable land, and the fiord had great possibilities for fishing. The location was favourable for boat traffic innermost in the Oslofiord; however, ice obstructed it during the winter (Molaug 2008:75). Two main streets in the 11<sup>th</sup> century town ran diagonal towards the mouth of Alna River and Hovin Creek (fig. 17). One of the two traffic arteries from northeast towards southwest defined the main features of the settlement-structure from the oldest times of the dense settlements (Nedkvitne & Norseng 1991:44-45). The connections the town had to the villages inland were an important factor for the development of the town. The streets were set up with more than only the sea in mind. The old approaching roads that led out of town and further north played an important role when the streets were set up and fitted to them. According to Sverris saga, South Street (*Søndre Strete*) went up from the southern side of the Church of St. Mary, and has to be the same street later named *Øyrastretet* also called *Østre*

*Strete*. West Street (*Vestre Strete*) must have been located north of the Church of St. Mary. These two streets were the most important ones, and across them, there were several commons (*no. allmenninger*). On several locations, excavations uncovered remnants from paving in stone or wood. These paved areas provide us with information on where the streets went (Nedkvitne & Norseng 1991:82-83).

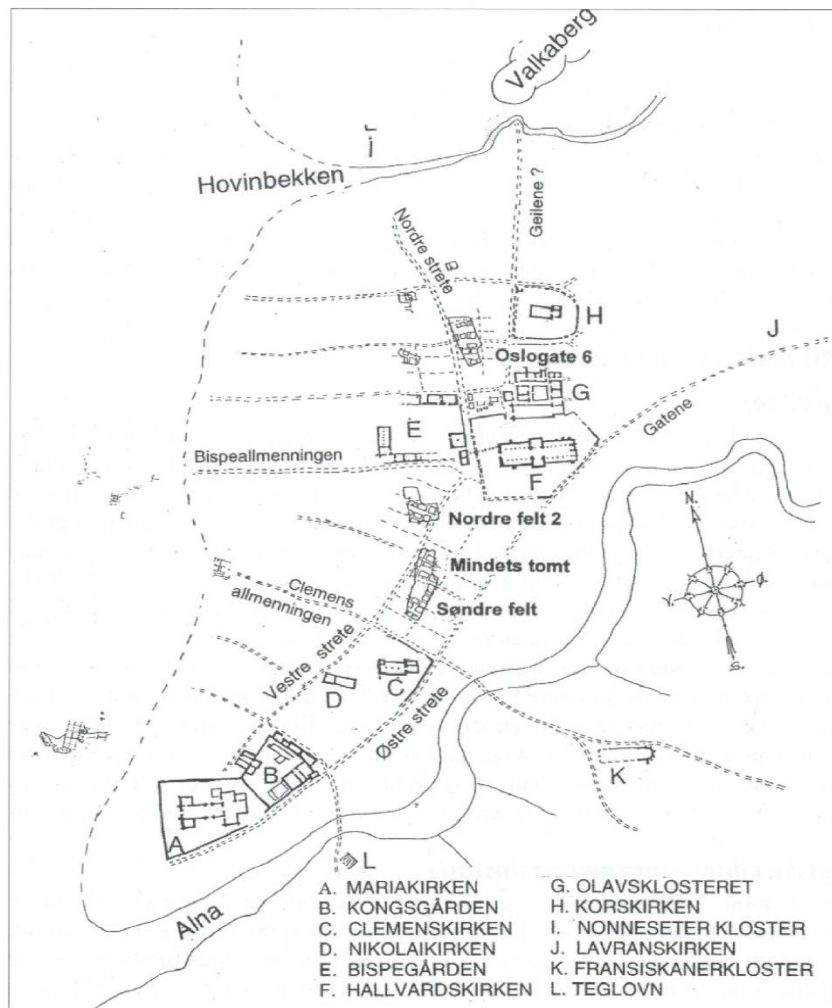


Figure 17. Medieval Oslo c 1300. Monumental buildings, assumed streets, larger excavations from 1970 and later. A. Church of St. Mary, B. Royal estate, C. Church of St. Clement, D. Church of St. Nicholas, E. Bishop's farm, F. Church of St. Hallvard, G. Church of St. Olav (Dominican Convent), H. Church of St. Cross, I. Nonneseter Convent, J. Church of St. Lawrence, K. Franciscan Convent, L. Brick furnace. After Molaug (2008).

As in Bergen, there was an emphasis on establishing a fire chronology from the 1970s. Where a fire has destroyed settlements within a larger area, the fire layers and burnt remains in situ can give a contemporary time horizon (Molaug 2008:75). The archaeological excavations have uncovered up to 14 fire-layers in the settlements until 1624, when the town moved west (Nedkvitne & Norseng 1991:101). The written material mention the same

amount of fires in the last 500 years of this period. In some of these cases, the written sources match the archaeological material, while in others it is hard to find a connection. The building phase after the fire around 1100 at “Mindets tomt” and “Søndre felt” represents the start of a condensation of settlements. Prior to this, we know of very few townhouses next to the Church of St. Clement and the royal estate. The first remains of buildings at “Nordre felt” are from around 1100, and in layers from the start of the 12<sup>th</sup> century traces of settlements on the property of Oslo gate 6 just north of the bishop-church have been found. The town area most likely grew from the south towards the north, which archaeological excavations confirm. The finds from Oslo gate 6 and “Nordre felt” gives the impression that these areas were in the outskirts of the town area. The intense constructions of churches indicates that the town was growing (Nedkvitne & Norseng 1991:57-58). The orientation of the streets indicate that the settlements grew more rapid northeast along the streets rather than northwest along the coastline. It seems that the relation to the harbour was less determining for the oldest settlement development here (Nedkvitne & Norseng 1991:88). Strong town developments characterized the High Middle Ages all over Europe. The settlements became denser and the settlement area expanded (Nedkvitne & Norseng 1991:104).

The first time written sources mention a royal estate in Oslo, was around 1200, but archaeological excavations have provided us with traces from an older building (Nedkvitne & Norseng 1991:39). In the northern part of the royal estates’ ruins, traces in parts of the natural terrain indicated sand filling. The filling was located on high ground in the royal estate area, and was thicker than necessary to level the ground in terms of building settlements there. Therefore, architect Håkon Christie interpreted the finds as remnants of a defence, possibly the essence of a “motte-and-bailey” known from the Viking Age and early Middle Ages in northwest Europe (Christie 1966:72-74). The “motte” was a round or square mound, large enough to have a wooden defence-tower on top, surrounded by moats and palisades. Directly connected to it, protected by an outer moat, the so-called bailey or courtyard – with settlements, storage rooms, stalls, boathouses and similar was located. These types of fortifications were usually located in places where the terrain provided natural defence against attacks, and Oslo was a favourable location for this. The fiord sealed off the long headland to the west and northwest and the river to the south and east, so a single moat could block off the landside in the northeast. No historical or archaeological evidence of this moat has been found, however if it did exist it must have been refilled and obliterated at an early stage of the town development (Christie 1966:74). It is proposed that Klemensallmenningen is located on top of the remains of a defence mound (Nedkvitne & Norseng 1991:39). Finds of a handful of

coins that dated to the first half of the 11<sup>th</sup> century, indicates that the first work on the royal residence started when Harald Hardrada ruled as a king (1046-1066). Snorri Sturluson put the foundation of Oslo in relation to the King's need for a military point of support in this part of the country to be able to operate in Danish waters (Hødnebo & Magerøy 1979a:516). The reason for building a rather primitive fortification like a "motte-and-bailey" could be the requirements to build it in short time. The "motte-and-bailey" was just as good as the fortifications the enemies in Denmark had (Christie 1966:75). The interpreted remains of this fortification indicates the presence of the King in the earliest stages of the town.

At St. Hallvard's plass, there are visible remains of the medieval town. Side by side, the remains of the town's Episcopal Church, the mighty Church of St. Hallvard, and the Dominican convent's Church of St. Olav are located. Just north of these, we find the ruins of a smaller church, the Church of St. Cross. In Oslo gate 13 – Oslo Ladegård – just west of St. Hallvard, there are remains of a Bishop's farm in stone. Under the Loeng Bridge (*Loengbrua*), the ruins of the Church of St. Clement are located, and on the area of the national railway company (*NSB*), remnants of the medieval royal estate and the Church of St. Mary is found. Close to the Church of St. Clement, between the Bishop's farm and the royal estate, another church existed, the Church of St. Nicholas, and northeast of the town Nonneseter convent was located. In the northeast, the Church of St. Lawrence was located. East of Alna, the Franciscans had their convent.

## 8.2 Church organization

Oslo was the religious centre for Eastern Norway in the first half of the 12<sup>th</sup> century. The developments of the ecclesiastical organization in the decades around 1100 is visible in the erection of stone churches. Ruins of three stone churches from the early medieval period are present in the town area, the *Church of St. Mary*, the *Church of St. Clement* and the *Church of St. Hallvard*. In addition, the convent Church at Hovedøya, an island south of Oslo, is older than the mid-12<sup>th</sup> century.

The Church of St. Mary (fig. 18) was located beside the royal estate and functioned as a royal chapel. During excavations of the Church, archaeologists uncovered the remnants of a wooden church directly below the floor. The wooden Church was like the later stone-church oriented east-west with a nave in west and a chancel in the east (Nedkvitne & Norseng 1991:40). The wooden Church was from the 11<sup>th</sup> century, and a stone-church replaced it

around 1100. The Church is visible as a ruin today (Keller & Schia 1994:28).

Archaeologists uncovered the remains of the Church of St. Clement (fig. 19) in the early 1920s in a backyard in Saxegaardsgata. It was a parish church for the part of the town located south of St. Hallvard (Nedkvitne & Norseng 1991:87). A comparison of the building technique and material with other older stone-churches in Oslo indicates that the construction of the Church started around 1120 or earlier. Almost all of the St. Clement-churches in Norway date back to the first half of the 11<sup>th</sup> century or earlier. The round arched portals and the small windows are typical for the Roman building-tradition. No remains of the Church that can illustrate its appearance have been located. With the exception of the chancel, ruins of the Church still exist (Keller & Schia 1994:40). The graves found outside the Church indicates that this church is the oldest in Eastern Norway. No other cemeteries dates back as far as this one (Nedkvitne & Norseng 1991:16). Like the Church of St. Mary, it also had a

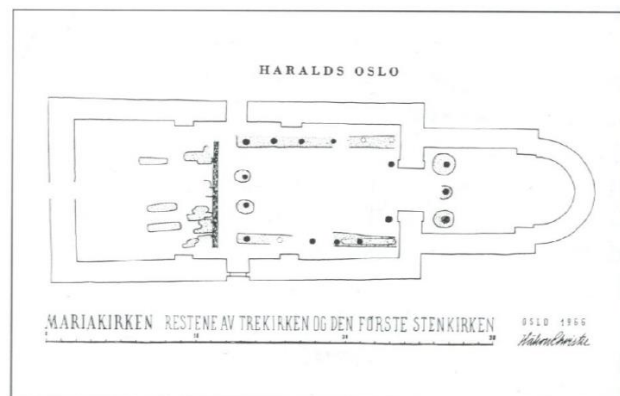


Figure 18. Plan of the Church of St. Mary. In the ruins of the oldest Church in stone, archaeologists uncovered traces of a smaller wooden church. The postholes of this are marked with dots, the black circle mark the uncovered post supports. After Nedkvitne & Norseng (1991).

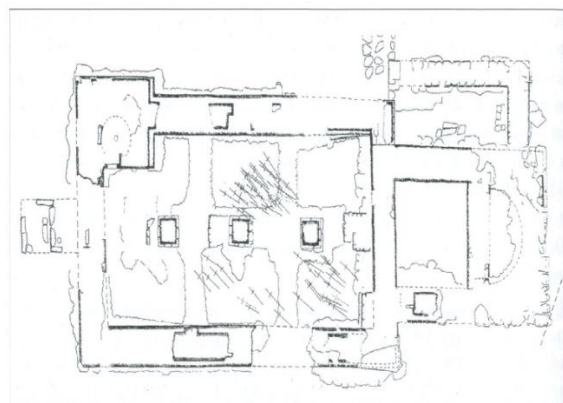


Figure 19. Plan of the Church of St. Clement. The stone Church from the first half of the 12th century, based on the drawings of G. Fischer and the graves from the oldest cemetery. After Molaug (2008).

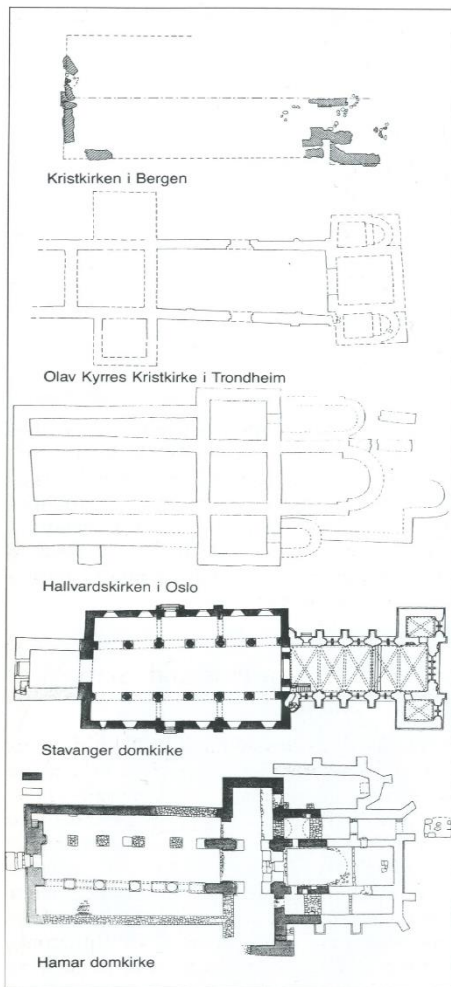


Figure 20. Plan drawings of the oldest Norwegian cathedrals illustrating that the Church of St. Hallvard was an ambitious project. After Nedkvitne & Norseng (1991).

predecessor in wood. The Church of St. Hallvard was the cathedral of Oslo. The dimensions and the plan of the Church shows that it was built in the same fashion as the large Roman cathedrals further south in Europe. The Church underwent expansions and rebuildings several times later in the Middle Ages. The Church had the shape of a cross and when it was completed, it was 56m long inside. Its large central tower was higher than any other buildings in the medieval town, and functioned as a watchtower in wartimes. The oldest Episcopal Churches in Nidaros and Bergen were evidently as long as this church. However, until the construction of the new cathedral in Nidaros took place, probably around the middle of the 12<sup>th</sup> century, the Church of St. Hallvard in Oslo was the largest and most ostentatious in the country and probably built by the King (fig. 20). The foundations were built in a “fishbone-pattern” not found in any of the other Churches in Oslo (Nedkvitne & Norseng 1991:50-52).

The dimensions and the planning of the Church indicates that it was intended as an Episcopal Church

from the beginning. The Church of St. Hallvard is a central part of the memorial park today (Keller & Schia 1994:64).

Cistercian monks from England established the convent at Hovedøya in 1147. They dedicated the convent to Virgin Mary and St. Edmund, while Cistercians usually only dedicated their churches to Virgin Mary alone. This points towards the presence of a *Church of St. Edmund* there when the Cistercians took the island. Archaeological investigations of the buildings have shown how the monks expanded and incorporated the Church into the monastery they constructed. The older versions of the Church of St. Clement, St. Mary and St. Edmund were relatively small with the same plan. The completion of the Church of St. Edmund happened before the Cistercians came to Hovedøya, because the tower in the northern corner of the west-front does not fit into the strict Cistercian architecture (Nedkvitne & Norseng 1991:48-51). Several of the ecclesiastical institutions in and around Oslo trace back to the early Middle Ages. Some of the Churches first mentioned in written sources in the



13<sup>th</sup> century, could be just as old. *St. Lawrence* was among the most worshipped saints from the 9<sup>th</sup> century and a *St. Lawrence* church is referred to as early as 1085 in Lund (St. Lars). St. Lars was the patron saint of Lund. *St. Nicholas* was known in Germany from the 10<sup>th</sup> century and in England from the 11<sup>th</sup> century, and the worship of this saint seems to have spread in the Nordic from around 1100. Written sources mention the Church of *St. Nicholas* in Bergen in 1160, and the completion of the Church of *St. Lawrence* took place before the fire in 1198. The monastic life in the towns probably dates back to the early Middle Ages as well. The first Benedictine nuns arrived at Oslo in the 1180s, and the Cistercians started the rebuilding of the Church at Hovedøya in 1147. The construction of the *Dominican convent of St. Olav* started in the 1230s and the *Franciscan convent* in the 1280s (Nedkvitne & Norseng 1991:99).

*Nonneseter convent* was a Benedictine nun-convent dedicated to Virgin Mary and the first nuns arrived Oslo in the 1180s. It could be as old as the Cistercian convent on Hovedøya or older. We can at least trace it back to the 1180s, when then nuns received *Aker Church* and rectory from the bishop. The old *Aker Church* was a parish church for Osloherad (administrative county) in the Middle Ages, however it was located outside the town area, and is not discussed in this thesis. Written sources mention the *Dominican convent* from 1240. Dating of the Church of *St. Olav* confirm that the convent not is much older than this. Minutes from the order-meetings for the province of Dacia and the Nordic mention the convent in 1254. Half a century later, the Franciscans established in Oslo. The first time written sources mention the convent is a pope-letter from 1291, where Nicholas IV gave a year and 40 days in indulgence to those who pay a visit to the different Franciscan Churches in the Nordic (Nedkvitne & Norseng 1991:118-119).

The royal and ecclesiastical functions did not only attract people to Oslo, it also meant that parts of the incomes of the Church and King were concentrated here. The royal and ecclesiastical collection constituted a large part of the economic foundation for the settlers in the area. The most important and reliable incomes for the King were the land rents. In addition, the King received taxes and fines paid for breaking the laws (Nedkvitne & Norseng 1991:66-67). The increased meaning as a royal and ecclesiastical centre was also important for the development of the town. It attracted travellers that needed food and shelter while they stayed in town. The Church was evidently subject to the King for most of the 12<sup>th</sup> century. However, gradually the bishop's chair gained a certain independent economic foundation (Nedkvitne & Norseng 1991:68).

### 8.3 Discussion

The location of Oslo was similar to Bergen with a mountain limiting the town on one side, and the water on the other. I would claim that the divisions of the area into plots in the first building phase (c 1000-1050) indicates that the King or one of his men planned the town's layout from the start. In Bergen, there were settlers and agrarian activities prior to the founding, but no clear indications of a plot division in the first phases of the development. The probability that there has been a continuity of the royal estate in Oslo from the mid-11<sup>th</sup> century, speaks for the royal power being central in the establishment of the town (Molaug 2008:87-88). The location of the royal estate was rather similar in Oslo and Bergen. The estate was located in one end of the town overlooking the sea. This way the King overlooked any sea traffic and could keep control of who came to town. The rapid expansion of the town was similar in the High Middle Ages all over Europe. Bergen grew faster than Oslo, and the period after 1200 stands out as the time with most expansion and development. As far as the sources go, it seems that the growth in Oslo was stronger than the other large Norwegian towns towards the end of the High Middle Ages (Nedkvitne & Norseng 1991:104). The town-area in Oslo most likely grew from the south towards the north, which archaeological excavations confirm. Gustav Storm claimed that the medieval streets in Bergen, Trondheim and Oslo were so similar that it pointed towards royal regulation. He assumed that all three originally were so-called "one street constructions", with a street going parallel with wharfs along a river or sea, and crossing passages between the townhouses, oriented towards the harbour. The differences were however larger than Storm imagined. In Bergen, there was a street parallel with the beach, but excavations have shown that this is unlikely for Trondheim, and in Oslo, two streets ran diagonal towards the mouth of the river. The natural topography probably determined the pattern of Oslo, rather than by a ruling hand (Storm 1899:435-436). In the mid-12<sup>th</sup> century, there was a radical change in the craft production, which is most visible in the production of shoes. Large amounts of leather waste in the area north of the Church of St. Hallvard stretching over a length of 80m indicate a centralization of the shoemaking business to a specific area of the town (Molaug 2008:87). In Bergen, the different crafts had their own designated areas in the townscape.

A hypothesis promoted by several researchers, states that Oslo, like Bergen, got its name from a farm. In the Middle Ages, the contemporaries wrote the name of Oslo partly Ósló, partly Ásló, which can be interpreted as "the plain under the hill", "the plain of the Gods" or "the grove of the Gods". Neither of these names point towards agricultural

settlements, and the age of the name is uncertain. However, the town's territory was in the late stage of the Middle Ages around 1000 acres, which is a reasonable size for a manor (Nedkvitne & Norseng 1991:23). When Snorri wrote in the sagas that King Harald founded Oslo, he did not state when this happened. However, the presence of a fortification interpreted as a "motte-and-bailey", indicates that the King was present in the town at an early stage. It is difficult to interpret the oldest traces at the royal estate because the construction has not been fully excavated (Schia 1991:113). The ditches that have been uncovered could also be remains from a system of moats, occasional burials or rubbish heaps. Gerhard Fischer, archaeologist and architect, interpreted Peter Blix and Johan Meyer's finds of a stone castle, surrounded by a ring-wall on all four sides, as the royal estate and made it clear that this was the oldest part of medieval Oslo (Christie 1966:71-72). The royal estate was a monumental construction with a relatively high ring-wall (c 5m) behind the Church of St. Mary. It was mostly built in stone with a large two-storeyed hall in the south-east corner. The hall was similar to Håkonshallen in Bergen, however somewhat smaller. Archaeological excavations showed that the entrance on the middle of the first floor led to a hallway with two larger rooms on either side (Schia 1991:33). The size of the courtyard was modest, and the only opening towards town was through a gate in a square tower out towards West Street. It was in the King's interest to defend the town and the fortification can be viewed in conjunction with the royal estate. The need of a fortification was most prominent during the first period of Harald Hardrade's reign when he had several run-ins with the Danes. The coin-finds from the royal estate confirm that the earliest work on the royal estate took place in the first years of King Harald's reign, which clearly confirms Snorri's story that Harald founded Oslo (Christie 1966:74-75).

Oslo and Bergen were religious centres on each side of the country, and they both became Episcopal seats. The difference in size is striking. While Bergen had five monasteries and as many as 20-23 churches and chapels, Oslo was more modest with three monasteries and six churches. This indicates that the size and number of churches not necessarily decided which towns became Episcopal seats or not. Likewise, the size of the town did not matter in deciding how important a town was. All the medieval Churches in Oslo were oriented more or less east-west, which is in accordance with regular ecclesiastical practice (Nedkvitne & Norseng 1991:14). This could indicate that the Churches were constructed prior to the settlements, or that the settlements were concentrated and the Churches built in areas with no buildings. Five of the six Churches in Oslo bear the same name as churches in Bergen (St. Mary, St. Nicholas, St. Hallvard, St. Cross and St. Lawrence). This indicates that certain

saints had a more prominent position in the towns than others did, and that the same saints gave name to churches in several of the important religious centres of Norway. The saints alone provided not only a focus for religious devotion, they also gave whatever sense of identity, means of protection, and economic vitality religious institutions of Europe would know for centuries (Geary 1990:19). The Virgin Mary held a unique position in all Christian countries, being the Mother of Jesus. Cistercian churches were uniformly dedicated to the Virgin (Geary 1990:23). The Churches in both towns go in lines following the settlement patterns.

There were eight different monastic orders in Norway in medieval times. Four of these established in Oslo, the Benedictines, the Cistercians, the Dominicans and the Franciscans (Haavardsholm 2014). Nonneseter was a Benedictine convent dedicated to Virgin Mary. In Bergen, Nonneseter was a Cistercian convent, however the younger Cistercian order it belonged to aimed to revive the Benedictine order in its original form. Later discussions have proposed that the convent in Bergen belonged to the Benedictine order and not the Cistercian order (Ommundsen 2010:548), but that will not be discussed here. The two Nonneseter convents belonged to orders that had the organised 'religious life' as its aim, a life striving for Christian perfection. In Oslo, monks from Kirkstead in England established the Cistercian convent at Hovedøya in 1147. In the High Middle Ages, this convent became a prominent landowner. Benedictine and Cistercian convents were often powerful proprietors within towns. This brings associations to Munkeliv in Bergen, which was the largest and richest convent in Norway. The Cistercian convent in Oslo was located on an island outside the town, while in Bergen it was located in the outskirts of the town-area along one of the main-roads leading to town. The Cistercian convents established themselves in rural areas, because agriculture was an important part of its activities (Haavardsholm 2014). The Dominican and Franciscan orders settled in the towns with the most people. However, they had the right to preach in the town as well as in the villages without getting permission from the parish priests. This often brought them in conflict with the local clergy (Nedkvitne & Norseng 1991:119). The Dominican order emerged in 1216 (Hødnebo 1958:174) and the Franciscan order in 1208/09 (Hødnebo 1959:563). The Dominicans established themselves in Oslo in 1239 (Hødnebo 1958:178). The exact date of when the Franciscans established in Norway is unknown, however the orders came to in Tønsberg and Bergen during the reign of Haakon Haakonsson (1217-63). They established in Oslo before 1291 (Hødnebo 1959:567). These orders swore to the ideal of poverty and were not to possess any lands. As mendicant orders, they depended on gifts from the people to survive, and was therefore usually located in the

outskirts of the town area near the main roads. The Dominican convent in Oslo took over the Church of St. Olav north of the Church of St. Hallvard, and made it the southern wing of the convent. Usually, the Church was located in the northern wing, but the ground plan was as if seen through a mirror. This was due to the cemetery located south of the Church. The Dominican convent in Bergen was located near the royal estate and was a part of the centre of the Churches' economic, judicial and political operations. In Oslo, it was located in the middle of the town area with churches in the north and south, and the bishop's estate and settlements to the west. The location of the Franciscan convents in the two towns are more similar. They were both located near one of the main approaches to the town.

The large ecclesiastical institutions in Oslo were partially competitors, and partially they had different tasks in the town. Together, they characterized the town. The number of the clergy must have been up to 120-150. The ecclesiastical institutions were important for the towns' connections to the surrounding country. Simultaneously, they contributed to increased contact with the surrounding world. Apart from a number of specialized artisans, the lay people serving the Churches came from the town and surrounding countries. Eventually, a trickle from other bishoprics became more and more normal, including from the neighbouring countries. An example is probably Nikolas Ulvsson, priest and canon in Oslo, who in 1244 gave lands in Södermanland, Eastern Sweden to a convent there, in return for being included as a brother in the convent. During the first century the convent at Hovedøya functioned, the abbots were of English origin. The first certain abbot of Norwegian descent was Halle in the 1290s. In addition to the people that more or less worked in Oslo permanently, visiting foreign clergy contributed to giving the ecclesiastical environment an international character (Nedkvitne & Norseng 1991:126). The historian Edvard Bull did not believe that the King was important in developing the town, but that the Church and bishop had enough incomes for the townsfolk to live off. This way, he insinuated that the development of the town only could take place after the Church had established itself as an independent social power (Bull 1922:35).

In summary, Oslo share some similarities with Bergen, however the differences are rather prominent. The first that strikes as different is the size of the town area, and the number of ecclesiastical institutions. Both towns became Episcopal seats, and the size seems to have little or no importance when choosing which towns were to have this function. Whether Oslo got its name from an old farm or not is not firmly established and requires further investigations. The name in itself does not imply an agricultural settlement. The plot division in the first phases of the town indicates that the King was an important initiator in both towns.

## 9. Discussion and summary

This thesis has taken several aspects of the urbanizing process and the initiator's roles into account. In the following chapter, I will gather the previous discussions and summarize the results of the different themes. The chapter is divided into three subchapters closely linked to the aims of the thesis. Firstly, I will discuss the royal and ecclesiastical role in the emergence and development of the town. Secondly, the ecclesiastical distribution in the townscape is discussed, and lastly, I compare Bergen to the other two towns presented in the thesis; Sigtuna and Oslo.

### 9.1 The royal and ecclesiastical role in the emergence and developments of the town

In chapter 4, I presented several different models and theories for the *emergence* of towns, among them 'the organic town tradition' and 'the founded town tradition'. In the organic tradition, the town grows over time with the inhabitants as the initiators or important actors. In the founded the *King*, the *Church* or other powerful proprietors initiate the establishment of permanently occupied towns.

There are archaeological traces of settlements and previous activity in Bergen prior to the period when Olav Kyrre *founded* the town. However, the extent of the activity is still uncertain. Traces from former inhabitants thus shows that the area was in use before it became a town. I emphasized that if the inhabitants view a certain area of settlements as a town, then to them it is a town regardless of the King or bishop giving it town privileges. In other words, we can view marketplaces as towns, but because the King did not centralize the production and make them administrative centres, archaeologists do not consider them as towns. Likewise, if we consider all the criteria posed to determine which places that are towns and which that are urban settlements, several of the marketplaces match multiple criteria for towns, and some towns only match a few of the criteria. No definition for a town is correct, and the situation is different from area to area, and country to country. The criteria can indicate characteristics that has to be taken into consideration when establishing whether a place is a town or not, and can serve as guidelines.

Archaeological excavations have established that some towns, for instance Sigtuna, emerged on 'virgin soil', hence fitting 'the founded town tradition'. The first traces from the

earliest phase in Sigtuna, were plot-divisions indicating that someone planned a town from the start. Only the proprietor could divide the land and it is likely that this was the King or other powerful people. It was first when the land in Bergen was divided into plots that written sources mention Bergen as a town (Hansen 2005:21; Helle 1982:3; Helle & Nedkvitne 1977:206). A more structured and regulated plot-division is archaeologically documented in Bergen from the time when Olav Kyrre took an interest in the town area. This serves as an argument for accepting him as the founder of the town. Before towns were established, the King had estates in several areas of the country. He travelled from place to place consuming the local surplus at these farms. Around 1000 AD, the town became a place of interest for the King. This is seen in relation to the advantage the centralizing of the production and craft in the area produced, thereby creating a central place where the King could exchange goods and turn it into capital. As demonstrated in chapter 5.1, the genetic model for the uprising and development of the towns consider the royal power as a primary factor and sees the town as an attempt from the King to centralize the trade to more favourable locations. This model fits the developments that took place in Bergen.

The high number of monumental buildings in the early phase of the town indicate that resourceful people took the initiative to build them, which is clear in the size and location of them. It has taken a tremendous workforce as well as finances to erect buildings like The Church of the Apostles and Håkonshallen in Bergen, The Church of St. Hallvard in Oslo and Christchurch Cathedral in Nidaros. The King was an important factor in the introduction of the Christianity in Norway. In order to convert his subjects, he granted land and erected churches, several of them elaborate and massive. Initially, the King was the sole actor in erecting churches in town in Bergen because he had the finances to accomplish it. However, eventually when the King and the Church separated, the Church became a more dominant actor in the society. They upheld the building-activity that the King started, and continued to erect, develop and expand churches. I suggest that the King's building-activity was a way of showing off his religious superiority and wealth. With the Church as the main actor, the focus shifted towards more churches to serve every religious aspect for everyone in the population. The King wanted the Christian faith to reach out and include as many of his people as possible, however I suggest that he always considered how it could benefit his position as a King and God's man on Earth. Major churches were often powerful proprietors in towns, and had large amounts of income from the land they had at its disposal. These incomes contributed to maintaining the Churches as well as investing in more land and the trade. Christianity was the only allowed religion in the High Middle Ages and was as much a

lifestyle as a belief. The Church participated in all the events in medieval people's lives, and followed them from the birth to the grave. For the people, it was more of a matter of course than an obligation to pay tithe to the Church.

## 9.2 The ecclesiastical distribution in the townscape

An important aspect in the matter of the distribution in the landscape is the physical/natural landscape as discussed in chapter 3.1. Buildings can be located in certain areas because the topography favours it, for instance when building the defence structure at a vantage point (i.e. Sverresborg in Bergen). As we have seen, there is no doubt that the Church had a prominent role in the medieval society. The Christian faith became a universal religion and some churches had more favourable locations than others. What is a favourable location for a church? I would claim that it involves a considerable property in an area with little or no settlements. This way the erection of the Church would not have any limitations in regards to its size and extension. It would also render the possibility of building it with the east-west orientation that was the hallmark of most medieval churches. The property was the source of income for the Church, and if they had sizeable land, it could secure the finances to maintain and expand the Church. The graveyards of the Church would also take up quite a bit of space, another reason for claiming that the property should be of some size. Some churches appeared prominent for travellers when entering the town area. They towered over the low wooden settlements and were visible from the sea or the main approaches on land. I see this as indications that these churches attracted attention from the people entering the town and in this way attracted more people to visit them. The reason some churches were more visible than others was not just due to their location, but also their size and decoration. Examples on such churches are Christchurch Cathedral from the late 11<sup>th</sup> century and The Church of the Apostles from the early 12<sup>th</sup> century at Holmen, which were visible when entering the seaway. The Church of St. Nicholas from the mid-12<sup>th</sup> century towered above the settlements in the northern town area and for that reason served as the watchtower in Bergen.

In the 12<sup>th</sup> century, Bergen saw an explosion in the number of churches. Olav Kyrre started the work with the two Christ-churches at Holmen and at the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century around 15 churches made its mark on the landscape. Towards the middle of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, there were over 20 churches, and several convents and hospital churches (Hellemann 2003:66). The parish-division from the 14<sup>th</sup> century cannot describe how the parishes were in the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> century, however they can serve as an indication. A striking feature from this division is the number of churches in relation to the number of parishes. There were seven



different parishes in Bergen in the 14<sup>th</sup> century (Lidén 1985:86-87), which would imply that there were seven parish churches. In addition, one can argue that there were some other churches or chapels to serve the population when the parish church was inadequate, and that the King had his own coronation church. Christchurch Cathedral had two functions, it served as a royal-church as well as being the parish-church for the people living at Holmen. In this matter, 20 churches seems somewhat exaggerated to serve the population of Bergen. Therefore, I find good arguments for stating that the majority of the smaller churches were privately built, either serving travelling merchants or the person who erected them. This is further enhanced by their location, squeezed in between the houses, implying that they were fitted to already existing buildings. Some of these churches were located in areas designated to the different trades, which brings forth the theory of landscape as social order. As I demonstrated in chapter 3, social roles, relations and identities are mapped on the land, so the landscape can be a key to understanding or interpreting a society. The townspeople knew that the Church of St. Michael 'belonged' to the shoemakers, and which churches that were open for the public or those designated to certain groups of the settlers. One matter that also should be mentioned, is that due to the many town fires affecting Bergen several of the Churches underwent many changes. As larger churches were built, several of the smaller ones could lose their function and instead serve other purposes or left to decay. Abandoned monuments are still part of the landscape and can serve as symbols of the past even if other buildings stand on the ground today. Whenever fires affected a church, it was often rebuilt. This could lead to changes in their orientation due to the settlements that distinguished the townscape. It could be more favourable to change the size and orientation of the Church because it would benefit the town to expand the townhouses rather than rebuilding the Church as it was before the fire. Archaeological investigations of The Church of St. Clement in Oslo uncovered graves underneath the Church from the early 12<sup>th</sup> century. These graves had a 30 degrees differing orientation than the graves on top, which were oriented east-west as was common for the Middle Ages. This indicates that it had a predecessor with deviating orientation (Nordeide 2007:3). The re-use of locations can be seen in relation to the theory around the landscape as memory, where the locations are part of the collective memory of the people that live in the landscape (see chapter 3.1). Certain locations were simply not just favourable, but could have a deeper meaning for the townspeople.

With the introduction of Christianity in Medieval Europe, the convents saw an opportunity to establish themselves in the towns. In the Benedictine and Cistercian convents, the nuns and monks strived for Christian perfection and sought to live a life in chastity. To

obtain this they left behind their past lives and dedicated themselves to God. These orders were secluded and located outside the settlement areas. Munkeliv Benedictine Abbey was a major proprietor in Bergen making it the largest and richest convent in Norway. King Eystein Magnusson (1103-22) gave the convent its land and properties. The founder of the Cistercian order, Bernhard of Clairvaux, wanted the order to be a self-contained unity with agriculture. The land registers from the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century show that Munkeliv at this point had over 300 farms in Western Norway. There are far less reliable sources regarding the estates of Nonneseter convent, however it had significant landed property at its disposal from the beginning (Helle 1982:287). The Augustinian, Dominican and Franciscan convents were not as strict and not monastic in the same sense as the first two (Helle 1982:608). Their main goal was to spread the word about Christianity and their location near the main approaches made it easy to get in touch with large amounts of people. The Augustinians, Dominicans and Franciscans were all mendicant orders favouring the location near the busiest routes in and out of town. The towns attracted a significant number of people providing the convents with greater possibilities or receiving alms. Bergen was not the only town this could be applied to, which the following chapter will demonstrate.

### 9.3 Bergen in relation to Sigtuna and Oslo

The focus so far in this chapter has been on medieval Bergen. In this comparative discussion, I review three factors in Sigtuna and Oslo in order to establish whether the situation in Bergen was unique or whether there are similarities in these Scandinavian medieval towns. The main factors I emphasize are how the towns emerged and developed, the royal and ecclesiastical involvement in the towns, and the ecclesiastical distribution in the landscape.

#### *Emergence of the town and development*

The theories on how towns emerged established that a powerful initiator founded them or that they grew organically. The three towns central in this study all got town privileges from the King regardless of there being any previous activity in the area or not. There are however traces of previous agricultural activity in Bergen and Oslo, while Sigtuna emerged on “virgin soil”. The advantage of establishing a town on “virgin soil” is that all the land is available to build on. The most favourable locations could house the most important buildings, such as the

royal estate, churches and merchant-shops. The King could place the different institutions wherever they would benefit the interests he had in the town best. Main streets were located so that they easily could transport goods from the harbour to the surrounding country, and usually went from one end of the town to the other. The commons connected the settlements to the main streets, and the main streets connected to the approaching roads to the towns. These features all correspond to several of the theories around what a town is, as mentioned in chapter 1.2, especially the concentration of trading and craft production, dense settlements, religious organization and a planned street-system. When the King or other initiators wished to establish a town in areas with previous activity, whether this was seasonal or permanent settlements, he had to take existing streets and settlements into consideration. This could interfere with his plans for the area, so an alternative for the initiator was to collaborate with the settlers to develop the town. If the King owned the land, it would benefit him to implement the settlers in the development of the town rather than trying to remove them from the land. The King could provide protection, give more land or involve them in the trade. He could offer larger properties in other places of the town area in order to gain access to favourable locations himself, where he could build churches, defence structures or the royal estate. In return, the settlers could contribute with the skills they had gained from living in the area, they could point out the best locations for defence and they could contribute in the building of central institutions.

Bergen (c 1070), Sigtuna (c 980) and Oslo (c 1050) all appeared in a little less than a century. By organizing the three towns in chronological order after when they emerged, Bergen is the “youngest” of them. It is possible that Bergen emerged after the model of Sigtuna or Oslo, because functions and features, such as the location of the different institutions and the organizing of the trade, from well-established towns were adapted in new towns. There are similarities in the organization of the townhouses in Sigtuna and Bergen. The houses were long (30-40 m) with the short ends towards the main street and the harbour. I interpret this as an indication on a focus on transporting goods from the harbour to the main street through these houses. The waterfront was not important in Oslo until in the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> century (Nedkvitne & Norseng 1991:88), probably due to the good communication to the hinterlands. The surroundings were rich in arable land and there was more focus on agriculture. The orientation of the main streets also points out the difference between the towns. In Sigtuna and Bergen, they follow the waterfront, while in Oslo the communication with the surrounding country seems to have been of more importance. Here, long commons served as the main roads from the waterfront to the main streets. The settlements in Sigtuna

quickly expanded to its full width, in Oslo the settlements expanded from the south to the north, which archaeological excavations confirm. Lidén suggests that Bergen grew from two ends towards the middle, indicated by the location of two of the largest Churches in the town, the Church of St. Mary and the Church of St. Cross (Lidén 1985:91-92). The towns expanded and developed in three different ways.

Bergen became the Episcopal seat of Western Norway during the reign of Olav Kyrre (1067-93), Sigtuna in Eastern Sweden around the 1070s, and Oslo in Eastern Norway around 1070. This clearly shows that there were big plans for Bergen already from the start, because it became an Episcopal seat in the early phase. The King also started the work on Christchurch Cathedral in the initial phases of the town. The situation is somewhat similar in Oslo, which was considered an Episcopal seat barely two decades after its foundation. Sigtuna had a different development in terms of becoming an Episcopal seat. From the foundation until it was known as an Episcopal seat, almost a century passed. Sigtuna emerged in the late phase of the Viking Age and the Christian faith had not yet gained a strong foothold in the society. The major growth in churches took place in the 12<sup>th</sup> century. Because it took such a long time for the town to become the Episcopal seat, it is possible that this was not the intention in the first place. Sigtuna ceased to be an important town when the Episcopal seat moved to Gamla Uppsala in the mid-12<sup>th</sup> century. This leads me to believe that it must have played an important role in the town. The King saw a potential in the town with good communication to other parts of the world and decided to make it a trade centre and establish a town that could become a prominent actor in Eastern Sweden. If he had no intention to make Sigtuna an Episcopal seat from day one, then at least the importance the town eventually gained made it clear that this could be a good candidate for establishing an Episcopal seat here. There is also the possibility that the King wanted to make it an Episcopal seat, but that the town was not as strong enough. The developments in the Middle Ages laid the foundation for today's towns. Bergen and Oslo are still two very important towns in Norway, with Oslo as the capital and Bergen as the second largest town in the country. Some places acquired an urban character while others went back to being 'normal' rural settlements. All the three towns discussed in this thesis became urban centres, however when the Episcopal seat in Sigtuna moved to Gamla Uppsala, Sigtuna went back to being a rural settlement.

### *Royal and ecclesiastical involvement in the town*

From the previous discussions, it is clear that the King took great interest in all three towns, both in the foundation and development of them. He was central in the emergence and development of all the three towns discussed in this thesis. The King saw potential in the areas, invested in them and contributed to their development. In the initial phase of the town the royal power was the major contributor in the developments however, when the King established the Church in the town he contributed to the creation of a second important factor in the town emerging process (Helle & Nedkvitne 1977:222).

The King contributed in several stages of the town development. There are documentations on several occasions that the King initiated the erection of churches and defence structures and gave land to monasteries. King Olav Kyrre started the work on Christchurch Minor and Christchurch Cathedral in Bergen in the first phases of the town. The erection of Sverresborg, a defence castle, started after 1184 by King Sverre Sigurdsson (1177-1202). Written sources state that King Eystein Magnusson gave tremendous amounts of land to build Munkeliv Benedictine Abbey. The Church of St. Mary in Oslo located next to the royal residence was the royal chapel, which makes it reasonable that the King financed it. As we saw in chapter 7.4, the wide western tower of St. Per in Sigtuna has been interpreted to that the King was the builder of this church. Archaeological excavations in Sigtuna and Oslo have uncovered traces from plot-divisions, which are seen in relation to the King because it is argued that he owned the land.

We know from the sagas that the Norwegian king resided in the area of Bergen and Oslo before they became towns, which archaeological excavations at the locations of what is interpreted as the royal farms have emphasized. I suggest that this played an important role in choosing exactly these locations. Mainly, because the sagas state that Harald Hardråde often resided in Oslo because of the rich arable land there, which could provide the household with food. The situation in Bergen was similar, and the sagas state that the Kings often resided there when they were in Western Norway. In other words, they did have knowledge of the area before they decided to establish a town there. In Sigtuna the town emerged in an area with no previous activity, however someone had to notice the area and see the potential before the King invested there. If this was not the case then the King took a chance on an area he thought could be fitting to establish the centres he wanted. In order to centralize the trade into towns, communication to the surrounding country as well as to other important trade areas were important. To know where a town would have the best potential there must have been a

certain amount of planning behind the locations, even if it was founded in an area with no previous activity. The knowledge of the area can explain why certain elements of the town are located in particular areas, for instance the defence structures and the royal estates.

The King had to have control of the town and all that took place in it as well as keeping an eye on what approached the town, so a royal estate with a location with an overview would benefit him. At Holmen in Bergen, the King could oversee all the ships that came into town, the whole area of Bryggen and the Bishop. The main street, Øvregaten, led to the royal estate and the King could easily access the resources of the town. In Sigtuna, the King had a plot in the middle of the settlement area that possibly was intended to house a royal estate. No archaeological traces of a royal estate have been found here or in the town area. There was a royal farm at Fornsigstuna 4 km west of the town. Like the town, the farm was located in an area with good communication and was an important meeting place from the centuries before the birth of Christ (Damell 1991a:15). Arable land surrounded this area, and Fornsigstuna was a central manor that received the surplus from the other farms. Only the function of the royal farm disappeared from Fornsigstuna when the King moved to Sigtuna, the place still existed and was in use (Damell 1991b:91). The town's intended functions, such as the Christian element could be one of the reasons for founding it so far away from the royal farm. These functions were not possible or opportune to establish near the royal farm (Selling 1989:100). When Sigtuna was founded, it took over the name of the royal farm (Strid 1989:111). In Oslo, the royal estate had a similar location as in Bergen. It was located on a headland in one end of the town overlooking the sea and the town area. The two main streets in the town went from the royal estate through the settlement area and further east to the hinterlands, securing ample supplies to the King.

### *Ecclesiastical distribution in the landscape*

I have established that the Churches had a prominent role in the medieval towns, visual, religious and in the development of the town. A remarkable difference with the three towns discussed is the number of churches and their distribution within the townscape. The focus here will be on Sigtuna and Oslo since the distribution in Bergen already has been discussed (see chapters 6.2, 6.3 and 9.2). In Sigtuna, we know the names of seven churches from medieval times. Two of these belonged to other institutions, one to the hospital of St. Jörgen and the other to the Dominican convent. Only one of these five churches was located within

the town area, St. Gertrude. The remaining four were located in an east-west line north of the town area. Either the plots in town were already occupied when the Churches were erected or the Churches were intentionally placed there. I claim that with the Churches located outside the settlement area, an expansion of the properties, such as the cemetery, would be easier. If a fire broke out in the settlement area, the Churches would not be at risk of burning down. The organization of the Churches in this manner can be viewed as a preventive way of protecting the Churches. There were seven churches in Oslo in the Middle Ages, all located in a northeast-southwest going line along the town area. The cemetery of the Church of St. Clement in Oslo had graves from three different phases, indicating that the cemetery was re-used. This could be because there was a limited amount of space to bury the dead however, archaeologists have interpreted it as an indication that there was an older church on the location. The graves with different orientation than the stone-church St. Gertrude in Sigtuna, indicates that the first small wooden Church was located here.

In chapter 6.3, I presented three factors Lidén suggested had to be present to name a church a main-church. In short, the surroundings were fitted to the Church and it had a large cemetery and stood out from other churches in the town. It is still unknown which of the Churches that was the cathedral in Sigtuna. The only Church in Sigtuna that fit Lidén's descriptions are the Church of St. Mary, belonging to the Dominican convent. It functioned as a grave church for larger parts of the high nobility in Uppland, and had a remarkably long and arched chancel compared to the Swedish material. St. Mary is the only complete Church from the medieval period in Sigtuna and has features not seen anywhere else in Sweden (see chapter 7.2). There are however two things that speak against St. Mary as the main-church. Firstly, that its construction was completed around 1255 (Bonnier 1989:26), which is after the Episcopal seat was moved. Secondly, that it belonged to a convent, and it is therefore likely that it was not a main-church. However, the establishing of a convent indicates that Sigtuna still had a prominent position in Sweden in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. It is unlikely that a convent emerged in an area with little or no importance. The Church of St. Per and the Church of St. Olov had a central tower which is a feature found in churches with a high position within the ecclesiastical hierarchy (Bonnier 1989:11). St. Per's location on a height and the impressive central tower still gives a fascinating impression of power (Bonnier 1989:19) and the walls indicate that it was the largest Church in Sigtuna. A unique feature of St. Olov is that it was a three-aisled church with transepts, however it is relatively short and seems pressed together (Ros 2001:164), which speaks against the surroundings being fitted to the Church. Based on these observations I find good arguments that St. Per was the main-Church of Sigtuna.

Several factors speak in favour for the Church of St. Hallvard from the early 12<sup>th</sup> century being the main-Church in Oslo. Firstly, it was the cathedral of the town and the dimensions and planning indicate that it was intended as an Episcopal Church from the start. Secondly, it was the largest and most ostentatious Church in the country until the cathedral in Nidaros was built, with a central tower higher than any other buildings in the town. Thirdly, the foundations in “fishbone-pattern” are unique and not found in any other churches in Oslo. The Church of St. Mary was a royal chapel, and probably functioned as the main-church until St. Hallvard was completed. I find good arguments for interpreting the Church of St. Hallvard as the main-church in Oslo.

From the middle of the 12<sup>th</sup> century, several convents emerged in Bergen, Sigtuna and Oslo. The general similarity for all of them, except Hovedøya Cistercian Convent in Oslo, is that they all were located along the main approaches to the towns. In Bergen and Oslo, the Dominican Convent was located close to the cathedral of the town, however in Bergen it was also part of the royal complex. Five orders were present in Bergen and all the convents appeared from the mid-12<sup>th</sup> century to the early 13<sup>th</sup> century. Only one order was represented in Sigtuna and the convent appeared in the 13<sup>th</sup> century when the town no longer was the Episcopal seat. In Oslo, there were four different orders, which appeared from the mid 12<sup>th</sup> century to the mid-13<sup>th</sup> century. Two of them were located outside the settlement area, one was next to the cathedral and the Cistercian convent was located on the island Hovedøya off the coast of the town. The nuns and monks strived to live a life in chastity, and several of the convents had a main goal to spread the Christian word to the people. Their location in the towns brought them closer to the people, the settlers of the town as well as all the travellers that came to town.



## 10. Conclusions

The questions of how important the King and the Church were in the emergence and developments of the medieval towns, the distribution of the ecclesiastical institutions and the similarities and differences between different towns have now been addressed. The period between 1050 and 1250 was studied.

The King and the Church were fundamental for the emergence and the development of the towns. The King centralized the production and craft to town, thereby increasing the incomes to the town. He invested in the town, and provided finances and workforce to erect monumental buildings and expand the town area. The King was an important factor in bringing the Christianity to the town, and the Church soon established as a powerful actor next to the King. The Church upheld the building activity the King had started, and contributed to the further development of the town. Eventually, the ecclesiastical institutions became major proprietors in town.

The distribution of the ecclesiastical institutions are somewhat different in the three towns discussed, indicating that there were several ways of organizing them. Bergen has a tremendous amount of churches located *in and around* the settlement-area, Sigtuna has all churches but one located *outside* the settlement-area, while the situation in Oslo is similar to Bergen. The convents in all three towns have approximately the same locations. Bergen stands out because of the amount of churches. Some of the Churches had more favourable locations than others indicating that these were built by powerful initiators, while the remaining were privately built.

The comparison of Bergen to Sigtuna and Oslo have shown that there are several similarities and differences between the three towns. The concentration of trade and production, dense settlements, religious organization and a planned street-system are the most striking similarities, in addition to the fact that all three became Episcopal seats. The organizing of the townhouses and the importance of the waterfront were similar in Bergen and Sigtuna. In terms of differences, Sigtuna holds a special role because it emerged on “virgin soil”, while Bergen and Oslo had traces of prior activities. The expansion of the towns, as discussed in chapter 9.3, was different. Bergen and Oslo continued to be important towns throughout the Middle Ages and into modern times, while Sigtuna lost its importance when the Episcopal seat moved to Gamla Uppsala in the mid-12<sup>th</sup> century.

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1

#### Overview of the most important medieval Churches in Bergen, c 1100-1250.

Table 1 Overview of the most important medieval Churches in Bergen, c. 1100-1250. After Bergen Byleksikon (2009)  
[http://www.bergenbyarkiv.no/bergenbyleksikon/arkiv/14317214#lightbox\[post-14317214\]/0/](http://www.bergenbyarkiv.no/bergenbyleksikon/arkiv/14317214#lightbox[post-14317214]/0/)

NAME	MAT	CONSTR	DISAPP	SOURCES	BUILT BY
1.Christchurch Minor	W	Between 1067-93	T 1531	Hkr., Fgr., DN	O. Kyrre
2.Christchurch Cathedral (EW - 22°)	S	Between 1067-93	T 1531	Hkr., Sturlunga saga, Sverris saga, DN, IA	O. Kyrre
3.Church of the Apostles (1) & (2)	W (1), S(2)	c. 1110 (1), 1247 (2)	L 1247 (1), 1302 (2)	Mrk., Sverris saga, the saga of Haakon Haakonarson, IA, DN	Ø. Magnusson (1), H. Håkonsson (2)
4.Church of St. Olav on the Hill	W	Between 1135-36?	16 <sup>th</sup> century	Mrk., Hkr., Sverris saga, DN	H. Gille
5.Church of St. Nicholas (SSE - NNW)	S	c. 1130?	B 1580	Scholeus, Hkr., Sverris saga, the saga of Haakon Haakonarson, NgL, DN, IA, ruins	Ø. Magnusson
6.Church of St. Mary (EW - 20°)	S	B1160	ss	Present building, Sverris saga, the saga of Haakon Haakonarson, DN, Scholeus	Ø. Magnusson?
7. St. Olav in Vågsbotn – Franciscan Convent (EW - 15°)	S	B 1181	ss	Present building, Sverris saga, the saga of Haakon Haakonarson, IA, NgL, DN	
8.Church of St. Cross (EW)	S	B 1181	ss	Present building, Sverris saga, Scholeus, DN	
9.Church of All Saints (1) & (2)	W (1) S (2)	B 1181 (1) 1266 (2)	B 1248 (1) T 1552-58 (2)	Sverris saga, IA, DN	H. Håkonsson/M. Lagabøte (2)
10.Church of St. Columba	S	B 1181	15 <sup>th</sup> century	DN, Sverris saga, NgL	H. Gille or M. Barefoot?
11. St. Mary – Nonneseter Convent (EW - 38°)	S	Mid-12 <sup>th</sup> century	T 1529, chapel + vestibule ss	The saga of Haakon Haakonarson, DN, ruins	Bishop Sigurd?
12. St. John – Augustine Convent	S	1180-1190s	B 1561	Sverris saga, Mrk., Fgr., DN	
13.Church of St. Peter (NE-SW)	S	B 1183	B 1563	Sverris saga, the saga of Haakon	

				Haakonarson , NgL, DN, ruins	
14.Church of St. Lawrence (EW -10°)	S	B 1198?	A 1568	DN, ruins?	
15. St. Michael – Benedictine Convent (EW -10°)	S	12 <sup>th</sup> century	B + T 1536	Mrk., Hkr., DN, ruins	Ø. Magnusson
16. St. Olav – Dominican Convent	W/S	Between 1217-63	B 1528	DN, the saga of Haakon Haakonarson, IA	H. Håkonsson?
17.Church of St. Katarina – hospital (1)	S	Between 1217-63	B 1248	The saga of Haakon Haakonarson, IA, DN	H. Håkonsson
18.Church of St. Martin	S	Bf 1248?	B 1702	Scholeus, NgL, DN, foundation walls	
19.Church of St. Hallvard	S	B 1248?	T c. 1560	DN, NgL, Scholeus	
20.Church of St. Michael in Vågsbotn	S	Bf 1248	B 1413	DN, IA	
21.Church of St. Katarina (2) – hospital	S	1266	A 1527	IA, DN	M. Lagabøte
22.Church of the Apostles (3)	S	1275- A 1312	T 1529-30	IA, DN	M. Lagabøte

Abbreviations: A=after, B=burned down, Bf=before, Constr=constructed, Disapp=disappeared, DN=Diplomatarium Norvegicum, EW=east west, Fgr.=Fagrskinna, Hkr.=Heimskringla, IA=Icelandic Annals, L=latest, Mat=material, Mrk.=Morkinskinna, NE-SW=Northeast-southwest, NgL=Norges gamle Lov (law codes), S=stone, ss=still standing, SSE – NNW=south-southeast – north-northwest, T=torn down, W=wood.

## APPENDIX 2

### Map of the most important institutions in medieval Bergen, c. 1250-1300.



Figur 1. Overview of the most important institutions in medieval Bergen, c. 1250-1300. Screenshot. After Arkikon/Byantikvaren i Bergen, <http://www.arkikon.no/>.



## APPENDIX 3

### Presentation of the most important medieval Churches in Bergen, c 1100-1250.

#### *The early town (c 1067-1100)*

##### *1. Christchurch Minor (Lille Kristkirke)*

Location: At Holmen, north of Håkonshallen (the royal hall).

Period: Built between 1066 and 1093, during the reign of Olav Kyrre.

Remains/ruins: None.

Building material: Wood, perhaps later stone.

Building style: Unknown.

Type of church: Probably functioned as the temporary cathedral and Church for the bishop, while Christchurch Cathedral was under construction.

Dedicated to: Originally dedicated to the Holy Trinity (Trinitatis, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit), but named Christchurch in most Norse sources.

##### *2. Christchurch Cathedral (Store Kristkirke)*

Location: At Holmen, north of Håkonshallen (the royal hall). Next to Christchurch Minor.

Period: Construction started between 1066 and 1093, during the reign of Olav Kyrre.

Remains/ruins: Remains from an early-gothic window, and from a roman pillar-base.

Building material: Boulders and steatite according to Edvard Edvardsen.

Building style: Roman and Gothic.

Type of church: The Cathedral of Bergen, coronation church and royal burial church.

Dedicated to: The Holy Trinity (Trinitatis, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit), but named Christchurch in most Norse sources.

## *The 12<sup>th</sup> century*

### *3+22. Church of the Apostles (Apostelkirken) (1), (2) & (3)*

Location: Southeast at Holmen, probably east of the royal estate.

Period: Around 1110 (1), around 1247 (2), started in 1275 (3).

Remains/ruins: The cemetery wall, fundaments from the western wall (2).

Building material: Probably a stave church (1), stone (2) & (3).

Building style: Probably Gothic, details suggest artisans of English origin or artisans trained in England built it.

Type of church: Royal churches, collegiate church (2).

Dedicated to: The apostles (Jesus' twelve selected disciples who founded the first Christian congregation in Jerusalem and the first Christian missionary movement).

### *4. The Church of St. Olav on the Hill (Olavskirken på Bakkene)*

Location: "The Hill", the steep area behind the settlements from Sverresborg to the Church of St. Nicholas.

Period: Started between 1135 and 1136 by Harald Gille (?).

Remains/ruins: None.

Building material: Wood.

Building style: Stave church.

Type of church: Votive church.

Dedicated to: St. Olav (Olav Haraldsson, King in Norway 1015-1028, driving force behind the Christianization of Norway, became Norway's patron saint).

### *5. The Church of St. Nicholas (Nikolaikirken)*

Location: At the top of the hill above the property of Øvregaten 17, but below Forstandersmuget.

Period: Constructed around 1130 (?).

Remains/ruins: Parts of the southern and western wall excavated in 1895, pillar-bases, marble ashlars, a setting stone in steatite.

Building material: Stone.

Building style: Unknown.

Type of church: Parish church, guild church – or a combination.

Dedicated to: St. Nicholas (bishop in Myra in Lycia – modern-day Turkey, commemorated and revered among Anglican, Catholic, Lutheran and Orthodox Christians, patron saint of sailors, merchants, archers, repentant thieves, children, pawnbrokers and students).

#### *6. The Church of St. Mary (Mariakirken)*

Location: On the eastside of Vågen, in the northwestern part of the medieval settlements.

Period: Constructed before 1160.

Remains/ruins: The church is still standing today. Foundation from a predecessor under the present church

Building material: Steatite, greenstone, gneiss and quartzite, with slate, brick and clay.

Building style: Attic, Baroque, Roman.

Type of church: Parish and guild church.

Dedicated to: St. Mary (the mother of Jesus, the most prominent female figure in Christianity, Christians of the Catholic Church, the Eastern Orthodox Church, Oriental Orthodox Church, Anglican Communion and Lutheran churches believe that Mary is the Mother of God).

#### *7. The Church of St. Olav in Vågsbotn (Olavskirken/Domkirken)*

Location: On the beach ridge on the eastern side of Vågsbotn, in the outskirts of the medieval town area.

Period: Constructed before 1181.

Remains/ruins: The church is still standing today, though very different from the medieval church. The present church has remains from two earlier churches.

Building material: Stone, ashlar, steatite, stones from St. John's Augustine Abbey were used to rebuild the northern wall in the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

Building style: Roman, Gothic.

Type of church: First, probably a parish church before the Franciscans acquired the Church and built a convent next to it. From the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, it became the cathedral of Bergen.

Dedicated to: St. Olav (Olav Haraldsson, King in Norway 1015-1028, driving force behind the Christianization of Norway, became Norway's patron saint).

*8. The Church of St. Cross (Korskirken)*

Location: Southeast of Vågsbotn, at the intersection between Kong Oscar's gate and Korskirkealmenning.

Period: Constructed before 1181.

Remains/ruins: The Church is still standing today. Stones from the dome paved an alley close to the Church of St. Olav (the Cathedral) in the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

Building material: Quarried stone with ashlar, brick (same type as the Church of St. Mary and Church of St. Olav (the Cathedral)).

Building style: Gothic, Roman, Attic.

Type of church: Parish church.

Dedicated to: The Holy Cross (religious symbol of Christianity, supposed remnants of the actual cross upon which Jesus was crucified).

*9. The Church of All Saints (Allehelgenskirke) and hospital (1) & (2)*

Location: On a beach ridge on the western side of Vågsbotn, somewhere on the southern side of Allehelgensgate.

Period: Constructed before 1181 (1), 1266 (2).

Remains/ruins: The inner part of Vågsbotn was paved with stones from the Church. The new town hall used stone, lime and timber from the Church. Behind the magistrate building a blunt granite-wall that possibly is a part of the hospital is located.

Building material: Wood (1), stone (2)

Building style: Unknown.

Type of church: Probably a royal chapel.

Dedicated to: All Saints (people who lived their lives in a particularly holy and godly way, people who died for their Christian faith, Norwegian saints include among others St. Olav, St. Sunniva and St. Hallvard).

*10. The Church of St. Columba (Columbakirken/Steinkirken)*

Location: Close to the Church of St. Nicholas situated above Øvregaten, south of the present Nikolaikirkealmeningen.

Period: Constructed before 1181.

Remains/ruins: Fragments of a larger sculpture and a capital believed to come from the Church of St. Columba or the Church of St. Nicholas is located at the historical museum in Bergen.

Building material: Stone.

Building style: Unknown.

Type of church: Most likely not a regular parish church.

Dedicated to: St. Columba (Irish saint of royal descent, Catholic missionary and founder of the convent on Iona, patron saint of Ireland, of insanity and floods).

*11. The Church of St. Mary at Nonneseter Convent (Nonneseter klostets Mariakirke)*

Location: At Alrekstadvågen between the present Lille and Store Lungegårdsvann.

Period: Mid-12<sup>th</sup> century.

Remains/ruins: The chapel on the southern side of the choir and the vestibule is still standing today. Several stones from the Church are located in the historical museum in Bergen.

Building material: Quarried stone and brick, ashlar.

Building style: Attic, Gothic.

Type of church: Convent church.

Dedicated to: St. Mary (the mother of Jesus, the most prominent female figure in Christianity, Christians of the Catholic Church, the Eastern Orthodox Church, Oriental Orthodox Church, Anglican Communion and Lutheran churches believe that Mary is the Mother of God).

*12. The Church of St. John at St. John's Augustine Abbey (Jonskirken)*

Location: The western side of Vågen, in the area between Strandgaten and Tårnplass.

Period: Mid-12<sup>th</sup> century.

Remains/ruins: Several building stones from the Church are located at the historical museum in Bergen. In the backyards of Strandgaten 10-12 6.5 m long remnants of the profiled pedestal were located.

Building material: Stone, steatite.

Building style: Gothic.

Type of church: Convent church.

Dedicated to: John the Baptist (itinerant preacher, baptized Jesus, major religious figure in Christianity, Islam, the Bahá'í faith and Mandaeism, patron saint of a large amount of artisans, livestock, the baptism, monastic life and more).

### *13. The Church of St. Peter (Peterskirken)*

Location: South of "Shejõtstuene" (assembly halls for the Hanseatic during winter), about 60-70 m south of the Church of St. Mary.

Period: Constructed before 1183.

Remains/ruins: Excavated in 1920, walls, portals and foundations examined.

Building material: Quarried stone, ashlar, steatite.

Building style: Late Roman or Early Gothic.

Type of church: Parish church.

Dedicated to: St. Peter (early Christian leader, one of Jesus' twelve apostles, suffered martyrdom under the Emperor Nero, patron saint of Rome, a number of artisans, fishermen, virgins, fever, snakebites and more).

### *14. The Church of St. Lawrence (Lavranskirken/Laurentiuskirken)*

Location: Southwest of the Church of St. Mary (according to the sagas).

Period: Constructed before 1198 (?)

Remains/ruins: Remnants of a stone building southwest of the Church of St. Mary excavated in 1968, parts of a portal, several floor layers

Building material: Quarried stone, steatite.

Building style: Roman, Gothic.

Type of church: Probably a chapel, due to its size.

Dedicated to: St. Lawrence (also known as St. Laurentius, one of the seven deacons of ancient Rome, martyred during the persecution of Emperor Valerian in 258, patron saint of fire services, the burned, poor, comedians, librarians, students, miners, tanners, chefs, roasters and more).

*15. Church of St. Michael (Mikaelskirken) at Munkeliv Benedictine Abbey*

Location: On Nordnes in the open space called "Klosteret".

Period: 12<sup>th</sup> century.

Remains/ruins: Excavated in the 1850-60s, significant parts of the walls and foundations. The finds are located at the historical museum in Bergen.

Building material: Stone, ashlars, steatite, slate, flagstone.

Building style: Attic, Corinthian, Gothic.

Type of church: Convent church.

Dedicated to: St. Michael (archangel in Jewish, Christian and Islamic teachings, healing angel, protector and leader of the army of God against the forces of evil, Guardian of the Catholic Church, protector of the Jewish people, patron saint of police officers, military, grocers, mariners, paratroopers, and more).

***The 13<sup>th</sup> century***

*16. The Church of St. Olav (Sortebrødrekirke/Dominikanernes Olavskirke) at the Dominican Convent*

Location: At Holmen, north of the Christchurch Cathedral, down in the slope towards Bontelabo.

Period: Constructed between 1217 and 1263, most likely before 1241.

Remains/ruins: None.

Building material: Wood/stone

Building style: Unknown.

Type of church: Convent church.

Dedicated to: St. Olav (and Erik IX of Sweden) (Olav Haraldsson, King in Norway 1015-1028, driving force behind the Christianization of Norway, became Norway's patron saint. Erik XI of Sweden, King in Sweden 1155-1160, all information about him is based on later legends, buried in the Church of Old Uppsala).

*17+21. The Church of St. Katarina (Katarinakirken) and hospital (1) & (2)*

Location: At Sandbro between the town area and Holmen (1), Vågsbotn close to the Church of All Saints (2).

Period: Constructed between 1217 and 1263 (1), 1266 (2).

Remains/ruins: Remains of what possibly was the first hospital are still visible today. A few steatite ashlar from the second hospital.

Building material: Stone (1) & (2).

Building style: Unknown.

Type of church: Royal chapel (2).

Dedicated to: St. Catherine (St. Catherine of Alexandria, also known as St. Catherine of the Wheel, princess and a noted scholar, converted hundreds of people to Christianity, martyred in the 4<sup>th</sup> century by Emperor Maxentius, patron saint of unmarried girls, dying people, girls, several occupations, scholars, and more).

*18. The Church of St. Martin (Martinskirken)*

Location: Above Øvregaten, where the school of Kristi Krybbe is located today.

Period: Constructed before 1248 (?)

Remains/ruins: Excavated in 1873 when the school was rebuilt, the foundation walls were uncovered.

Building material: Stone, steatite.

Building style: Unknown.

Type of church: Parish church.

Dedicated to: St. Martin (Martin of Tours, bishop of Tours, founder of the Abbey of Marmoutier, patron saint against poverty, against alcoholism, of beggars, cavalry, equestrians, innkeepers, soldiers, tailors, and more).

*19. The Church of St. Hallvard (Hallvardskirken)*

Location: In the area between Kong Oscar's gate and Lille Øvregate south of the present Vetrilidsalmenningen, according to written sources.

Period: Constructed before 1248 (?)

Remains/ruins: According to Edvard Edvardsen stones from the Church were used to build the northern transept of the Church of St. Cross.



Building material: Stone.

Building style: Unknown.

Type of church: Parish church.

Dedicated to: St. Hallvard (Hallvard Vebjørnsson from Huseby in Lier, considered a martyr because of his defence of an innocent thrall woman, patron saint of Oslo).

*20. Church of St. Michael in Vågsbotn (Mikaelskirken i Vågsbotn)*

Location: West of the Church of St. Cross, between Hollendergaten and Torget.

Period: Constructed before 1248.

Remains/ruins: According to Edvard Edvardsen stones from the Church were used to build the northern transept of the Church of St. Cross.

Building material: Stone.

Building style: Unknown.

Type of church: Parish church.

Dedicated to: St. Michael (archangel in Jewish, Christian and Islamic teachings, healing angel, protector and leader of the army of God against the forces of evil, Guardian of the Catholic Church, protector of the Jewish people, patron saint of police officers, military, grocers, mariners, paratroopers, and more).

