

Birka's Fall and Hedeby's Transformation

Rewriting the Final Chapters of Viking Town Bibliographies

ABSTRACT One crucial problem dealing with the earliest urban development in Scandinavia is not only the emergence of urban settlements, but their discontinuity. By examining the case studies of Birka and Hedeby, this paper does not only deal with the likely causes for the towns' decline, but also takes a more detailed look into the closer chronological sequence of this very process. While Birka seems to become abandoned around c. AD 975, almost contemporaneous with Kaupang, Hedeby in contrast appears to prevail almost a hundred years longer. The possible reasons for this anachronism will be discussed and a so far unobserved, extensive transformation phase in Hedeby suggested.

KEYWORDS Viking Age; Scandinavia; urbanism; Christianization; Birka; Hedeby; Sigtuna.

Introduction

Early North European towns have long been perceived as almost monolithic entities. Thus, their considerable chronological depth of some 250 years has largely been neglected, suggesting static idleness instead of dynamically changing conditions. In fact, a few scholars shared this insight already some decades ago trying to tackle just this problem: Richard Hodges (1982, 50–52) introduced a phasing discerning between type A (seasonal fairs), type B (classic emporia), and type C emporia (regional administration centres). For Birka, Sweden, an admittedly rough differentiation between an 'Early Birka Period' (c. AD 750–860) and a 'Late Birka Period' (c. AD 860–975) was practised (Arwidsson 1984; cf. Jansson 1985, 176–86), approximately following

the shift from predominating western to eastern trading contacts. For Hedeby in northern Germany, in the scope of a systems theory approach, Christian Radtke (2009) tried to characterize the conditions of the decades around AD 800, 900, and 1000. Finally, for the area of the Baltic Sea as a whole, Callmer (1994) suggested a phasing with time slices of fifty years each covering the period from AD 700 to 1100.

One crucial phase in the earliest urban development in Scandinavia is the period of the decades around the decline of the first town-like entities. The disappearance of early Scandinavian towns and the view that they were a rather discontinuous phenomenon is the point of departure of Charlotta Hillerdal's thesis (Hillerdal 2009; cf. Hillerdal 2010). Hillerdal forcefully emphasizes that mere functionalistic explanations (e.g. changing trade routes or new developments in shipbuilding) are not applicable for this process and — since towns as a new environment would trigger the formation of new communities differing from the rural society — one should instead test an identity-based perspective (Hillerdal 2009, 205–08, 221, 250–52, 274–76). She arrives at the conclusion that the abandonment of the first North European towns became *ideologically* necessary and should be perceived as a result of political conflicts between a strengthened royal power and now largely autonomous urban dwellers with little dependence on king or hinterland only. She writes:

This autonomy was the determining factor when they [the Viking Age towns] were dismissed and relocated by the new 'national' royal power. The history of the townspeople had to be rewritten to fit into medieval society; they could no longer be allowed to work within a system of their own, but needed to be reorganised to submit to the hierarchical order of the king and his realm. (Hillerdal 2009, 208, see also 272–73, 276–78)

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For Denmark, the emerging Jelling dynasty indeed accomplished such consolidation of royal power:¹ the inscription of the rune stone of Harald Bluetooth (DR 42) from c. AD 965 — commonly also denoted as Denmark's baptismal certificate — claims that 'Haraldr [...] won for himself all of Denmark [including Scania and Halland] and Norway [i.e. Viken] and made the Danes Christian'. Especially under the reign of Harald Bluetooth, a major building boom of monumental structures can be identified, among them not only the Jelling monument itself, but also the well-known wooden bridge of Rønning Enge, the royal strongholds of the so-called Trelleborg ring fortresses, and probably even the linear Kovirke within the Danevirke fortification system, near Hedeby (Roesdahl 2002; Andersen 2003). However, it shall also be noted that in Sweden the royal power in question at the same time still was a very fragile one, and it would take until the thirteenth century before feudal features were established (cf. Sundqvist 2002, 183, 306, 314, 329). Yet, even if some lines of evidence surely can be discussed, Hillerdal's deduction is overall exceedingly convincing:

They [Viking Age towns] created new opportunities for people to organize a social structure *separate from traditional power structures based on family, kin and land*. In that capacity, as *autonomous communities*, they posed a potential threat to an emerging consolidating royal power trying to take control of the land. In this light, the discontinuation of the towns can be ascribed to an ideological change. (Hillerdal 2009, 278, author's italics)

Consequently, in the course of the state-formation process, early North European towns had either to be assimilated or destroyed (Hillerdal 2009, 279).

Birka's Fall

An overall ideological conflict between a consolidating royal power and more and more autonomous urban communities, as suggested by Hillerdal (2009), might be apparent in the decades previous to Birka's abandonment around c. AD 975. In the chapter 'Olika tider – olika Birka' (Different Times – Different Birka) of her article 'Birkafolket' (The

People of Birka), Charlotte Hedenstierna-Jonson (2012) states that towards the end of the ninth century AD wholesalers became increasingly rich and powerful. She writes:

The structural power still lay with the king and chieftains in the region, but there was no real possibility of them exercising any true power over the extensive network that Birka belonged to. Instead, the real power shifted towards the trading families. They owned the resources and had contacts abroad, they were flexible and could provide themselves with the required military power to guard the commercial traffic. In the tenth century AD, Birka appears increasingly self-governed. (Hedenstierna-Jonson 2012, 215, trans. by author)

This explosive initial position and its potential for conflict seems indeed to become archaeologically manifest in two examples from Birka's late history.

On the one hand, particularly in Birka's final phase, there seem to be strong indications of a distinct pagan manifestation. To trace Christian artefacts and to identify 'true' Christian burials has ever since been a scholarly preoccupation within Birka research (cf. Gräslund 1980, 83–85; 2001, 58–63, 69–78; Trotzig 2004). The Frankish missionary Ansgar's second visit to Birka in AD 852 was followed by the presence of the priests Erimbert (c. AD 856), Ansfrid (AD 856–859), and Rimbert (shortly after AD 860)² in Birka (cf. Rimbert, *Vita Ansgarii*, 33). After this grand and concentrated missionary attempt 'no teacher had dared to go in the [following] seventy years' until another missionary, Archbishop Unni of Hamburg-Bremen, attempted to revive the 'long neglected' Christian mission on Björkö (Adam of Bremen, *History of the Archbishops*, I. 60–61; cf. Tegnér 1995). Unni died 17 September AD 936 in Birka and was buried on the island; only his head was transferred to St Peter's Cathedral in Bremen, attested by a lead epitaph found on the high choir (Fig. 3.1) (Brandt 1976, 332; 1979, 71–74).

He is the last missionary we are informed of — after the 930s, missionary attempts on Björkö seem to have ceased. In lieu thereof, the pagan element seems to become more explicit. From the latest phases of Birka's settlement development, an iron amulet ring with sickle and fire-steel pendants (find no. F23362) as well as an equally miniature iron axe (find no. F24070) were found in the road-bed to a street construction (stratigraphic unit S₅),

¹ Cf. Lund 1995, 215–20; Roesdahl 2008. For a critical discussion of the alleged temporary backdrop to King Harald Bluetooth's centralistic tendencies, due to the rebellion of Sven Forkbeard supported by disempowered pagan magnates ultimately leading to Harald's death in Jumne/Wolin in c. AD 985 (Adam of Bremen, *History of the Archbishops*, II. 27), see Lund 2002.

² Probably not identical with the archbishop of Hamburg-Bremen and author of the *Vita Ansgarii* with same name.

which followed the general alignment of an abandoned jetty from the black earth towards the town's later waterfront.³ Neil Price (1995, 76) regards these pagan amulets as evidence of quite unique 'foundation offering[s], during the construction of a major work of civic engineering' and thus as 'evidence for the active practice and patronage of paganism during the final phases of Birka's occupation'. Moreover, there is another strong evidence from the so-called Garrison — four spearheads were deposited as building sacrifices on a part of the hill fort overlooking the town: while two of these spearheads were found next to and underneath the Garrison's rampart on the lower house terrace o (nedre terrassen), respectively, two more formed a part of a hoard with a terminus post quem of AD 922–932 found in a posthole (feature A9) of the central double posts of a roof-bearing pillar of the 'warriors house'. In addition to the two spearheads, the hoard also comprised, amongst others things, a sword chape, a Thor's hammer made from antler, three hones, four knives, a padlock, two dirhams, and a comb case (Kitzler 2000). Even in the second posthole of the double post — already excavated by Hjalmar Stolpe in 1877 as 'burial' Bj. 596f of his alleged likbränningsplats (cremation site) — there seems to be evidence for an additional building sacrifice (Stolpe 1888, 14; cf. Hedenstierna-Jonson 2006, 64). If it is not a weapon once put up on or leaned against the hall's wall, a fifth spearhead found in the debris of the house's north-western long side might even be included in this group of building sacrifices. Because of their find contexts, these spearheads are understood as attributes to the god Odin and thus as sacrifices made by an Odin cult within the warrior ideology (Kitzler 2000). Hedenstierna-Jonson reasons:

Perhaps the manifestation of heathen fervour should be seen as an *expression of resistance against the rise of Christianity*, an expression that did not require complete polarization away from all aspects of the new religion [...]. The Birka warriors distanced themselves from some group of Christians *for political rather than religious reasons*. (Hedenstierna-Jonson 2006, 65, author's italics; see also Hedenstierna-Jonson 2012, 215)

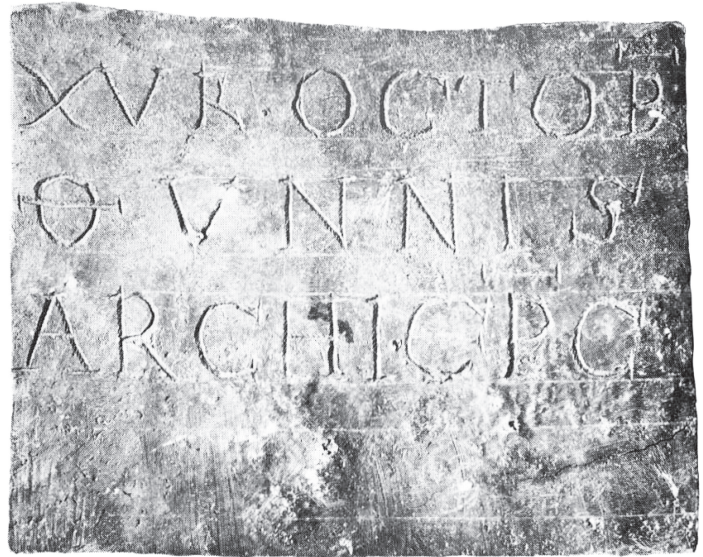


Figure 3.1. Lead epitaph from the (skull) burial of Archbishop Unni of Hamburg-Bremen. The inscription reads 'XV K[al.] OCTOB[ris] O[biit] VNNIS ARCHIEP[iscopu]s' (The fifteenth before the calendars of October [17 September AD 936] Archbishop Unni died). Bremen, St Peter's Cathedral. After Brandt 1979, cat. no. 2.

In this, another conflict with the royal power, which was increasingly legitimized in Christian terms, might have been motivated, ultimately leading to Birka's violent destruction and a political restart in Sigtuna as a true Christian town under direct royal control. This deduction is underlined by the fact that the first Swedish coinage started in Sigtuna in c. AD 995 under the reign of Olof Skötkonung (Malmer 1989; Malmer, Tesch, and Ros 1991), and that Svealand's first bishopric would be established here in c. AD 1070, before it was transferred to Gamla Uppsala in c. AD 1130 (Ros 2008, 143; cf. Holmquist Olausson 2001; Runer 2014). And while Adam of Bremen (*History of the Archbishops*, IV. 25) calls Sigtuna a 'civitas magna', some of Olof's coins of the English Long Cross type B:II, the Early Sigtuna Style, even propagandize Sigtuna as 'God's town' ('Situne Dei') (cf. Malmer 1989, 19, pl. 3.21).

On the one hand, for Birka's violent destruction there is the evidence from the so-called Garrison. The outer bailey-like Garrison denotes an assemblage of artificially erected house terraces crouched behind a rampart on the slope down to Lake Mälaren right north-west of King's Gate (kungsporten) of the hill fort named Borgen (Bergström 2015). On the most pronounced terrace, terrace I, the central Warriors' House (krigarnas hus), even called the Ceremonial House (ceremonihuset), was situated (Holmquist Olausson 2002a, 161–63; 2002b, 163–65; Holmquist 2010). The building was erected in the second half of the tenth century AD, and it was a double-walled

³ Feature (B) and S-unit (S) are not included in the first volume on the stratigraphy of the Black Earth settlement excavations 1990–1995 (Ambrosiani 2013) as this only covers the time period up to AD 870. However, this particular stratigraphic unit (S5) is mentioned in the interim report on the first year of excavations, where, together with S15, it was assorted to feature A2 denoting a 'ditch or passage across the trench' (Ambrosiani 1995, 44).

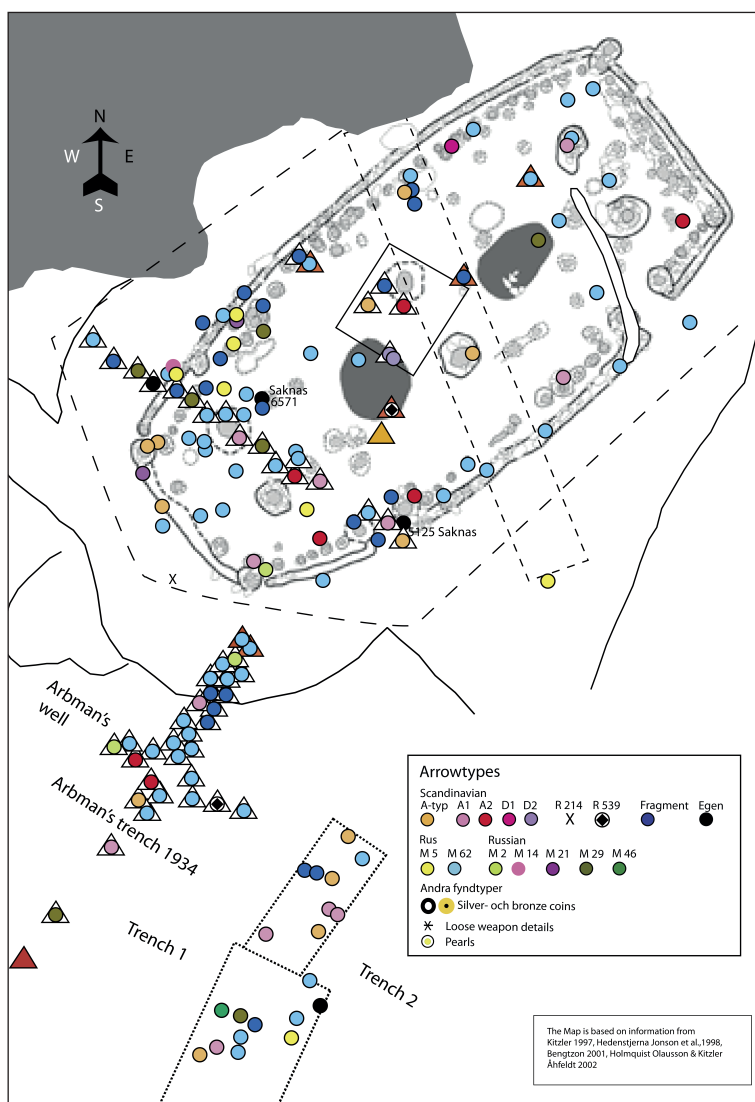


Figure 3.2. Birka, Garrison. The Warriors' House on terrace I. Arrowheads found during different excavations indicating a naval attack from the lakeside (towards the SSW of the map section). After Lindbom 2009, map 13.

three-aisled hall belonging to the last construction phase on that terrace. Around 19×9 m in size, its dimensions were rather squat, while the very type has ties to Migration- and Vendel-period floor plans and thus appears quite archaic — conceivably for political and ideological reasons as a decisively representative building (Holmquist Olausson and Kitzler Åhfeldt 2002, 22–23). The artefact assemblage from the hall has a distinct martial as well as professional character and consists of spear- and arrowheads, axes, and swords as well as shields, chain mail, and lamellar armour (Hedenstierna-Jonson 2006, 54–60). However, no more than half a century later the hall ended in a major fire, which the soot- and charcoal-rich cultural layer as well as a flaming arrow testify to. Even the parapet of the hill fort Borgen

might have been affected by the same blast.⁴ Based on the analysis of the striking amount of arrowheads from the Garrison area (Fig. 3.2) — predominately of Eastern or Russian types — Peter Lindbom (2009, 92–98) assumes one major naval attack on both Birka and the neighbouring site Helgö during the middle of the AD 970s in which the Garrison's hall was destroyed.

The attacking enemies have been suggested to be mere raiding pirates, yet more likely it was no less than the founding father of Sigtuna, Erik Segersäll (the Victorious), supported by the exiled prince of Novgorod, Vladimir (Old Norse: Valdamarr). Consequently, Lindbom (2009, 98–99) deduces as well that the merchants in Birka started to constitute a threat to Erik's plans to reclaim control over the ongoing trade and were thus forced to relocate to newly founded Sigtuna. In the latter scenario, the professional mercenaries of the Garrison, the 'Birka warriors' (cf. Hedenstierna-Jonson 2006), would have fought in opposition to the king and must have been hired by the Birka merchants themselves in their pursuit of autonomy. A strong indicator of a violent end to the activities on Björkö seems also to be traceable in a more unexpected context. Already in 1977, Johan Callmer published his doctoral thesis 'Trade Beads and Bead Trade in Scandinavia ca. 800–1000 A.D.' in which a few pages were dedicated to the Birka beads, discussed as 'zone 19' (Callmer 1977, 155–56). In the enclosed catalogue, Callmer (1977, 27–32, cat. nos 219–302) recorded eighty-four graves with sets of beads consisting of more than nine specimens to which he added another thirty-eight burials with smaller bead sets. These bead sets were then assigned to his universal bead periods (abbreviated BP) and thus provide us with a closer chronological framework for the dating of the interments from zone 19.⁵ When converting this information to a simple graph, the result is surprising and staggering (Fig. 3.3).

- 4 Holmquist 2010. A trial trench conducted by Holmquist and the author through the nowadays ploughed-up section of the town rampart, stadsvallen, in 2018 revealed a construction not dissimilar to the Kovirke section of the Danevirke dated to c. AD 980. The central post, the wickerwork of the double-sided framework, and the inclined outer supporting post were charred. While ¹⁴C-datings are still awaited, it is tempting to see the rampart's destruction in the same course of events too.
- 5 Note that the Roman pagination of Callmer's bead periods does not correspond to their actual chronological sequence. In his thesis (Callmer 1977), he differentiates between the 'Hypothetical Dating' (p. 77), a 'Revised Chronology' by co-dated find assemblages (pp. 168–70), and finally an 'Absolute Chronology' (p. 170). The latter is the one applied here.

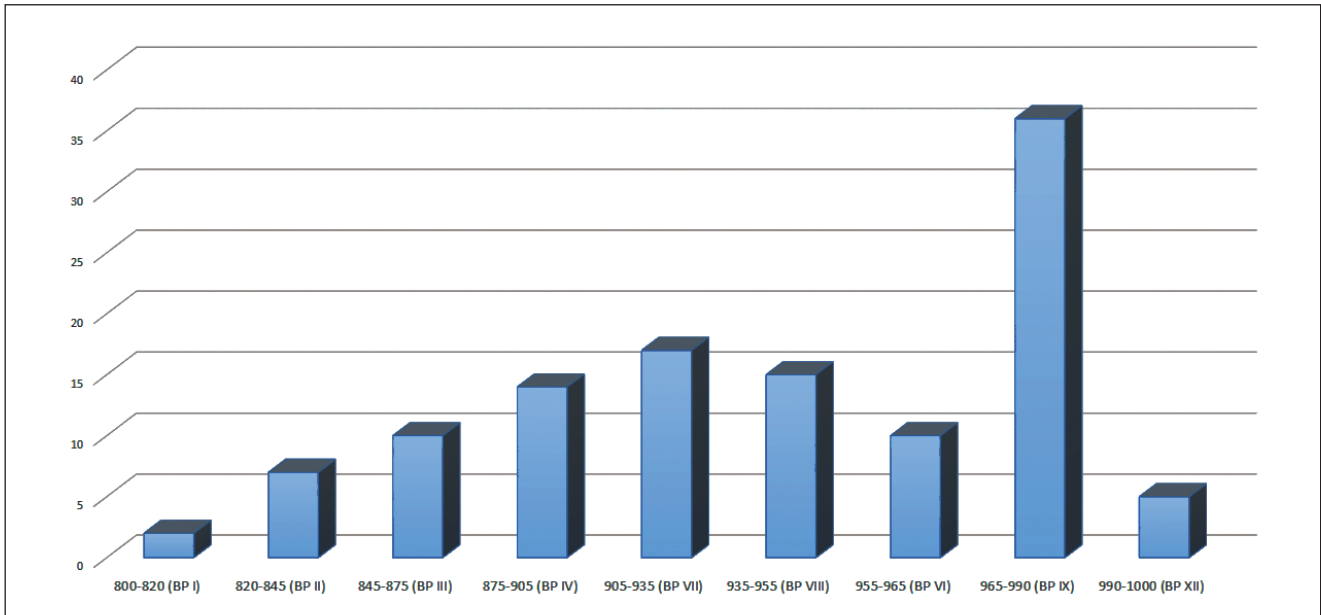


Figure 3.3. Birka. Graves with ten or more beads assigned to Callmer's (1977) bead periods. Note the peak of dated interments in BP IX that coincides with Birka's assumed end in c. AD 975. Graph by Sven Kalmring.

At first glance, the 116 discussed graves describe an ordinary and normal curve of distribution with the highest value of seventeen bead-bearing interments in the period between AD 905 and 935 (BP VII). Yet there is another peak which constitutes a clear spike to the otherwise predictable curve: thirty-six of the graves, that is more than 30 per cent of the burials, belong to the period AD 965–990 (BP IX). It seems hardly coincidental that this phase exactly covers the suggested date for Birka's fall around c. AD 975. After BP IX and with five bead-bearing interments, the graph jumps back to the normal curve in the short phase between AD 990 and 1000 when Birka seems to have returned to being a rural place (cf. Bäck 2012). Hence, considering this interrelation, this basic compilation is apparently able to demonstrate a significant, unnatural increase in events of deaths in Birka's final phase, which would fit well together with the other indications of violence testified at the Garrison and Borgen. Less secure, but equally tempting, is to connect the mass grave from the later St Lawrence churchyard in Sigtuna with the violent end of Birka and the execution of captives from the island: the grave contained nineteen individuals — thirteen men, five women, and one child — of which at least eleven displayed lethal-bladed weapon traumata, predominantly directed towards throat and neck. Chronologically, it is ¹⁴C-dated to the period c. AD 880–1000 (Kjellström 2005, 58–61, fig. 4.12; 2014, 246–47).

The shift from Birka to Sigtuna was nonetheless not unique to East Middle Sweden, but a part

of a general development in Scandinavia, which has lately been discussed as a 'second wave of urbanization' in the decades of the turn of the first millennium (Skre 2007, 45; Hillerdal 2009, 253). As Ulf Näsman (2000, 66) accurately puts it: 'The rapid urbanization [...] from the tenth century went hand in hand with the conversion to Christianity and the spread of direct royal rule'. Almost contemporary with Sigtuna, medieval towns such as Lund, Roskilde, Odense, Schleswig, Aarhus, and Viborg as well as Oslo and Nidaros/Trondheim were founded as new governmental, ecclesiastical, and administrative centres, which — tightly embedded in the regional setting — unified all three of these functions at one and the same site (cf. Andrén 1985). This development was not limited to northern Europe, but a second wave of urbanization can also be identified in north-western Continental Europe. Here, after the heyday of the emporia from the second half of the ninth century onwards, a change of socio-economic contexts in terms of a growing importance of the regional functions and an increased orientation towards regional trade become apparent, preparing the ground for the emergence of new dynamic and multifunctional urban centres of the tenth/eleventh century AD (Verhaeghe 2005, 271–72). In the ninth century, the trading places which survived the crisis of the North Sea emporia slowly developed an increasingly urban character while ecclesiastical centres as well as royal residences with attached manors formed further nuclei of urban settlements. In the course of the tenth century, however, new urban

settlements would emerge accruing from the duality of feudal castles of territorial lords and craftsmen's settlements. Yet for these new urban settlements' economies, long-distance trade no longer played any great role. It was not before the eleventh century that, due to feudalization and an accompanying dwindling manorial system, industrial production — that is, division of labour and serial production — gained a foothold in the towns, and international trade once more became the major economic pillar for urban communities (Verhulst 1999, 68–70, 113–18).

Hedeby's Transformation

Even if Hillerdal's stimulating approach on the discontinuity of early North European towns discussed above is more than convincing, the author accepts a certain chronological vagueness when it comes to the point in time when the first Scandinavian towns fell. Hillerdal (2009, 205, 253, 276) placed this universally at 'the turn of the first millennium' or 'by the early 11th century'. Yet more accurately, Birka and Kaupang already ceased to exist at the end of the tenth century—*c.* AD 975 and *c.* AD 960–980 (Pedersen and Pilø 2007, 186), respectively. In Ribe, the case is less clear: even if, historically, we are informed of the foundation of a bishopric in AD 948 (Adam of Bremen, *History of the Archbishops*, II. 4) for the period between the late ninth/early tenth century (east of the river in Ribe, Ribe Å) and the end of the eleventh century (west of Ribe Å), for a long time there was hardly any archaeological evidence (Feveile 2006, 52–53). However, during recent excavations at Torvet 13 next to the cathedral west of Ribe Å, a cemetery dating to the ninth–eleventh centuries AD has now been revealed.⁶ Remarkably, though, Hedeby continued to persist well into the eleventh century (Hilberg 2016), according to its historical dating to *c.* AD 1066, and thus a whole century longer than Birka and Kaupang. This putative anachronism demands an explanation.

It has been proposed that towards the end of the tenth century, simultaneously with the abandonment of Birka and Kaupang, Hedeby experienced an eco-

nomie decline.⁷ And already in *c.* AD 965, when the Jewish diplomat Ibrāhīm ibn Ya'qūb al-Ṭurūshī visited Šilšwiq (Hedeby), he described it as being 'poor in goods and riches', despite crediting it simultaneously with being 'a very large town at the extreme end of the world ocean' (cf. Adamczyk 2014, 152). However, both recent scientific analysis and ongoing fieldwork have shown that this report must rather be regarded as an expression of a cultural gap seen through the eyes of an envoy from the highly developed Caliphate of Córdoba: as reflected by the finds of late coins and standardized weights, even eleventh-century AD Hedeby had not become a mere 'centre of power with perhaps garrison-character' as suggested by Radtke (2009, 152). It was still a flourishing centre of long-distance trade whose transition to modern Schleswig during the reign of King Svend Estridsen (AD 1047–1074) in fact cannot be explained by economic reasons whatsoever (Hilberg 2016). On the other hand, Birka obviously was not abandoned in a phase of economic recession either, but rather due to the need to establish a true Christian town under direct royal control.

Therefore, for Hedeby the question remains by what means exactly — in contrast to all of the three other early North European towns — it was able to persist that much longer. A general problem when looking into this questions is the fact that the younger settlement phases' development — with the exceptions of dug-in features, such as pit houses or wells, or features from the submerged harbour area — are generally decayed due to insufficient soil moisture and affected by modern deep ploughing practised until the 1970s (Hilberg 2016; Schietzel 2014, 72–75, 95; Schultze 2008, 64–71, fig. 29). However, an important clue can be obtained by shifting the focus from Hedeby itself to its immediate surroundings.

The extensive fortifications of the Danevirke emphasize Hedeby's position in the political no man's land between Scandinavia and the European continent, functioning as an extraterritorial site (Fig. 3.4) (Kalmring 2016, 15–16; Dobat 2008).

Even with its incorporation into the Danevirke in the mid-tenth century AD — by the erection of the semicircular rampart around the town and the Connection Wall linking it to the Main Wall/North Wall-section at Lake Dannewerk — the site merely 'moved' onto the very border itself instead of, as a true part of the Danish realm, being withdrawn behind the fortifications themselves. At this point, attention will be called to the fact that the monument of the Danevirke in itself can be, and in fact was, dis-

⁶ Søvsø 2014. This early Christian cemetery and its circular enclosing ditch suggest that Ansgar's first church from *c.* AD 855 (Adam of Bremen, *History of the Archbishops*, I. 29) was located in the immediate vicinity, most probably underneath today's cathedral, see Søvsø 2014, 254, fig. 11. This insight cannot be overestimated since this for the very first time in Viking Age archaeology would prove the location of one of the first churches as well as its spatial separation from the early town on the eastern side of the river.

⁷ Cf. Hilberg 2016 with references therein.

cussed between the antipodes as a 'border fortification or boundary mark of a territory' (Schietzel 2014, 587). In effect, the question reflects a general debate in early medieval studies and thus the two competing concepts of territorial frontiers seen as either sharp linear boundaries — and thus political rather than cultural or economic — or larger frontier zones. The frontiers of the Carolingian Empire seem to have been quite permeable and flexible and were regarded as borders by people living afar rather than by the people actually living in the borderland. Walter Pohl elaborates:

Even without taking symbolic, religious, moral, cultural or linguistic frontiers into account, the political geography of early medieval Europe can hardly be reduced to a clear pattern of proto-national boundary lines. This does not mean that no theoretical, or symbolical notion of a frontier existed [...]. Neither does it mean that on the level of states, the concept of realm and frontier was lacking. (Pohl 2001, 254–55)

Interestingly enough, he also concedes:

When frontiers changed, that was usually perceived in terms of gain or loss of *civitates* or provinces, not shifting frontiers. It may be no coincidence that it was beyond the post-Roman world of, however rudimentary, *civitates* that we find [...] indications that linear frontiers were negotiated. (Pohl 2001, 255)

Despite the fact that the discussion of the earliest origins of the Danevirke lately was reignited due to recent excavations (Tummuscheit and Witte 2014, 156–57) at the historically attested 'Wieglesdor' (Thietmar of Merseburg, *Ottonian Germany*, III. 6; cf. *Royal Frankish Annals*, ad AD 808), the observations by Ole Harck (1998, 131–34, fig. 3) on the border fortification's impact on the settlement pattern are still valid: while the settlement indicators in the inner Schlei Fjord are evenly distributed in the pre-Roman Iron Age, this changes during the course of the Roman Iron Age as the evidence of these indicators in the southern foreland of Danevirke and its East Wall diminishes considerably. However, in the Viking Age the situation along the Danevirke frontier is much less clear: while Andres S. Dobat (2008, 46), too, reckons that there was a 'rather clear-cut demarcation line', Thorsten Lemm (2013, 362) concludes 'that the Saxon-Danish frontier, despite two prominent linear structures — the River Eider and the Danevirke —, was recognized as *Flächengrenze* [frontier zone]'.

While in the first written mention of Hedeby in AD 804 — related to a boundary dispute due to the inclusion of Nordalbingia into the Carolingian realm

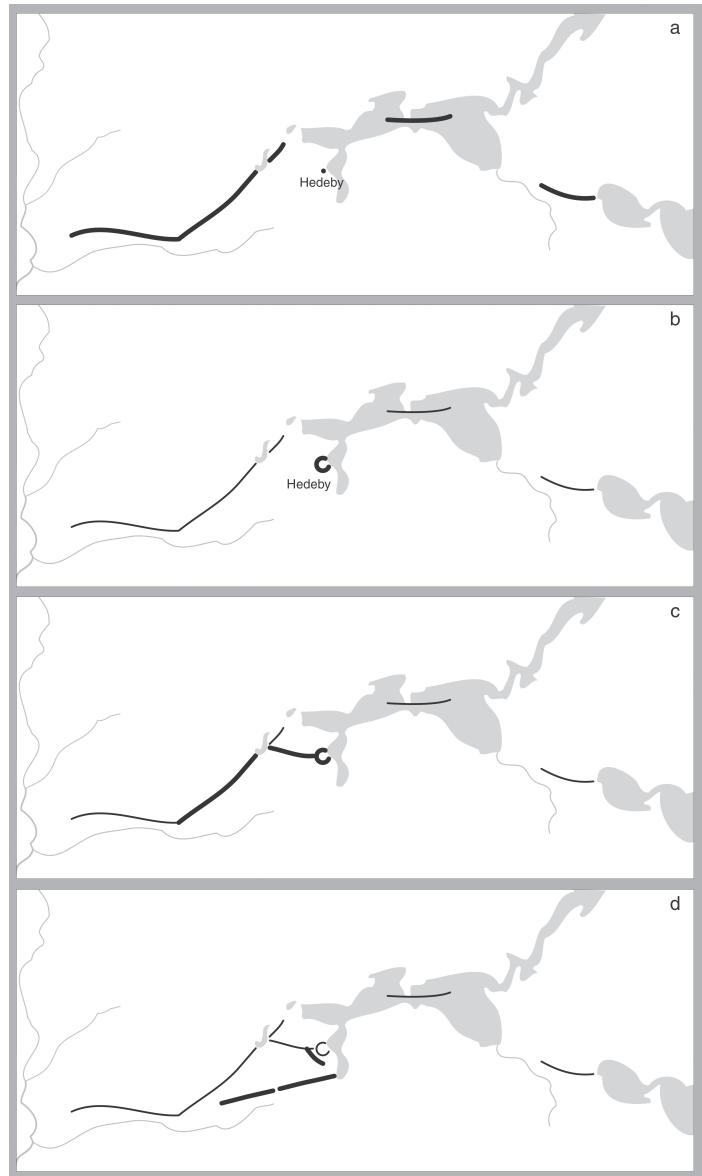


Figure 3.4. Danevirke. Phases of development with new or reinforced sections highlighted in bold. Note the position of Hedeby in the area of no-man's-land south of the border fortifications (phases a–b) and as a part of the borderline (phase c). Only with the establishment of the Kovirke in c. AD 980 did Hedeby become entrenched behind the border (phase d). After Dobat 2008, fig. 8.

in the aftermath of the Saxon Wars, the expulsion of the resident Saxons, and the location of Slavic Obodrites — King Göttrik concentrated his troops in Hedeby, which is said to have been situated on the border between his realm and Saxony:

At the same time king Godofrid [Göttrik], king of the Danes, came with his fleet and the entire cavalry of his kingdom to Sliethorp [Hedeby] on the border of his kingdom and Saxony. (*Royal Frankish Annals*, ad AD 804)

Only four years later, the River Eider, flowing c. 21 to 33 km south of Hedeby, was mentioned as the frontier:

[Göttrik] decided to fortify the border of his kingdom against Saxony with a rampart, so that a protective bulwark would stretch from the eastern bay, called Ostarsalt [Baltic Sea], as far as the western sea, along the entire north bank of the River Eider. (*Royal Frankish Annals*, ad AD 808)

Yet the notion 'north bank of the River Eider' is problematic since up to today no archaeological traces have been identified along the river course itself. The notion might as well be a rather vague description circumscribing the whole frontier zone north of the river and in consequence the fortifications of the Danevirke themselves.⁸ In 'Descriptions of the Islands of the North', Adam of Bremen (*History of the Archbishops*, IV. 1), too, reports that 'The principal part of Denmark, called Jutland, extends lengthwise from the Eider River toward the north'. Yet again, the battle of Otto II against the rising Danes in AD 975 was fought at the Danevirke itself:

At a second [campaign] he [the Emperor] hastened to Sleswic [Hedeby] in order to attack the rebellious Danes. There he discovered that his enemies anticipated him armed in the occupation of the ditch erected for the defence of their country and its access, the so-called Wieglesdor; following the advice of duke Bernhard [Billung] and my grandsire, the count Henry [the Fowler], he subdued all these defences. (Thietmar of Merseburg, *Ottonian Germany*, III. 6)⁹

Regardless of the differing perceptions of the borderland between Danevirke and the Eider, the erection of the Kovirke constituted a clear *novum* in the development of the Danevirke. With its suggested dating to c. AD 980¹⁰ and thus to the late reign of Harald Bluetooth, the Kovirke might even be perceived as a direct Danish measure for securing recaptured territory after the successful attempt to shake off the Ottonian attempts at hegemony in AD 983 — by the destruction of the *urbs* (i.e. the so-called margrave's

castle of Duke Bernhard), which was deliberately synchronized with the Lutizenaufstand ('The Great Slav Rising') (Thietmar of Merseburg, *Ottonian Germany*, III. 24; cf. Lemm 2013, 360; Andersen 1998, 168). As a shortening of the front, the Kovirke constituted an alternative line of defence, which was erected at a distance of 1.5 km south of Hedeby. The rampart ran dead straight for a distance of 6.5 km reaching from the innermost end of the Selker Noor (Selk inlet) towards the swampy flats of the Rheider Au (Rheide meadow) next to the hamlet of Kurburg. By way of construction, it consisted of a remarkably uniform 7 m wide and about 2 m high rampart with a threefold row of posts and a 3 m deep V-shaped ditch. Since only one single phase of construction can be traced, in fact very similar to the contemporaneous Trelleborg ring fortress, the structure must have been rather short-lived (Andersen 1998, 153–68, plates 22–23) and as such only possessed significance for Hedeby itself, but no longer for medieval Schleswig, Hedeby's medieval successor on the northern shore of the inner Schlei Fjord. Why, then, is exactly this observation so important for the postulated changes in Hedeby? As demonstrated elsewhere, early North European towns could only develop in a political no man's land where they formed almost parallel societies segregated from the surrounding traditional rural-agrarian world (Kalmring 2016). With the construction of Kovirke, however, Hedeby all of a sudden was placed behind an indeed very physically manifested Danevirke border depriving the town of its former status as a 'Special Economic Zone' (cf. Kalmring 2016). The implications of this simple appraisal are dramatic indeed: Hedeby henceforth was incorporated into a territorial realm (Dobat 2008, 59) and was reduced from a free trade zone in a no man's land to an admittedly very large and certainly royal, but otherwise regular, Danish town (cf. Andrén 1985; Hybel and Poulsen 2007, 228–39). How these towns of the late tenth and early eleventh centuries AD looked and what the demands were on their infrastructure, we are quite well informed by the contemporary Swedish example of Sigtuna.

The town topography of Sigtuna is characterized by its distinctive 20–30 × 8 m large town yards (*stadsgårdar*) arrayed at right angles towards both sides of the main road, 'Stora gatan', running parallel to the shore, as well as by the manifold cemeteries and the upcoming ecclesiastic architecture with up to seven churches behind the elongated settlement (Tesch 2007). As exemplified by the excavations at the district 'Trädgårdsmästaren' (cf. Wikström 2011), the town yards were covered with a row of buildings aligned gable to gable (Tesch 2007, 82–90). Initially, in main phase I, covering the brief period from AD 985

8 Indications for a 'Southern Danevirke' along the Eider can solely be deduced by fifteenth-century sources and later charts labelling 'Landscheide' (tariff walls). Kühl and Hardt 1999, 85–87.

9 For a more elaborate discussion on the Danish–Saxon frontier, cf. Lemm 2013, 356–62.

10 Dating by comparison with Trelleborg ring fortresses, see Andersen 1998, 153. The actual ¹⁴C-dates 'generally point to the tenth century. [...] The probability distribution, dedicated to the average value for the date of growth, places an emphasis on the second half of the tenth century, yet neither can the early first half [of the century] be excluded based on the ¹⁴C-results' (Erlenkeuser 1998, 193, trans. by author).

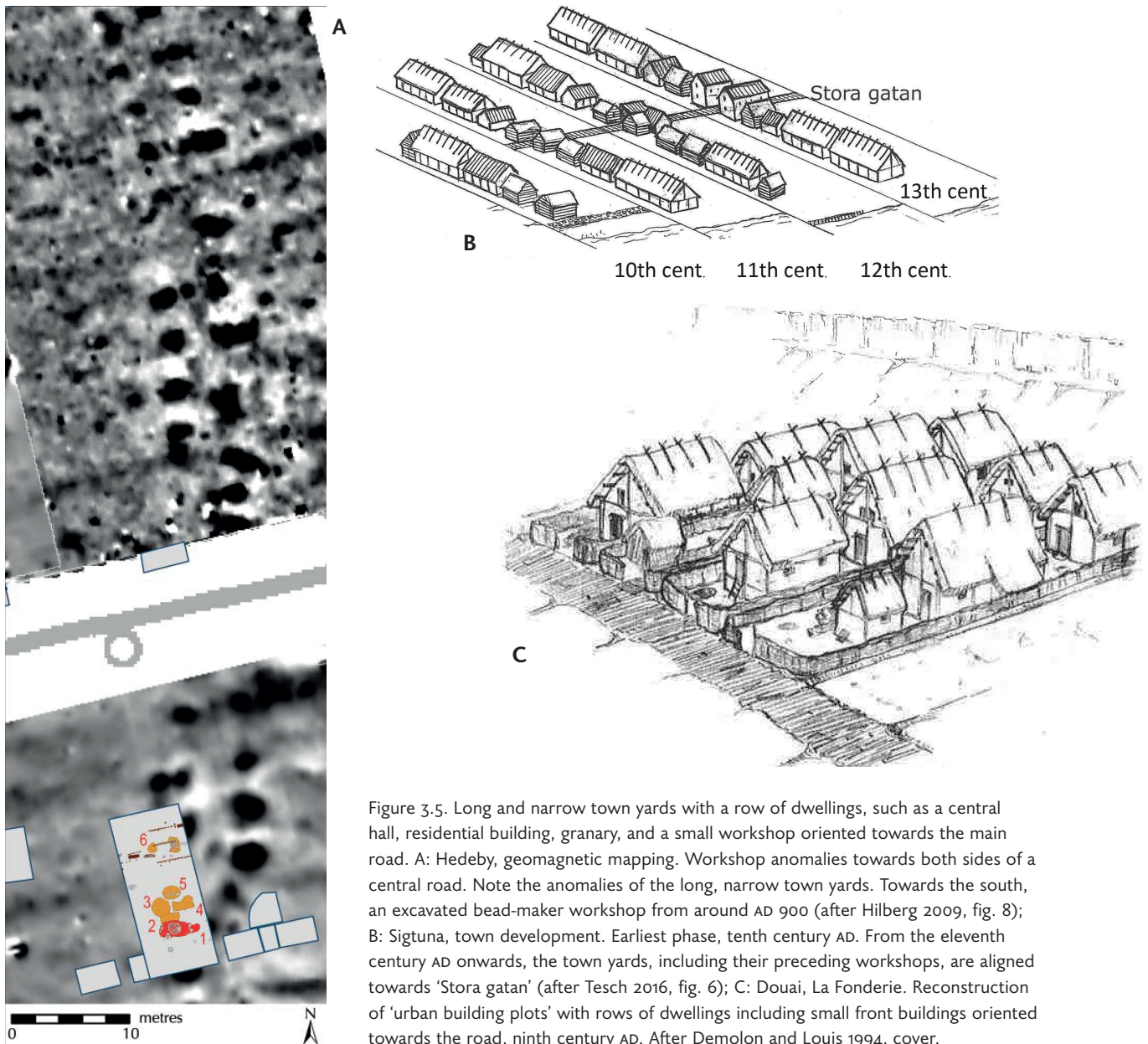


Figure 3.5. Long and narrow town yards with a row of dwellings, such as a central hall, residential building, granary, and a small workshop oriented towards the main road. A: Hedeby, geomagnetic mapping. Workshop anomalies towards both sides of a central road. Note the anomalies of the long, narrow town yards. Towards the south, an excavated bead-maker workshop from around AD 900 (after Hilberg 2009, fig. 8); B: Sigtuna, town development. Earliest phase, tenth century AD. From the eleventh century AD onwards, the town yards, including their preceding workshops, are aligned towards 'Stora gatan' (after Tesch 2016, fig. 6); C: Douai, La Fonderie. Reconstruction of 'urban building plots' with rows of dwellings including small front buildings oriented towards the road, ninth century AD. After Demolon and Louis 1994, cover.

to 1000, there was probably just one single row of plots housing two buildings each, which were oriented towards the shoreline with a likely road along the lakeside. From the eleventh century AD (main phase II) onwards, however, the from now on double-sided town-yard development was oriented along the new main road on the far side of the waterfront (cf. Fig. 3.5b) (Tesch 2007, 89). Henceforth, the plots were built up with a row of four to five buildings serving very distinctive and altered functions: situated closest to the main road at any one time were small simple workshops (zone I), followed by modest granaries or multifunctional buildings (zone II). Then came the actual residential buildings with a sitting room (*dagligstuga*) containing a corner fire-

place and seat/bed platforms (zone III), and finally the proprietor's hall (zone IV) as the largest dwelling on the plot (Tesch 2007, 88).

Scrutinized more closely, there is even a glimpse of evidence for the internal settlement layout of late-period Hedeby: during the geomagnetic surveys conducted in 2002 (cf. Neubauer and others 2003), a roughly north-south-running main road was detected crossing the Haddeby Stream at the bridge excavated in 1963 (cf. Schietzel 1969, 21–26; 2014, 113–15). Particularly on the northern stretch of this road, it is lined with matching minor anomalies (Fig. 3.5a) (Schultze 2008, 235–43, figs 161, 163).

Some of these were excavated earlier and shown to belong to 'a relatively late phase [...]' of settle-

ment development' (Schultze 2008, 240–41), perhaps dating to around AD 900, even though certain artefacts could be dated to the early tenth or the first half of the tenth century AD. These minor features proved to be small rectangular buildings, yet — to put it with the suggestive statement of the author — 'since fireplaces are missing, the question arises if they are dwellings or outbuildings' (Schultze 2008, 241, trans. by author). The outbuilding anomalies are not only characterized by a comparatively high degree of magnetization, but also by evidence of all kinds of handicraft in and immediately around them (Schultze 2008, 242–43; 2017, 569–71). As Volker Hilberg could demonstrate, workshops coinciding with the geomagnetic anomalies were in fact already excavated on the western side of the main road as early as 1911/1913 (Hilberg 2009, 89–90, fig. 8; Hilberg and Kalmring 2014, 231–32, fig. 16.4). Apart from indications of the workshop buildings themselves, there was an oven as well as crucibles from metal-casting for a whole range of artefacts from the second half of the ninth and the first half of the tenth centuries AD. Hilberg therefore concludes:

We get a picture that the settlement area in the decades around AD 900 was divided into long rectangular plots measuring c. 6–9 m in width, where workshops and ovens were situated immediately on both sides of a main street no wider than c. 2 m running N-S across the site. (Hilberg and Kalmring 2014, 232)

These minor workshop buildings oriented towards the main road placed on the frontline of long and narrow plots strongly resemble the town layout of eleventh-century AD Sigtuna. They might be an argument for a major structural and spatial reorganization of the town taking place in the first half of the tenth century which was eventually terminated with the construction of the Kovirke line in c. AD 980, bringing forward the Danevirke lines of defence and incorporating the formerly free trade zone as a town into the Danish realm. Admittedly, conclusions on the general settlement pattern in Hedeby are hard to draw since, until now, it was only exemplified by the building sequence in one sub-area, measuring 10 × 15 m, obviously constituting a mere rear development oriented towards an easterly running road (Schultze 2008, 217–34). From that section, we get an impression of a rather rapid building succession: the floor plans of the ensuing buildings shifted steadily at a small scale and were even repeatedly built over an east–west-running bypass, clearly speaking against the existence of stable plot boundaries. In another area, 'House 2' from AD 833 was rebuilt in no less than three quickly succeeding phases, yet

the subsequent building development changed its general orientation from east–west to north–south. In fact, only a few structures, such as a picket fence, showed place-continuity during the whole of the ninth century AD. However, in a settlement transformation, as indicated by the establishment of workshops along the main road, we might find the key to the putative 'anachronism' of Hedeby's continued existence beyond the last quarter of the tenth century and even well into the eleventh century AD.

Against the notion of a 'Sigtuna phase' in Hedeby, one might argue that the presumed major reorganization of Hedeby predates the upcoming town layout of Sigtuna by quite some decades and therefore could not have been modelled after such an example. Yet, here we rather seem to deal with a phenomenon of cultural transfer: Sigtuna was probably not created after a pioneering ideal originating at this particular place, as might not even have been the case for Hedeby as the probable predecessor. Again, the antetypes seem rather to be rooted on the Continent: at the site of La Fonderie at Douai in northern France, four Carolingian building plots were excavated between 1976 and 1981 (Demolon and Louis 1994; cf. Schofield and Steuer 2007, 125–26, fig. 4.5). They were located inside a semicircular rampart opening up towards the River Scarpe and were orientated at right angles to a central corduroy road of 2.5 m width. The long and narrow plots measured 5 × 25 m and were characterized by a narrow sequence of three buildings aligned gable to gable. At the outset towards the road, a 2.5 × 4 m small shallow pit house (*fond-de-cabane*) was situated, which might have been used as a granary. The second, central building measured 3 × 4–5 m and covered almost the whole breadth of the plot. At the far end, at the foot of the rampart, another somewhat deeper pit house with a weaving loom was located. This development of plots, here denoted as *parcel-laire urbain* (urban building plots) (Demolon and Louis 1994, 55, fig. 7), in fact strongly resembles the building pattern we know from eleventh-century AD Sigtuna (Fig. 3.5c).

At La Fonderie, the plots could be dated to the ninth century AD and, separated in two distinct building phases, prevailed until around c. AD 945, when the ducal residence of Arnulf I of Flanders was erected on site. It appears this novel building pattern only gradually found its way towards northern Europe, spreading from ninth-century AD Flanders to Hedeby as its most southernly outpost during the first half of the tenth century AD. From here, this innovation spread further until it was finally implemented in the town layout of Sigtuna around AD 1000. It is maybe not even by chance that the decades of the

adaption of this continental novelty and the suggested major structural and spatial reorganization of Hedeby (cf. Arents and Eisenschmidt 2010, 316, 324) roughly coincide with the Ottonian dominion in Hedeby after AD 934.¹¹ Consequently, the final Danish recapture in AD 983 would have been the reclamation of quite another town, which then, now as a Christian European town, became incorporated into the Danish realm, unmistakably demonstrated by the erection of the Kovirke.

The Implications of a Successful Transformation — A Sigtuna Phase in Hedeby

An alleged Ottonian-Christian *civitas* as suggested for tenth-century AD Hedeby would not do without any churches inside the very boundaries of the town. As the recent example of Ribe illustrates,¹² the earliest missionary churches may be assumed to have been placed rather at a distance to the early North European towns as they do not seem to have coped well with the basic ideas of cosmopolitan trading centres and free trade (cf. Staecker 2009, 313–14). Concerning Hedeby, an early stave church underneath the Romanesque St Andrew's Church some 735 m north of the town rampart has been discussed as the location of Ansgar's missionary church from AD 849 and 860 (most recently Staecker 2009, 309–12). For a long time, this idea has also been — and still is — supported by the deduction that before its reformation this church must have been associated with St Mary as its original patron saint (Frahm 1934, 194–95). For late Viking Age Sigtuna, Sten Tesch (2007, 101–08) suggests in his sub-chapter 'Från hallkult till sockenkyrkor' (From Hall-Cult to Parish Churches) that the earliest Christian cult, in analogy to the earlier pagan conditions on the manors on the countryside, was initially practised in the residential houses (zone IV) themselves since so far no evidence for wooden stave churches has been provided. However, the hitherto absence of stave churches might just as well be because of a source-critical problem, since the absence of evidence, as is known in archaeology, is not necessarily equivalent to evidence for absence. For the time around AD 1060, Tesch assumes the first cathedral to have been a stave church placed on the royal manor that, already by the end of the eleventh century AD,



Figure 3.6. Bronze bell and wooden frame found in Hedeby harbour: a church bell for a church building within the town's semicircular rampart? Stylistically dated to the eighth/ninth to mid-eleventh centuries AD. After Kalmring 2010, fig. 322.

was replaced by a stone cathedral.¹³ Generally, it was not before the first half of the twelfth century AD that the characteristic ecclesiastical architecture of Sigtuna became manifested (Tesch 2007, 105–08). In Hedeby, however, a bell was found in 1978 deposited in the Haddebyer Noor close to the town's harbour (Kalmring 2010, 80, figs 50–51). This remarkable object was about 51.5 cm high, and it consisted of a 24.3 kg bronze bell with clapper together with its wooden frame (Fig. 3.6).

Since a dendrochronological dating of the frame failed, typo-chronologically it was rather unsatisfactorily placed in the period between the eighth/ninth

11 For a different view on the Ottonian dominion, cf. Roesdahl and Sindbæk 2014, 398.

12 Cf. n. 6.

13 'Museets tomt, kvarteret S:ta Gertrud 3', cf. Tesch 2001, 16, 19–20. Already towards the end of the thirteenth century AD, it was abandoned and replaced by a marketplace, 'Lilla Torget', cf. Tesch 2001, 16–17. This development is not totally unlike the insights from Schleswig Rathausmarkt, where the St Trinitatis II Church was replaced by a marketplace in the first half of the thirteenth century AD. See Lüdtke 1997; cf. Kalmring 2010, 446–47.



Figure 3.7. Hedeby, 'Koppel Tams'. Hitherto unpublished stone foundation uncovered in 1931 in trial trench I, south-west of the inhumation burial ground 'Flachgräberfeld'. Photo: Hedeby-archive, Archäologisches Landesmuseum Schloss Gottorf.

and mid-eleventh centuries AD.¹⁴ The bell has been discussed as deriving from a looting of Schleswig (Olsen 1981, 250) or even as a mere profane signal bell from the entrance to the harbour of Hedeby (Articus 1982). Yet, as one of the earliest ringing-bells north of the Alps it seems likely to originate from an ecclesiastical context which would make it a proper church bell for an actual church in Hedeby itself.

And more can be added to the story: Hedeby's extensive inhumation burial ground ('Flachgräberfeld') — where a total number of 322 graves have been excavated, all (in analogy to the burial grounds of Sigtuna) situated towards the rear of the settlement — actually shows a couple of the characteristics of a Christian cemetery. Ute Arents and Silke Eisenschmidt conclude:

None of Hedeby's burial grounds correspond to our contemporary picture of a Christian cemetery. [...] The 'Flachgräberfeld' and especially the burials at the Noor with their dense assignments without burial mounds show more Christian features than the chamber-burial ground and the southern burial ground. (Arents and Eisenschmidt 2010, 296, trans. by author)

14 Drescher 1984; cf. Kalmring 2010, 440–41; Schietzel 2014, 424–25. Already in 1710 another, yet broken church bell was encountered in the valley next to the village of Loopstedt on the northern shore of the Haddebyer Noor, probably almost opposite St Andrew's Church, see Schietzel 2014, 425.

In a previous chapter, they dared to be more explicit: 'The even, dense assignment [of the inhumation burial ground] with line formation and absence of grave goods is typical for Christian cemeteries' (Arents and Eisenschmidt 2010, 292, trans. by author). Recent excavations on the 'Flachgräberfeld' in 2017 revealed even more Christian features for its latest phase of existence (Kalmring 2017, 41–42). After initially being a barrow burial ground, the establishment of the inhumation burial ground probably started off in the second half of the ninth century AD when it was only one among Hedeby's many burial grounds. In the tenth century AD, the adjacent chamber burial ground had been given up, and the area of the inhumation burial ground was enlarged towards the east, north, and west (while the 'Südgräberfeld', with a more pagan character and later situated outside the town wall, was enhanced eastwards towards the Haddebyer Noor replacing the Southern Settlement). From the inhumation burial ground, the youngest datable interment can be coincided to the time around AD 1000 by the burial gift of an Otto Adelheid penny (coffin grave 33; cf. Arents and Eisenschmidt 2010, 228, pl. 6.33). Yet the existence of younger, eleventh-century AD burials without any grave gifts at all cannot be ruled out either (Arents and Eisenschmidt 2010, 323). Towards the west of the cemetery, a 0.5 m wide stone packing or stone wall was observed already by Herbert Jankuhn in 1931 (Jankuhn 1986, 105; Arents and Eisenschmidt

Figure 3.8. Lead epitaph from the burial of Bishop Rodulf of Hedeby/Schleswig. The inscription reads 'ANN[us] INCARN[ationis] D[omi]NICE MXLVII O[biit] RVDOLFVS SLE[sc]WICENS[is] E[c]CL[esi]e. HVI[us] E[C]C[lesi]e A) MATOR FIDELISSIM[us] II NON[is] (NOV[embris])' (In the year of the Incarnation of the Lord 1047 Rodulf, bishop of the Schleswig church, died. The churches' [St Cunibert] dearest friend the 2nd ninth of November [4 November AD 1047]). Cologne, Basilica of St Cunibert. After Gechter 1997, fig. 1.



2010, 37, fig. 84) — in fact, up to today it is the only stone structure known from Hedeby at all (Fig. 3.7).

It was traced in four subsequent trial trenches and stretched over a distance of at least 23.5 m. In the attempt to distinguish Hedeby's pagan burial grounds from medieval churchyards, Arents and Eisenschmidt elsewhere, by referring to Jakob Kieffer-Olsen (1993, 156), generally claim: 'An additional important characteristic of a cemetery is the demarcation of the area e.g. by a small wall with a ditch or a stone wall'. And they continue: 'Round about in the middle of the enclosure, the church is situated' (Arents and Eisenschmidt 2010, 292, trans. by author).

In the context of the suggested Sigtuna phase in Hedeby, the church bell from the harbour can now be convincingly explained as deriving from an existing tenth- to eleventh-century (stave?) church inside of the town wall. While its physical identification will be a task for future archaeological surveys, for now we can suggest that it might very well be situated in the area of the inhumation burial ground with its Christian expression and the graveyard stone wall. Because of its proposed chronological placement, this church might even be the very episcopal church of the first bishops of Hedeby/Schleswig from AD 948 onwards. The murder of Otto the Great's margrave and legate and the subsequent destruction of the Saxon *colonia* by Harald Bluetooth was answered by a punitive expedition through Jutland which ended with Otto defeating Harald in a battle at Sliaswig. In the aftermath of these events, Adam of Bremen reports: 'At the same time Denmark on this side of the sea, which is called Jutland by the inhabitants, was divided into three dioceses and subjected to the bishopric of Hamburg' (Adam of Bremen, *History of the Archbishops*, II. 3). In the following chapter, he continues:

Our most blessed father [Archbishop Adalag], then, was the first to consecrate bishops for Denmark: Hored for Sliaswig [Hedeby/Schleswig], Liafdag for Ribe, Reginbrund for Aarhus. [...] This was done in the archbishop's twelfth year [AD 948]. And indeed, such increase followed these beginnings of heavenly mercy, God working with them, that the churches of the Danes are seen to abound in the manifold fruits of the northern peoples from that time even to this day. (Adam of Bremen, *History of the Archbishops*, II. 4)

Hedeby bishop Hored was followed by Bishops Folkbert, Marco, and Poppo. The latter is the very bishop who was to baptize Harald Bluetooth in c. AD 960 (Widukind of Corvey, *Deeds of the Saxons*, III. 65), who in his turn, subsequent to his baptism, raised the claim to have 'made the Danes Christian' on the large Jelling stone (DR 42) from around AD 965.

According to the *Vita Bernwardi* (chap. 20), however, Bishop Ekkehard (d. AD 1026), the successor of Poppo, was banished from Hedeby after the destruction of the *civitas* and the abandonment of the church — presumably right after the Danish recapture of the town in AD 983. Ekkehard remained titular bishop in exile in Hildesheim, as did his successor Rodulf in the diocese of Cologne. During the time of these two 'shadow bishops' (cf. Gelting 2004, 175, 179–81, 183), the episcopal see in Hedeby was discontinued and Canute the Great of England-Denmark — in an attempt to ward off the influence of Hamburg-Bremen and thus the Holy Roman Empire — tried to establish his own church dependent on the archbishopric of Canterbury instead (Gelting 2004, 175–77). According to Michael H. Gelting (2004, 187–91), it

was not before the convention between Archbishop Adalbert and Svend Estridsen in AD 1052/53 that the supremacy of Hamburg-Bremen was recognized, and the see was re-erected with the instalment of Bishop Ratolf (d. AD 1072) in AD 1059. Radtke presumes divergently that it was already with the peace treaty between Conrad II and Canute in AD 1026 that the Hamburg-Bremen bishops (i.e. Bishop Rodulf), could return to their see.¹⁵ Rodulf (d. AD 1047), however, was evidentially buried in the Church of St Cunibert in Cologne (cf. Scherping 2003) (Fig. 3.8).

Also, Gelting (2004, 181) argues that, even if Bishop Rodulf was undoubtedly present at the convention between Adalbrand-Bezelin and Magnus the Good in Sliaswig in AD 1042 (Adam of Bremen, *History of the Archbishops*, II. 79), he was merely able to attain his diocese in the retinue of the archbishop.

Be that as it may, with Hored, Folkbert, Marco, and Poppo, we have a whole line of at least four Hedeby/Schleswig bishops who might actually actively have had their diocese within the limits of the town of Hedeby itself. On any English-Danish replacements from Canterbury under Canute in the interim time, we are lacking sources. The assumption of an episcopal church in Hedeby is supported by the fact that the two Icelandic women Auður and Gunnhildur stopped first at Hedeby (Heiðabæ), being one of the major ecclesiastical centres of the north, in order to be baptized before proceeding on their pilgrimage to Rome (*Gísli Súrsson's saga*, 38; cf. Radtke 2009, 154–55; Hilberg and Kalming 2014, 223). In the light of the discussion above, even the much-debated convent between Archbishop Adalbrand-Bezelin and Magnus the Good of Norway-Denmark in AD 1042 (Adam of Bremen, *History of the Archbishops*, II. 79) and the convent of Archbishop Adalbert and Svend Estridsen in AD 1052/53¹⁶ should be re-evaluated as having taken place not in the vicinity of Hedeby nor at an early Schleswig, but at Hedeby itself.¹⁷ At least for the first event in AD 1042, Radtke in fact clearly assumes an actual bishop's see in Hedeby. Still on the assumption of an earlier return of the Hamburg-Bremen bishops, he even goes a step further claiming:

This archaeologically insecure period [of the eleventh century AD] coincides with a range of historical events which, for the domains of power and religion — without being archaeologically verifiable — require a more evolved settlement development: since the official peace agreement between King Canute the Great of England and Denmark and King Conrad II [...], from AD 1026 onwards the bishop's see is occupied in an unbroken succession, which is unthinkable without the construction of a cathedral. *Episcopal church and royal court* with corresponding infrastructure *can inevitably be inferred* from the political negotiations and the wedding ceremony in autumn AD 1042 between the Norwegian-Danish king and the Saxon ducal house and even more so from the negotiations between King Svend Estridsen and Archbishop Adalbert of Hamburg-Bremen taking place in winter AD 1052/1053. (Radtke 1999, 367–68, trans. and italics by author)

If Radtke's (2009, 156) assumption of a royal palace or *Königspfalz* corresponding to a cathedral in Hedeby is correct, the preceding duality of early town and royal estate, as is characteristic for the earlier 'Special Economic Zones', must have been given up in the course of the late tenth/early eleventh centuries AD, before the palace ultimately was moved to the Graukloster site at medieval Schleswig (Radtke 1977). In that light, it might not even be by chance that the burning of the hall at the assumed royal estate at Füsing, likewise situated in the inner Schlei Fjord, happened in the course of the tenth century AD (Dobat forthcoming). Concerning the *äldsta kungsgårdstomten* (oldest royal estate plot) in Sigtuna, such a royal manor placed at one of the most prominent positions inside the town has actually been suggested (Tesch 2001, 19–20); for Hedeby, the evidence of such a palace seems to be even more sparse than its implicit ecclesiastical architecture. While for Hedeby's transformation, in the sense of a Christian reorganization, the church bell, the inhumation burial ground, and the graveyard stone wall can be emphasized, there are no available cues

15 Radtke 2009, 152 n. 170 with references therein; cf. Radtke 1992. For the peace treaty in AD 1026, see Adam of Bremen, *History of the Archbishops*, II. 55.

16 Adam of Bremen, *History of the Archbishops*, III. 18; cf. Radtke 2007, 320–21 with references therein.

17 Note the general source-critical problem within historical research on the transition from Hedeby to Schleswig: while the Old Norse sources denote Hedeby as Heiðabýr, the continental sources speak of Sliethorp or Sliaswich instead, see Kalming 2010, 41–42. This matter is best reflected in *Chronicon Æthelweardi* (I. 4) from c. AD 974 clarifying 'The old land of the

Angles lies between the Saxons and Jutes, and has as its capital the town known in the Saxon language as Slesuic [Schleswig], but by the Danes as Haithaby [Hedeby]'. To make things even worse, the same two denotations are maintained even after the transition to medieval Schleswig (cf. e.g. Adam of Bremen, *History of the Archbishops*, IV. 1), which makes it hard to discern whether the respective sources actually still refer to the Viking Age site south of or to the medieval site north of the Schlei Fjord. As an aside, it shall be added that in current German literature Hedeby is referred to as Haithabu due to an originally all too literal reading of its spelling on the Skarathi rune stone (DR 3).

for such a palace building. However, if we include the evidence from the harbour, there is archaeological evidence for a late, direct royal presence on site: the elegant, 30 m long warship Hedeby wreck 1, which sank after a major fire event in front of the town's harbour facilities (Crumlin-Pedersen 1997, 81–95; Kalmring 2010, 114–19, 329–36), is assumed to be nothing less than a royal vessel. Seeing the exceptionally fine execution and the disposal of extraordinarily large and high-quality planks, Ole Crumlin-Pedersen (1997, 93) commented: 'The ship excavated in the harbour at Hedeby must therefore be described as "a longship of royal standard", designed for high-speed sailing and rowing in relatively protected waters'. It was built around AD 982 and, due to wear and repairs, must have been in use for between five and fifteen years before it finally sank between AD 990 and 1010 in Hedeby (Crumlin-Pedersen 1997, 94; Kalmring 2010, 118). Due to its date of construction, it must have originally been commissioned by King Harald Bluetooth. While the dating of the ship would even allow involvement in the recapture of Hedeby in AD 983, historically the sinking of the ship between AD 990 and 1010 rather coincides with the deployment of the royal fleet, the *Pingmannalið*, in the conquest of England emanating from both London and Hedeby under the reign of Sven Forkbeard (*The Saga of the Jómsvíkings*, 50; cf. Radtke 2009, 153; Kalmring 2010, 54). Be that as it may, while the vessel must have constituted a rather alien element in a cosmopolitan trading centre only governed by a *prefectus* or *comes*, its presence might not be so strange when assuming a royal palace in Hedeby at the turn of the first millennium.

To conclude, one might ask why then, after such a successful transformation, as suggested above, allowing the town's persistence well into the eleventh century AD, Hedeby all the same was finally given up and moved to present Schleswig. Maybe it is not so far-fetched to ascribe this relocation to the historically documented events after all: during the events of the famous battle at Lürschau/Lyrskov Heath (in Old Norse, Hlýrskógsheiði) in AD 1043 — when an Obodrite army, under the command of the sons of the murdered Prince Ratibor, returning from a campaign of revenge in southern Jutland was destroyed by King Magnus the Good (Adam of Bremen, *History of the Archbishops*, II. 79; Snorri Sturluson, *Heimskringla*, *Saga of Magnús the Good*, 26–28) — the town of Hedeby obviously stayed unharmed. Yet the pillaging of Hedeby, 'the lord's town' (in Old Norse, *bæjar þengils*), by Harald Hardrada of Norway in c. AD 1050 (in the course of the conflict with King Svend Estridsen, as witnessed by skaldic poetry (Anonymous (HSig) verse 2; Þórleikr

fagri verse 6) plus its final raid (under the command of Prince Gottschalk's brother-in-law Blusso) in the course of an Obodrite rebellion in AD 1066 (Adam of Bremen, *History of the Archbishops*, III. 51, schol. 81) actually could have constituted Hedeby's deathblow.¹⁸ In fact, up to today the oldest timber dated from medieval Schleswig — belonging to a dwelling from the 'Schild' excavation — is still not older than AD 1071 (Vogel 1991, 269; cf. Rösch 2018, 240, 277–79, fig. 83). Even the minting of local Schleswig coins under royal Danish control, as the assemblage of the Hafengang 11 excavation recently could reveal, only started in the mid- or late AD 1070s (Moesgaard, Hilberg, and Schimmer 2016, 190).

18 Cf. Rösch 2018, 280. Differently, Radtke (2017, 91) recently suggested that the Norwegian attack in AD 1050 was directed at both the trading centre Hedeby and a (presumed early, though archaeologically not verified (cf. Rösch 2018, 277–81)) royal and ecclesiastical Schleswig, which was established already after the turn of the millennium. Since this event supposedly triggered the settlement transfer to Schleswig, the Slavonic attack in AD 1066 could also not have been directed at a henceforth abandoned Hedeby, but was solely an assault on Schleswig, see Radtke 2017, 88–89. Also, Radtke (2017, 85) claims that (while in the run-up to the battle at Lyrskov Heath in AD 1043, Magnus the Good still disembarked at Hedeby) the convention between Archbishop Adalbrand-Bezelin and Magnus the Good in AD 1042 could have happened nowhere else than in Schleswig. Central to Radtke's argumentation is his core hypothesis that 'a sharp church-administrative breach, e.g. the relocation of the cathedral including its episcopal annexes from the southern to the northern shore of the Schlei Fjord, would presumably have been recorded' (Radtke 2017, 88, trans. by author).

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