

# Summaries

## Studies of the late medieval stilt towers of Denmark

*By Thomas Bertelsen*

The research is dealing with a characteristic late medieval type of church towers, especially spread in Eastern Jutland and dating back to about 1450-1550. The type differs from traditional towers by having no tower room, but instead one or – in infrequent cases – more open arcades, hence the name »stilt towers« (fig. 1, 2).

Within the present borders of Denmark 54 out of 59 stilt towers, completely or partly preserved, have been investigated, mainly situated within the medieval Diocese of Århus (fig. 3). Most of the towers can be divided into two main types, each of them representing a building tradition. The largest group mainly comprises of towers within the area of Djursland, but also south of Århus. These towers are of a very slight construction, with very high arcades and only one storey for the bell (fig. 1). The second group is mainly found about and between the inlets of Randers and Mariager. These towers are more strongly built, with very low arcades and more storeys (fig. 4).

A group of towers within the area of Djursland and south of Århus can be assigned to a small group of master builders (fig. 5-11), eg. The Tirstrup-Albøge master, who may possibly be the originator of the special building style of Danish stilt towers.

## Sct. Jørgenskapellet at Spidlegård on Bornholm. Archaeological studies 1918, 1960, 1961 and 1962

*By Jens Velleu*

On the island of Bornholm, just northwest of Åkirkeby, the only institution where lepers could receive care and lodging was estab-

lished in the thirteenth century. The place is referred to for the first time in written sources in 1334 by the Latin name domui leprosororum (the lepers' house); later it was referred to as Sct. Jørgensgård, just like most of the other leper hospitals in the country. In 1918 Poul Nørlund (1888-1951) from the National Museum excavated the institution's chapel, which lay in ruins, exposing the preserved brickwork. In 1960 and 1961 the churchyard outside the chapel was excavated and c. 170 burials examined. In 1962 the burials inside the chapel were exposed. This time Dr Vilhelm Møller-Christensen (1903-1988) carried out the study, ascertaining several cases of leprosy and a number of skeletons showing evidence of syphilis.

The planned scientific examination of the excavated skeletal material was never accomplished. It has not been possible to obtain a large portion of the documentation from the last three campaigns in the relevant museums and archives.

On the basis of the highly fragmentary archival material, the article aims to outline the main features of the centuries-long history of the place, concluding with a discussion of the find of two coins from the times of Valdemar Atterdag (1340-1375) in 1997. They may be regarded as the preliminary to renewed archaeological activity surrounding one of Bornholm's most mysterious buildings.

## The Burials in the chapel by Spidlegård

*By Poul Baltzer Heide*

The purpose of this anthropological research is an attempt to find a pattern in the burials, in factors such as sex, age and disease. Because of the poor possibilities to decide the sex of the buried, no convincing image of this factors relevance can be drawn. On the contrary, age could be estimated in 80 % of the cases, hereof five were children. The average age appeared to be 42.4 years, with

a moderate spreading on both sides. The age-interval spans between approximately 18 and 75 years.

Symptoms of leprosy was only to be found on four individuals. This circumstance suggests that the right to be buried inside the chapel was limited to the superiors of the hospital. However, this does not explain the five children, and therefore it is possible that these are the result of a system where the whole family moved to the hospital if one of the parents got leprous. The placing of the graves can partially be reconstructed using the notes made on the original research-schedules by Vilh. Møller-Christensen. 14 of the burials are mentioned, and can be divided into six coherent groups, of which three can be related to the remainings of the foundations. Considering the dating of the burials, the only clue comes from the arm positions, who points at the 14<sup>th</sup> century. The coins cannot be used to date the burials, since none of them for sure are related to the buried.

## Of Migratory Legends and Deserted Churches

*By Jan Brendalsmo & Frans-Arne Stylegar*

The main purpose of the article is to argue for observance of oral tradition as a source to deserted medieval churches. Such churches are referred to in place-names, where church- (*kirke, kapell*) or priest- (*prest*) are part of the name (eg. *Kirkeby, Presterud, Kirkeåketengen, Kapelløya*). Often there are folk tales connected to these places. Some tales just tell that there once stood a church on a specific site, the site often having one of the above mentioned type of name. In other cases there is no name to support the folk tale. Then there are the so-called migratory legends, which tell that the local farmers started to build a church on a specific place, but what was built during daytime was removed to another place at night by supra-natural powers. And there the church was eventually built. A few examples are presented, from the county of Vest-Agder in the south of Norway, where the authors have excavated some of these legendary churches. The various types of tradition in Vest-Agder are then discussed and grouped, with emphasis put on three geographical areas where tradition is especially plentiful. Finally, it is argued that by treating folk tradition as any other source for scientific research, it is possible to develop a much broader understand-

ing of the erection of religious buildings in the medieval periode. A theoretical reason is given for an approach of this kind, and an attempt at decoding the migratory legends is presented.

## Planning and Design of the Early Wooden Churches. A Contribution to a Theory

*By Jørgen H. Jensenius.*

For more than 160 years, researchers have conducted investigations into the churches which existed before the stave churches in Norway, and they have pointed out possible prototypes both at home and abroad. However, theories relating to origins often deal only with external form. In my dissertation (Jensenius 2001) the conclusion reveals that church building was part of an experience-based tradition wherein knowledge about the buildings' visible and invisible order (measurements) was transferred from prototype through imitation of a series of actions.

## The churches in Klåstad. A presentation of a progressive projekt

*By Rikard Hedvall*

In 1997 an unknown round naved churchruin was discovered in Klosterstad/Klåstad, Östergötland. The church dates approximately to the first half of the 13th century. It was destroyed in a fire between 1561 and 1567. A lot of the medieval interior was still extant. An earlier stavchurch was discovered a few meters north of the round naved church. This church dates from the 11th century and have been replaced when the round naved church was completed. Even the belltowers to both churches have been excavated.

Totally 30 pieces of limestone gravemonuments, from the same location, decorated with dragonmotives and runic inscription have been found. This type of monuments dates approximately from the 11th century to the beginning of the 12th century.

Among almost 200 excavated graves one of them which belong to that early church was covered with a runic inscripted monument.

## Graves beneath church walls

*By Christian Lovén, with an appendix by Claes Gejrot*

Skeletons discovered beneath church walls are generally taken to be indications of an earlier wooden church at the site. This may not always be true. Canon law, as well as provincial legislations, stated that burials were only allowed at churches. However, canon law allowed for funerals to begin already when the church building was in the planning stages.

Three Swedish and Finnish written sources are of interest. The Bishops' Chronicle of Västergötland (c.1325) states that bishop Sigfrid (11th century) marked three church sites and inaugurated the church yards. Bishop Bengt (c.1150–1180) had several churches erected, and he endowed them. The important point is that the author of the chronicle differs between these activities. An early 16th century Finnish account of the erection of a chapel at Lokalaks, 50 km NW of Turku, begins with the inauguration of the cemetery in 1490, with mass held by the bishop. This was at the request of two local noblemen. After this (post hoc), the two men erected a wooden chapel at the site. The chapel is mentioned in 1512. Finally, in a letter issued in 1470, the bishop of Linköping promises indulgence to all who visit the newly consecrated cemetery at Forsvik and pray at the four crosses erected at the corners of the cemetery (see appendix). No church by this name is known to have existed, but the letter probably concerns Forsvik on the W shore of lake Vättern.

These scarce sources confirm that cemeteries may be older than their churches. Normally, the stretches of intended walls would be avoided for funerals. But the erection of the church may have been delayed so much that the layout was forgotten or revised. Considering the number of unfinished projects that we can trace in medieval church buildings, these delays may have been common. This could explain some of the graves beneath church walls. The ultimate form of delay, abandonment of the intended church site, is what appears to have come to pass at Forsvik.

## Turku Cathedral – A Subject of Continued Research

*By Knut Drake*

Finland consisted of a single diocese in the Middle Ages, with the bishop's see located in Turku (Sw. Åbo). In connection with Turku Cathedral's restoration in 1923-1928, a thorough investigation of its structures was conducted. This was the first study of its kind in Finland, and the results have affected the general understanding of the Cathedral's building history to this day. According to a jubilee book published in 2000, a wooden parish church was constructed on the site of the present-day Cathedral in ca 1250, and a stone sacristy was added soon after. The timber church was replaced in the 1290s by a brick-built hall church that was taken into use as a cathedral in 1300. During the 14th century, a narrower polygonal chancel was added to the hall church, as well as two porches of grestone to the south and a tower to the west side. At the beginning of the 15th century, the chancel was replaced by the present-day three-aisled nave, the sacristy was enlarged, the east porch was demolished and a high brick-built vestibule built in its place, and side chapels were added both to the north and to the south of the nave. After 1460, the Cathedral was turned into a basilica, the large Chapel of All Souls was added to the east, and a new side chapel constructed on the south side.

I have studied the Cathedral's walls with building archaeological methods, and have concluded that some of the interpretations from the 1920s must be revised. Nothing remains of the wooden church today, but such a building was probably constructed in the 1290s and consecrated as a cathedral in 1300. Afterwards, it was extended with a stone sacristy. The first attempt to build a brick church in the 1370s-1380s failed, but the construction work was resumed after some time, and the brick-built cathedral was completed at the beginning of the 15th century. At that time, it consisted of a three-aisled vaulted nave with a narrower chancel and a two-storey sacristy.

The building work continued in the 1420s. A row of chapels to the north of the nave was constructed at that point, as well as two porches of two storeys to the south and a masonry tower to the west side. In the 1440s, the old chancel was demolished and replaced by a three-aisled nave. At the same time, the nave was raised by three

metres and the masonry tower was extended in brick. This work was completed with the Cathedral's conversion into a basilica in the 1460s.

## Papinniemi in Uukuniemi and other orthodox village cemeteries in Eastern Finland – basis for and problems of research

By *Ville Laakso*

At the turn of the 16th and 17th centuries Sweden conquered an area in Karelia known as the Käkisalme Province (fig. 1). The people living in this area were Greek orthodox Karelians, and their culture was somewhat different from the Lutheran population of the Swedish state. Because of Lutherization and heavy taxation, majority of this orthodox population moved to Russia during the 17th century. Today part of this area is Finland, part of it was ceded by Soviet Union during the Second World War.

From an archaeological point of view, characteristic for this cultural area is the use of village cemeteries. There are probably a few hundred of them in the area, but there is still very little research material of these sites. They date mainly from 14th to 17th centuries, some of them have been in use until the 19th or even 20th century.

Research problems of the cemeteries include lack of systematic surveys and larger excavations, poor documentation of early fieldwork, and lack of datings from unfurnished graves. On the other hand, there is rich oral tradition as well as some ethnographic data and written sources that provide us with information about these sites. Systematic archaeological surveys and excavations of the cemeteries have recently been started in Eastern Finland.

Future themes of research are for example comparison between different categories of source material connected with these sites, christianization of the area, details of orthodox burial customs, and the historical orthodox cultural landscape.

The most extensive archaeological excavations in connection with this cultural phase have been conducted by the University of Turku at the deserted village of Papinniemi in the parish of Uukuniemi, Eastern Finland. There has been an orthodox church, a cemetery and several houses in the area, which has been completely deserted since the mid-17th century.

## Research On the Building Technique of St Cross Church of Hattula in Häme

By *Tanja Ratilainen*

The main object of the research was to see what kind of building technique was used and how the building process had proceeded in the 15th century when the St Cross Church of Hattula was built. In addition, it was to see if the building technique could give some proof of the debated issue on whether the Hattula Church was built in a single building phase or not.

Firstly, I had to define the original medieval masonry. In doing so, I discovered some new facts about the repairs that had been done during the long history of the church. Secondly, the research of the building technique resulted in a number of interesting facts about the wedges, bonding technique, scaffolding and the lifting levels of the masonry. Thirdly, the vertical joints hint that the bricklayers proceeded from the east end of the nave towards the west end and from the gable ends of the sacristy and the porch towards the nave. Fourthly, it is probable that the same groups of bricklayers had worked on the different parts of the church, the nave, the sacristy and the porch. Therefore, this result combined with other evidence suggests that the church was built in many stages within one single building phase.