

Studies in Viking and Medieval Scandinavia 2

The Viking Age as a Period of Religious Transformation



SÆBJØRG WALAKER NORDEIDE

BREPOLS

THE VIKING AGE AS A PERIOD
OF RELIGIOUS TRANSFORMATION

STUDIES IN VIKING AND MEDIEVAL SCANDINAVIA

General Editors

Judy Quinn, Stefan Brink, and John Hines

Volume 2

THE VIKING AGE AS A PERIOD OF RELIGIOUS TRANSFORMATION

The Christianization of Norway from
AD 560–1150/1200

by

Sæbjørg Walaker Nordeide
University of Bergen



BREPOLS

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

Nordeide, Saebjorg Walaker.

The Viking Age as a period of religious transformation: the Christianisation of Norway from AD 560 – 1150/1200. – (Studies in Viking and medieval Scandinavia ; v. 2)

1. Norway – Church history. 2. Church history – Middle Ages, 600–1500. 3. Vikings – Religion. 4. Archaeology and religion – Norway. 5. Norway – Antiquities.

I. Title II. Series

274.8'103-dc23

ISBN-13: 9782503534800

© 2011, Brepols Publishers n.v., Turnhout, Belgium

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior permission of the publisher.

D/2011/0095/179
ISBN: 978-2-503-53480-0

Printed on acid-free paper

CONTENTS

Preface	vii
List of Abbreviations	xi
List of Illustrations	xiii

Part I: Scholarship on the Christianization of Norway

1. Scholarship on the Christianization of Norway: An Introduction	3
2. Religion: Action and Belief	35
3. The Christianization Process: An Overview	57

Part II: Analytical Results

4. The Christianization Process from a Regional Perspective	91
5. A Perspective Across Norway	235

Part III: Cult(ural) Change: From Norse to Christian Cult

6. Interpreting the Evidence: The Process of Christianization in Norway	287
7. Conclusion	319

Appendix	327
Glossary of Terms	365
Bibliography	367
Index	387

PREFACE

Religion is of fundamental value for religious individuals, encompassing most people in past communities, and great proportions of archaeological sources from prehistory are also the result of religious cult. The establishment of Christianity by the turn of the second millennium AD is also key to understanding multiple processes of the time. In spite of this religion was almost non-existent in Scandinavian archaeological literature during several decades in the late twentieth century. The situation is very much improved in the twenty-first century, but beyond Fridtjov Birkeli's work in the 1970s on monumental stone crosses, archaeological material in Norway has so far rarely played an important role in any major, systematic research involving religious studies. It is thus not straightforward to write a book like this. Lacking access to most of the material in databases on the internet, the basic books presenting the material since the time of Jan Petersen, A. W. Brøgger, and Haakon Shetelig are sadly missing. Many readers will feel the lack of overview of the relevant archaeological material while reading this book. However, overwhelming quantities, great variations, and old records explain why it is just not possible to present all the material the way it deserves in this book. Nor is it possible to argue in detail for which material is included and which is left out. This would lead to endless commentaries. However, this book is an attempt to contribute to the demonstration of this material's great potential by addressing questions of importance for the history of religion and Norway.

The main manuscript was finished in 2008 and since then only editing and minor additions have been added. I was given the opportunity to write this book by receiving a postdoctoral fellowship from the University of Bergen in 2003 at the Centre for Medieval Studies (CMS). This represented a pleasant opportunity to study what I had wished to study more sincerely since I was a student: the

Christianization process around the year 1000. I am most grateful to my colleagues at CMS who entrusted me with this work. The project was part of the Religion project at CMS, and during my first years I was also involved in Nora Berend's project, *Christianization and the Rise of Christian Monarchy: Scandinavia, Central Europe and Rus' c. 900-1200*, based in Cambridge. This was a most rewarding involvement for me, learning about information in basic written sources concerning Christianization in relevant polities in Europe. Since 2005 I have also been part of the Religion Team of the Nordic Centre for Medieval Studies, directed by Torstein Jørgensen and Kurt Villads Jensen. In all these teams we have experienced comprehensive and relevant seminars with many good discussions, in a friendly and professional atmosphere. It has meant a lot to me to participate in these projects, in terms of information, encouragement, and inspiration.

During my daily work I have been supported by good friends and colleagues, and I have enjoyed many good discussions in my work milieus in Trondheim and Bergen, commuting between the two Universities for three years. The former Centre for Medieval Studies, Norwegian university of Science and Technology (NTNU) in Trondheim, provided me with an office in the Archbishop's Palace during my stays in Trondheim for two years while I was commuting. It was a pleasure to have this opportunity, for which I am most grateful. The university libraries in Trondheim and Bergen have provided me with the necessary books. Bergen Museum, the Vitenskapsmuseet, NTNU, Trondheim and Historical Museum, University of Oslo have provided me with access to the archaeological material and electronic records. In particular I am grateful to Sonja Innselset at Bergen Museum, Merethe Desirée Nævdal and Ingrid Landmark at Historical Museum in Oslo, and Geir Grønnesby, Anne Haug, and Ole Bjørn Pedersen at the Vitenskapsmuseet in Trondheim. Jan Erik G. Eriksson, Directorate for Cultural Heritage, and Gro Edvardsen, Norwegian Institute for Cultural Heritage Research (NIKU), were very helpful in collecting data in Tønsberg and discussing the interpretations there. In 2007 I visited Institute für Ur- und Frühgeschichte at Christian-Albrechts-Universität, Kiel, where I had the opportunity to use the office and libraries for a couple of weeks. I am most grateful to Ulrich Müller and Michael Müller-Wille for discussions and help, making my stay both pleasant and productive. In June 2009 I spent three wonderful days with Brit Solli in Romsdalen, during which stay she shared with me some of her knowledge about this region, which has proved to be so important for my studies. This event among others led to the discovery of two monumental stone crosses in a region where none of the kind was known before.

Oddmun Farbregd and Ole Egil Eide have both given me access to their notes and manuscripts concerning important excavations, and have openly and willingly discussed their results with me. Steinar Gulliksen, NTNU, has been an important aid in my efforts to date the material. Several of my colleagues have taken on the important burden to read my manuscript. I would sincerely thank Else Johansen Kleppe, Jenny Rita Næss, Torstein Jørgensen, and Sverre Bagge for reading and commenting on the manuscript. Discussions with these colleagues have been most inspiring and useful. They have greatly improved the quality of my work, but they are not to blame for any mistakes or failures on my part. Jena Habegger-Conti and Eleanor Rosamund Barraclough have done a great job in improving my English and my manuscript in general.

I thank Stefan Brink, John Hines, and the anonymous referee at Brepols for giving me useful comments in the editing phase.

I would like to express my utmost appreciation to my husband Bjørn Åge for continuous support and for following me on my move to Bergen. Without his support, I would not have been able to do this project at all.

Last, but not least, I would like to give some thought to the people of the past, whose lives and actions make my working hours so exciting and rewarding. I guess, however, we should be happy they did not know future actions regarding traces they left behind. What we see as sources from the past were for them results of the most sacred of actions which should not be disturbed. I hope I have treated them with adequate respect.

Sæbjørg Walaker Nordeide
Bergen 2011

ABBREVIATIONS

- DGK *Danmarks Gamle Købstadslovgivning*, ed. by Erik Kroman, III: *Danske sprog- og litteraturselskab* (København: Rosenkilde og Bagger, 1955).
- DN *Diplomatarium Norvegicum*. Reference is given by volume and number of letter.)

ILLUSTRATIONS

Figures

Figure 1, p. 39. The 'Odin stone' — a cross slab from Hustad Church, Nord-Trøndelag. Photo: S. W. Nordeide.

Figure 2, p. 61. *Yggdrasil*, as pictured by Gro Mandt and the illustrator Ellinor Moldeklev Hoff (Mandt 1996: 36). Reproduced by the permission of Mandt and Hoff.

Figure 3, p. 106. The possible cult place at Hove, Åsen in Nord-Trøndelag (Farbregd 1986a). Reproduced by the permission of Farbregd.

Figure 4, p. 110. Excavation site in Mære church with oldest graves (Lidén 1969: 10).

Figure 5, p. 114. Christian graves at Hernes, indicated by the sites from 1915 and 1984, after Farbregd 1986: 38. Reproduced by the permission of Farbregd.

Figure 6, p. 119. Crucifixes found in Trondheim, in a hoard dated post-1035. Photo: Per Fredriksen, Vitenskapsmuseet, Trondheim. Photo courtesy of Vitenskapsmuseet.

Figure 7, p. 122. Some symbols of uncertain meaning, from the artefacts listed in Table 5.

Figure 8a, p. 134. Reliquary (l= 11.5 cm) (Photo: Per Fredriksen, Vitenskapsmuseet). Reproduced with permission of Vitenskapsmuseet.

Figure 8b, p. 134. Hanging bowl (d= 35 cm) (Photo: Bruce Sampson, Vitenskapsmuseet). Reproduced with permission of Vitenskapsmuseet.

Figure 8c, p. 134. Decoration from an abbot's or bishop's staff ($d = 3.7$ cm) from a tenth-century grave at Setnes (Marstrander 1963). Reproduced with permission of Vitenskapsmuseet.

Figure 9, p. 138. Rauma split into seven different geographical units. Drawing: Gørill Skaale Johansen.

Figure 10, p. 141. Early Christian cemeteries at Veøy. Drawing: Brit Solli in Solli 1996: 130. Reproduced with the permission of Solli.

Figure 11, p. 142. Cemetery no. 2, from the west. Photo: S. W. Nordeide.

Figure 12, p. 148. The cemetery at Villa, overlooking the fjord and the central valley on the other side. Photo: S. W. Nordeide.

Figure 13, p. 149. Christian cemetery at Kirkebakken, Villa in Tresfjord. Drawing: O. L. Hoem 1932.

Figure 14, p. 158. The Kvalsund ship. Plan (top) and section (Shetelig and Johannessen 1929: 28). Courtesy Bergen Museum.

Figure 15, p. 205. Cemetery and cult building at Gulli, Vestfold (Gjerpe 2005: 147). Illustration courtesy of Lars Erik Gjerpe.

Figure 16, p. 235. Thor's hammer from Verdal. Bergen Museum. Photo courtesy of the Fotoarkivet, Bergen Museum.

Figure 17, p. 237. A possible Thor's hammer or a cross pendent from Tråen, Rollag, Oslo, Kulturhistorisk Museum, University of Oslo. Photo: Åse Kari Hammer. Courtesy of the Kulturhistorisk Museum.

Figure 18, p. 243. High cross from Rol, Inderøya in Nord-Trøndelag. Photo and reconstruction drawing: S. W. Nordeide.

Figure 19, p. 267. Gabrielsen's types of stone crosses in western Norway, with equal categories of this volume in brackets (after Gabrielsen 2002: 25).

Figure 20, p. 270. Typical stone crosses for eastern Norway: The one to the *left* is from Hedrum in Vestfold (from Lange 1955); the one to the *right* is from Vågå in Oppland. Photo: Mari Elise Bergli.

Figure 21, p. 271. Types of stone cross from western Norway: two newly discovered crosses from Kors cemetery at Flatmark in Rauma, Romsdalen. Photo: S. W. Nordeide.

Figure 22, p. 275. The cross slab from Kuli, with runic inscription (Liestøl 1957).
 Courtesy Riksarkivet.

Graphs

Graph 1, p. 31. Number of graves selected for the analyses, as a total and per period for the various municipalities.

Graph 2, p. 92. Categories of grave goods represented in Snåsa at various times.

Graph 3, p. 93. Grave forms and burial rites in the late Iron Age in Snåsa.

Graph 4, p. 98. Categories of grave goods per period in the municipality of Frosta.

Graph 5, p. 99. Characteristics of the burial sites at Frosta.

Graph 6, p. 101. Grave goods per period at Rissa.

Graph 7, p. 102. Recognized features at the funeral sites in Rissa.

Graph 8, p. 130. Grave goods per period at Tingvoll.

Graph 9, p. 131. Recognized features at the funeral sites at Tingvoll.

Graph 10, p. 133. Grave goods per period in Rauma.

Graph 11, p. 137. Late Iron Age burial rituals in Rauma.

Graph 12, p. 139. Burial rite characteristics in the various parts of Rauma.

Graph 13, p. 144. The OxCal graphics of the results in Table 6.

Graph 14, p. 155. Grave goods from Herøy and Selje.

Graph 15, p. 156. Characteristics of the burial rite and grave forms in the municipalities Herøy and Selje.

Graph 16, p. 161. Grave goods at various times in Gulen.

Graph 17, p. 163. Burial rite and grave forms in Gulen.

Graph 18, p. 167. Different types of grave goods in the various periods in Jølster.

Graph 19, p. 168. Burial rite and grave forms in Jølster.

Graph 20, p. 175. Categories of grave goods per period in Farsund.

Graph 21, p. 176. Traces of burial rite and grave forms recorded in Farsund.

Graph 22, p. 178. Types of grave goods per period in Valle.

Graph 23, p. 180. Traced elements of burial rituals and grave forms in Valle.

Graph 24, p. 181. Categories of grave goods found from various periods in Birkenes.

Graph 25, p. 182. Burial rituals and grave forms in Birkenes.

Graph 26, p. 183. Traces of burial rites and grave forms in Grimstad at various times.

Graph 27, p. 185. Various types of grave goods from different periods in Grimstad.

Graph 28, p. 194. Types of grave goods per period in Bø.

Graph 29, p. 195. Traces of burial rite and grave forms in Bø.

Graph 30, p. 198. Types of grave goods, grave forms, and burial rites found in Rollag.

Graph 31, p. 214. The position of the arms for those skeletons at St Clement's for which it was possible to determine on the basis of excavation and preservation (Nordeide and Gulliksen 2007).

Graph 32, p. 219. Number of types of grave goods in Ullensaker, per period.

Graph 33, p. 221. Elements of the burial rite and grave forms traced in Ullensaker.

Graph 34, p. 224. Grave goods in Ringebru and Sør-Fron.

Graph 35, p. 226. Burial rite and grave forms in Ringebru and Sør-Fron.

Graph 36, p. 229. Grave goods in Vang.

Graph 37, p. 230. Traces of burial rite and grave forms in Vang.

Graph 38, p. 231. Grave goods from Lom.

Graph 39, p. 232. Traces of burial rite and grave forms at Lom.

Graph 40, p. 247. Artefacts possibly signalling contact with people outside the community. An area that lacks such evidence has been left out from this figure.

Graph 41, p. 254. Grave forms observed in the selected municipalities in the Merovingian period.

Graph 42, p. 255. Grave forms observed in the selected area in the Viking period.

Graph 43, p. 258. Cremations or inhumations during the Merovingian period.

Graph 44, p. 259. Cremations and inhumations during the Viking period.

Graph 45, p. 260. Alignment of the grave in various periods.

Graph 46, p. 261. The relationship between alignment and other characteristics of the graves.

Graph 47, p. 264. The relationship between graves dominated by jewellery (female), weapons (male), and double graves in the selected municipalities calculated in percentages for each municipality.

Graph 48, p. 266. The distribution of stone crosses and cross slabs in various counties.

Maps

Map 1, p. 27. Regions (*fylke*) of southern Norway and selected municipalities (*kommuner*; shaded, names in *Italics*) for the non-Christian material.

Map 2, p. 29. Medieval towns in Norway. Drawing: Ellinor Moldeklev Hoff.

Map 3, p. 92. The Trøndelag region. Names of municipalities in bold.

Map 4, p. 118. Medieval Trondheim with ecclesiastical institutions related to streets and shoreline from *c.* AD 1000. Folkebibliotekstomten is located on the peninsula by the Franciscan monastery (after Nordeide 1997b: 55).

Map 5, p. 127. The region Nord-Møre, Romsdal, and Borgund at Sunnmøre.

Map 6, p. 153. Herøy at Sunnmøre and the coast of Sogn og Fjordane.

Map 7, p. 165. Inner parts of Sogn og Fjordane.

Map 8, p. 173. Agder.

Map 9, p. 192. 'Viken', the Oslofjord region.

Map 10, p. 218. Inland and valleys in eastern Norway.

Map 11, p. 240. Distribution of Thor's hammer objects and place names indicating Thor cult activity.

Map 12, p. 250. Bog finds of boats/boat parts from the Iron Age in Norway.

Map 13, p. 269. The geographic distribution of various cross monuments.

Map 14, p. 308. Evidence from Table 13 and Table 14 in relation to medieval towns and central places in Norway (Nordeide 2010). Dotted lines: latest Norse cult; unbroken lines: earliest Christian cult.

Tables

Table 1, p. 47. The average number of object types in the graves in the selected areas.

Table 2, p. 84. Earliest coins found under church floors or at the site of Christian churches and graves (based on Skaare 1976, Skaare 1978, Skre 1987: 60).

Table 3, p. 86. Presentation of the earliest possible years for construction based on dendrochronological dates of pine from early churches. Information based on Thun 2002.

Table 4, p. 115. Radiocarbon dates of Christian graves at Hernes, Frosta.

Table 5, p. 120. Possible Christian crosses and crucifixes recorded at Folkebibliotekstomten in Trondheim.

Table 6, p. 143. Radiocarbon dates from the two enclosures at Veøy (after Solli 1996).

Table 7, p. 196. Calibrated (MASCA) radiocarbon dates from the site of the church at Bø (Skre 1987: 62–63).

Table 8, p. 202. Radiocarbon date of the earliest graves near St Peter's, Tønsberg (after Brendalsmo 1989: 25).

Table 9, p. 211. New and previous radiocarbon dates from the graves at St Clement's in Oslo. Previous results are shaded. From Nordeide and Gulliksen 2007: 14.

Table 10, p. 212. Number of skeletons for which it has been possible to analyse the sex and age from Phase 1 and 2 at St Clement's, according to Nordeide and Gulliksen 2007.

Table 11, p. 236. Finds of Thor's hammers in Norway. Gender is determined on the basis of objects, not according to osteological analysis.

Table 12, p. 245. The number of graves with various types of grave goods for each municipality in the Merovingian (MVP) and Viking Period (VP).

Table 13, p. 280. The latest reliably dated non-Christian graves/Norse cult in the selected material.

Table 14, p. 283. The earliest dated traces of Christian cult activity (all ^{14}C results are calibrated by 68 per cent).

Part I

Scholarship on the Christianization of Norway

SCHOLARSHIP ON THE CHRISTIANIZATION OF NORWAY: AN INTRODUCTION

By the time the Christian Church reached Norway in around AD 1000, it was a well-developed, international organization that encompassed a wide spectrum of activities extending far beyond theological doctrines and personal religious beliefs. The process of Christianization not only involved religious transformations but also social, cultural, and even technological developments. Nevertheless, the study of the process of Christianization is first and foremost the study of a universal religion trying to conquer areas previously dominated by other belief systems, by forcing or otherwise persuading the people in the area to convert. This study presented in this volume will concentrate on the Christianization of Norway around AD 1000. The term *conversion* encompasses the concept of deeply felt, personal convictions that are impossible to prove based on traditional historical sources alone, but if previously unexamined sources are brought into the analysis, it should be possible to make some progress in this area.

The history of early medieval Norway has been studied and discussed by scholars from various fields down many centuries. In the beginning the topic was essentially of interest to historians who based their analyses on documentary sources, but later eras saw an increasing participation from those in academic disciplines such as theology, archaeology, and the history of religion. The character and content of the documentary sources have generally encouraged a focus on the role of individuals in historical processes such as state formation, particularly kings (both in general terms and with specific reference to key figures). This aspect has also been a consideration in the study of the Christianization process in Norway. There is, however, a problem in that documentary sources such as the sagas were created — or at least written down — several centuries later than the events described, by Christian authors such as Snorri Sturluson. As a consequence, the

reliability of the written sources as historical evidence for this early period is weak (for a discussion, see Bagge 1991: 8–11). In spite of this, and partly due to the lack of other contemporary sources available, documentary sources are repeatedly used by scholars studying this period as a means to explore the early medieval history of Norway.

It is known that various sections of the Norwegian population were converted at different times, but it is not always clear whether it was the Latin or Greek Church that exerted the greatest influence. It appears that elements of the Saami population were influenced by the Greek Church in particular, while the majority of other people in Norway were Christianized by the Latin Church. Furthermore, the Saami people in the north were generally converted later than in the south; most of them in the late-medieval, post-Reformation period (see, for instance, Hansen and Olsen 2004, Mundal 2007). This introduces additional critical aspects to our understanding of the term *Christianization* for, as William Kilbride points out,

the internal logic of Christianization assumes the existence of an ahistorical standard of Christianity, a standard that is an entirely modern construct. (Kilbride 2000: 3)

However, given the quality of the sources from early medieval Norway, this is probably not a very relevant problem to the study of the Christianization process. In the case of this particular historical period and area, a more valid question is the nature of society's cultural, social, and religious affinities with Christianity in any form. Consequently, the terms *Christendom* and *Christian Church* will be used in very general terms throughout this volume regarding matters of Christian theology and organization.

When the Centre for Medieval Studies (CMS) was established at the University of Bergen, the topic of Christianization was firmly on the agenda. This presented me with the ideal opportunity to study a question that had been discussed repeatedly in relation to the history of urbanization: in terms of the historical development of towns in Norway, what was the relationship between the arrival of the Church and the roles played by royal figures and other individuals? Having worked in the field of medieval urban archaeology in Norway for two decades, I had become aware of a need to improve the understanding of this issue by establishing a firmer chronology for the key events of this period, and thereby advancing scholarly knowledge of the early medieval period in Norway (see also Nordeide 1999). This is the central concern of the present study.

Chronological Conventions

Throughout this book I will follow the Norwegian chronological system for periods followed in Norway and more or less across Scandinavia. The periods which elsewhere are known as the Merovingian period (c. 560–800) and the Viking Age (c. 800–1030/1050) constitute in Scandinavia the late Iron Age, while the Middle Ages date from around 1030/1050 until 1536/37. The term *early medieval* will thus refer to the period around the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The term *high medieval* is synonymous with the thirteenth century and the first half of the fourteenth century; while the *late medieval* period dates from around 1350 onwards.

History and Background

In 1814, Norway dissolved its union with Denmark and joined forces with Sweden, a political development that formed the backdrop to the creation of the Norwegian Constitution. In this period there was a particular focus on the concept of the ‘nation’ and the roles played by various countries surrounding Norway throughout the course of Norwegian history. The Viking Age and the early medieval period were regarded as the most glorious in the history of Norway, the former characterized by an independent, proud polity of heroes as described in the sagas, while the latter was generally held in high esteem by the historians of the time. Nevertheless, Norway was now Lutheran, so a common Christian faith was emphasized rather than attention being drawn to the Catholic Church of the Middle Ages (Bagge 2005a).

The Saami people have often been neglected in previous studies of the Christianization process in Norway. Most of them were converted much later than the rest of the country’s population, and they are rarely mentioned in the relevant literature. The discussion that follows should therefore be considered as an analysis of the Christianization of southern and central Norway only, for it does not include the Saami conversion.

Early research in this field was based predominantly on accounts from the sagas. In the nineteenth century, one of the earliest scholars interested in the Christianization of Norway was the historian Peter Andreas Munch (1810–63). Munch argued that the Oslofjord region (Viken) was Christianized from Denmark/Germany, while the rest of the country was Christianized from England (Munch 1851). Elsewhere in early scholarship, Rudolf Keyser (1803–64) also adopted a nationalistic view of Norwegian history, in which he emphasized the role of the

king and the Church. Keyser was actually Munch's teacher, but he published his analysis of the process of Christianization later than Munch, probably as a response to his pupil's work (Myking 2001: 14–17). In Keyser's opinion, Sweden and Denmark were Christianized from Germany by the archbishopric of Hamburg-Bremen, but Hamburg-Bremen's attempt to Christianize Norway did not succeed; instead the population was Christianized from England (Keyser 1856–58, I: 31–33). It was Keyser's opinion that the process of Christianization was completed over a thirty-five-year period during the reigns of the missionary kings Olaf Tryggvason (*Óláfr Tryggvason*) and Olaf Haraldsson (*Óláfr inn helgi Haraldsson*) (Keyser 1856–58, I: 117).

The German legal historian Konrad von Maurer (1823–1902) presented a hypothesis regarding the organization of the early Church, which he saw as being based on a model employed by the pre-existing Norse religion. This was organized according to regions, each with their own temple — *hov* — and with the chieftains assuming a priestly role. Even if Maurer later abandoned this theory (Myking 2001: 36), others found inspiration in his ideas, which were elaborated upon and taken in a new direction by the historian Johan Ernst Welhaven Sars (1835–1917). Sars argued that the old organizational structure of Norway was closely associated with the old religion, but any king who wanted to establish a strong monarchy would have to fight this old organization, and thus the old religion. Consequently, Christianity would have been a potentially important ally in such an endeavour, so that any support for the monarchy meant at the same time support for Christianity (Sars 1873: 220). It was during this period that scholars began to debate whether the Christianization process might have been driven by political rather than religious motivations. However, like Keyser, Sars argued that Norway was Christianized from England, and that the Anglo-Saxon mission was not carried out by force and conquests but rather through a gradual process by which people were persuaded to convert of their own volition. He argued that there was a crisis in the old religion that made this process easier:

Nordmændenes hedenske Religion var efter sit hele Væsen kun lidet skikket til at indgyde nogen særdeles brændende Iver, allermindst kunde den være det paa en Tid, da den maatte siges at have overlevet sig selv og var undergravet paa alle puncter af en ved fremmede religiøse Forestillinger fremkaldt og næret Reflexion. (Sars 1873: 220)

(The pagan religion of the Norwegians was in its character only able to muster a small amount of enthusiasm, not least at a time when it could be considered to have outlived itself, being undermined in all ways by a reflection caused and nourished by foreign religious ideas.)

In the mid-1880s at the University of Kristiania (Oslo), a competition was held between academics based in the faculty of theology. The goal was to answer most successfully the question of what influence was exerted by the Anglo-Saxons upon the Norwegian Church. Even if the competition managed to give the impression of a consensus on the nature and degree of this Anglo-Saxon influence, this was not the case. The historian Absalon Taranger (1858–1939) was the winner of the competition, but was later criticized for his exclusive perspective on this Anglo-Saxon influence based on the work of scholars such as Konrad Maurer, amongst others (Maurer 1893, Myking 2001: 55–57, Taranger 1890). One of Taranger's approaches was to interpret parallels as evidence of influence, particularly by studying the early Christian laws. He saw the introduction of Christian laws as evidence for Christianization, which led him to a conclusion similar to Keyser's: that the conversion happened during the short period under the rule of King Olaf Trygvason and King Olaf Haraldsson (Myking 2001: 130–31).

Relevant research from the early twentieth century can be illustrated by the work of two contemporary scholars. In a hypothesis formulated during his thesis from 1912, the historian Edvard Bull stated that Christianity in the Middle Ages was not a deeply felt conviction, but rather a formality (Bull 1912). However, in his 1914 thesis, the literary historian Fredrik Paasche argued that hitherto the sagas had played too prominent a role in studies into Norse Christianity, and the corresponding religious literature too small a role (Paasche 1948: 30–35). By analysing religious poetry and literature, he found that Christian ideas were adopted from early on in Norway, while also seeing similar trends in architecture (Paasche 1948: 209). The differences between the two scholars can partly be explained by their academic backgrounds: Bull belonged to a materialistic school of thought, while Paasche was influenced by humanistic traditions (Myking 2001: 147).

In the twentieth century, archaeologists also began to take part in the debate, and Håkon Shetelig was among the first to use archaeological sources in the study of Christianization (Shetelig 1912). Shetelig's aim was to explain two apparently contradictory tendencies observed in late Iron Age burial customs, whereby some graves took increasingly simpler forms while others became more elaborate. He saw the simpler burial customs as possible evidence of Christian influences from western Europe, while he interpreted a simultaneous fashion for richer graves — which had been the dominant form during the Viking Age — as evidence of a 'pagan' backlash (Shetelig 1930: 271). When the topic was approached from an archaeological perspective, the various geographic regions of Norway automatically became the focus: for example, the archaeologist and art historian Eivind Engelstad concentrated particularly on the Christianization of eastern Norway (Engelstad

1927, Engelstad 1929). Using evidence from archaeological material (particularly graves and church sites), place names, and cultivated land, he studied the chronology and development of cults and settlements. Engelstad observed a steady decline in Norse burial customs from the beginning of the tenth century to around AD 1000. He found it difficult to date the conversion to Christianity, amongst other reasons because the actual change was difficult to define on the basis of archaeological sources alone. He was, however, convinced that the conversion was gradual, starting with external changes — that is, changes in rituals and ceremonies — and gradually moving towards internal transformations in terms of personal beliefs and religious convictions. Surprisingly, he found the inland area of Valdres to be one of the earliest parts of eastern Norway to be Christianized, but this could be explained by the close contact between this district and the inner parts of Sogn. He presumed that Christianity reached the inner parts of eastern Norway via two main routes: first, from the south via the River Glomma and the Oslofjord, and, second, from the west via Valdres (Engelstad 1929: 375–79).

Similarly, Eva Fett thought that the coastal area of Etne in Hordaland was Christianized earlier than the areas further from the coast due to its ease of access from other countries, although she found only weak evidence to support this theory (Fett 1968). Engelstad and Fett thus agreed upon the idea that new religious impulses came first to the coastal zones and then moved inland, with such impulses originating in the west and spreading slowly east.

Although most of the data supporting these theories came from archaeological sources, the archaeologists also made extensive use of documentary evidence. Both Shetelig and Engelstad used the sagas for this purpose: for instance, Shetelig used these written sources to argue that the Danish king Harald Bluetooth (*Haraldr blátǫnn*)¹ was responsible for the mission in Viken, with the Danish mission maintaining a constant presence in eastern Norway (Shetelig 1930: 242–45). Consequently, he believed, the sons of Eirik and Gunnhild should have had the honour of being called the first missionary kings of Norway.

The earliest period of urbanization in Norway coincides more or less with the time of the conversion, and from early on, scholars maintained that the Christian Church was of central importance to the urbanization of Norway. The first to make a strong link between the Church and urbanization was Bull. He argued that commercial enterprises, royal residences, and administrative processes did not involve a sufficient number of people and activities to satisfy the definition of a town, as had been suggested by previous scholars. Consequently, not before the

¹ *Haraldr blátǫnn* Gormsson in Old Norse and *Harald Blåtand Gormsen* in Danish.

Church had established ecclesiastical institutions there — and bishops' seats in particular — could the settlement be characterized as such (Bull 1918). Following Bull's initiative, subsequent scholars began to view Christianization as an integral part of the background to both state formation and urbanization, linking it to important stages in the development of Norway's social structures. In the later years of the twentieth century, this discussion was extended and incorporated into the hypothesis that the Church, the king and commercial activities all contributed to the process of medieval urbanization (Helle and Nedkvitne 1982: 72–73).

In the second half of the twentieth century, a greater degree of academic pluralism dominated the discussions. Two Lutheran theologians, both supported by archaeological sources, argued that the Christianization process had to have taken longer than the thirty-five years that covered the reigns of King Olaf Trygvason and King Olaf Haraldsson. Carl F. Wisløff found evidence from the date and the meaning of a rune-stone inscription at Kuli to support this contention that Christianity arrived earlier than previously thought, and he advocated a more critical view of the few documentary sources from this time (Wisløff 1966: 55–57). An even more ground-breaking advocacy of this view was the contribution from the bishop and theological historian, Fritjov Birkeli. He begins his book with the following observations:

Det hører med til den arv som Snorre overga det norske folk, at det var Olav Trygvason og Olav den hellige som kristnet Norge. Det fremgår tydelig av hans sagaer om disse to konger. Denne oppfatningen har holdt seg ganske hårdnakket like til i dag. (Birkeli 1973: 7)

(It is part of the inheritance from Snorri to the Norwegian people, that it was Olaf Trygvason and Saint Olaf who Christianized Norway. This is clear in his sagas about these two kings. This opinion has persisted up to the present day.)

Even if most historians since Keyser's time have believed that the process took more than thirty-five years, and in spite of Wisløff's and other earlier contributions, Birkeli felt the need to clarify this position still further. Birkeli's own background was as a missionary from the 'more easily converted, primitive, modern societies of Madagascar', and even there it took fifty to sixty years of intensive missionary activity by many specially trained missionaries before they could start to organize a church (Birkeli 1973: 1–10). Thus, arguing that the conversion phase could not have happened for the whole country as quickly as had been proposed, Birkeli divided the changeover period in Norway into three stages (Birkeli 1973: 8–14).

1. An infiltration period, when Christians tried to infiltrate the culture, until c. 950.

2. A period of missionary activity, c. 950–1030.
3. A period of organization and continuity, during which the Church was organized and established, c. 1030–1153.

Birkeli found that the sources supported his hypothesis, and also concluded that the mission to the area came from the British Isles (Birkeli 1973: 55). His research paid particular attention to the high stone crosses, stones decorated with crosses, and place names that included 'cross' elements (Norwegian: *kross-*, *kors-*), with the high stone crosses considered to be particularly strong indications of the conversion to Christianity. At the same time, however, he was particularly aware of the long tradition of the cross as a symbol in Norway, across thousands of years, and warned generally against automatically interpreting the cross as a Christian symbol, especially during a period of religious change. The cross might symbolize Thor (*Þórr*) or Odin (*Óðinn*) as well as Christ (Birkeli 1973: 26–32).

Since this time, archaeologists have used Birkeli's three phases as a prism for studying the archaeological material, either directly or in a modified form. Christian Keller, for instance, has divided the process of conversion to Christianity into four phases (Keller 1989: 208):

1. A phase of 'cultural missions' (accidental contact with Christian foreigners) and 'missions by words' (foreign missionaries preaching in pagan countries), from the ninth century.
2. A phase of royal missions, partly in the form of 'missions by the sword', from the middle of the tenth century.
3. A phase of royal church administration, that is, when the church was subordinate to the king, from the middle of the eleventh century.
4. A phase of clerical administration, whereby the Church obtained an independent administration, from the middle of the twelfth century.

A gradual conversion could be explained in various ways, either as an incremental process by which Christian ideas were accepted, and/or in terms of a gradual diminishing of old beliefs. The latter is sometimes explained by a crisis in the old religion, as Sars suggested in 1873. In 1970, this view was put forward once again in new terms by the historian Per Sveaas Andersen who argued that there was a crisis in the Norse belief system that led to people putting less trust in the old religion (Andersen 1977: 189). From an archaeological perspective, Per Hernæs postulated a long and peaceful process of religious transformation for Rogaland (Hernæs 1995). More recently, Jörn Staecker has also argued for a longer

conversion period in Scandinavia, although his analysis is concerned chiefly with Sweden and old Denmark. Staecker also put forth the idea of a crisis in the Norse religion, one not capable of succeeding in competition with Christianity (Staecker 1999: 243–44). On the other side of this discussion stands the historian of religion Gro Steinsland, who has asserted that the Christianization process represented an encounter between two vital religions. She regards the king as central to the process, and believes that such a collision of the various factions must have caused many conflicts (Steinsland 2000: 27–31). In her view of the vital role played by the two religions she is supported by the archaeologist Brit Solli, who suggests that the archaeological material does not indicate a crisis in the Norse religion. On the contrary, many graves from the period demonstrate a continuing vitality in the worship of the Norse gods, as evidenced by sites such as the famous ship graves of Oseberg and Gokstad (Solli 2002: 237–38). However, Steinsland has launched the hypothesis that the ideas and rites associated with sacral kingship in the Viking Age were a stepping stone on the path to Christianity. Steinsland based her study of the Norse religion on written sources, but she argues that more archaeological analyses should be undertaken if progress is to be made in this area (Steinsland 2000: 178).

While Birkeli based his analyses on his own experiences as a Norwegian theologian and missionary in twentieth-century Madagascar, Sverre Bagge has opposed his views, drawing his conclusions from his perspective as a medieval historian:

Modern missionaries want to convert the ‘hearts’. Some machine guns, light artillery and other evidence of the missionaries’ technological superiority, plus generous gifts, would probably have resulted in numerous and speedy baptisms. Medieval missionaries had fewer qualms about using similar means, if available to them. Baptism was a sufficient expression of Christianity; they did not worry much about the ‘hearts’. (Bagge 2005a: 123)

Bagge argues that there was a close connection between Christianization and state formation, seeing the missionary kings as central to the process. He does not find any evidence of foreign influences, except for the Danish king Harald Bluetooth’s unsuccessful attempts and the missionary kings who brought priests and missionaries with them from abroad, but these play a subordinate role in the narratives. The missionary kings, Håkon the Good (*Håkon inn góði*) (c. 935–60), Olaf Trygvason (995–1000), and Olaf ‘the Saint’ Haraldsson (*Óláfr inn helgi Haraldsson*) (1015–30) were crucial to the Christianization of Norway (Bagge 2005b). It might therefore be worth considering whether the motivation for Christianization was more political than religious, although Bagge believes that this is not necessarily an important question:

To what extent can we distinguish between religious and political reasons for the conversion? Such a distinction is far less obvious in the Early Middle Ages than today. What is religion and what is politics in a society that had no word for religion and where the conversion was referred to as a 'change in customs' (*siðaskipti*)? (Bagge 2005a)

Thus, because Christianization was associated with state formation and royal power, there may have been differences in the attitudes of the various Scandinavian regions. Some of the geographic information given in the medieval narratives may have been invented, and is therefore not reliable (Bagge 2005b). Yet in later years, the geographical and historical contexts have increasingly become the focus of scholarship, and the most recent picture drawn from archaeological sources is often one of large regional variations in the Norse religion. There are variations in both how long Norse burial traditions continued and in the character of the cults themselves. Such variations should be borne in mind while discussing the Christianization process, if it was gradual or not, how did it proceed, and what were the key catalysts. Such variations have been found by scholars such as Fredrik Svanberg, who has studied burial customs in Viking-Age Skåne, arguing that most of the people in the Viking Age lived independently from the modern national borders of Norway, Sweden, and Denmark, but that historiography has made 'the Vikings' into 'Danes', 'Swedes', and 'Norwegians' (Svanberg 2003: 92–99). Variations are also found when studying the distribution of Thor's hammers and toponyms associated with Thor's cult in Norway, which can only be traced in the southernmost parts of the country (Nordeide 2006). Considerable differences emerge even within Norway, such as those between the northern Saami and the Norse (see, for instance, Schanche 2000). In light of these difficulties, one of the important results from the large research project in Sweden entitled 'Old Norse Religion' is formulated as follows:

By switching the focus from myth to rite it has become highly obvious that pre-Christian Norse religion is not a uniform or stable category. Instead there were profound chronological, regional, and social differences in pre-Christian religion practice in Scandinavia. The archaeological traces of rites are in fact so different in time and place that one can seriously question the term 'Norse paganism'. Instead a picture emerges above all of regional rites. Social differences in rites can likewise be detected, since certain rituals, and also sacral place-names, seem to be connected to a small but politically important aristocracy, with contacts all over Scandinavia and continental Europe. (Andrén, Jennbert, and Raudvere 2006: 13–14)

Archaeological research concerning the Christianization process has, since the later part of the twentieth century, suffered from the fact that Norwegian archaeology has been divided into categories such as prehistoric/rural and

medieval/urban. Monuments of cultural heritage dated to the period of religious transition were likely to have been dated on the basis of presumptions regarding which phenomena belonged to the Viking period and which belonged to the medieval period. A Christian grave would have been dated automatically to the medieval period, and a burial mound to the prehistoric period. This has resulted in circular arguments such as: 'During the Viking period people were pagan, and because the grave is pagan, it must be prehistoric'. For example, Lars Forseth has discussed whether the end of the Viking Age and the beginning of the medieval period should be dated to 1030 (the date of the Battle of Stiklestad), 1050, or later, because some of the weapons and tools in graves could be later than 1050, which means that (non-Christian) graves could be later than 1050 (Forseth 1993: 107). In other words, the general interpretation has been that the Viking Age lasted as long as non-Christian graves persisted. Arne Skjølsvold gave the following reasoning in 1951:

Som en ser gir ingen av oldsakene grunnlag for en nøyaktig datering av funnet. Kleberkaret har som før nevnt en form som er svært vanlig i vikingetiden, men den går også ned i middelalderen. Men at oldsakene skulle gå ned i middelalder er vel temmelig usannsynlig all den tid de skriver seg fra en gravhaug i et strøk av vårt land som svært tidlig ble påvirket av kristen gravskikk. På den annen side skulle støpeformen til Torshammere etter all sannsynlighet kunne datere funnet til den senere del av vikingtiden (Skjølsvold 1951: 48).

(As one can see, none of the objects provide a proper base for an accurate dating. The soapstone vessel has, as was previously mentioned, a design that is very common during the Viking period, but it continues into the medieval period as well. However, it is rather unlikely that the objects are medieval, since they are found in a burial mound in a part of our country that was influenced by Christianity from very early on. On the other hand, the mould for Thor's hammer should probably date the find to a later part of the Viking period.)

It is now clear that this approach makes for an insecure chronology and ambiguous interpretations of the Christianization process in Norway around AD 1000.

The traditional cultural-historical approach adopted by international archaeology produced the tendency to see distribution patterns as a passive reflection of static cultural units — either ethnic or religious — where continuity in a distribution pattern could be interpreted as a stability of people and traditions. In more recent times we see the results of a more critical, post-processual approach where material culture is considered to be an active part of society. Rites for the dead are interpreted as something used by the living to actively create and form identity. Graves are considered to be part of the context of action, and as such should be seen as being relative, changeable, and contingent (Dickinson 2002). Much weight is placed

on meaning and symbolism. As a result we have new information to add to our knowledge of burial traditions and other kinds of religious cult in general, and in light of this, the Christianization process in particular has been singled out for special attention in recent years (see, for instance, Berend 2007a, Carver 2003, Müller-Wille 1997, Padberg 2006). Similarly, in the Nordic countries interdisciplinary projects focusing on religion and Christianization have taken place, such as 'Vägar till Midgård' and 'Sveriges kristnande' in Sweden (Andrén, Jennbert, and Raudvere 2006, Nilsson 1996b, Raudvere, Andrén, and Jennbert 2005) and the Norwegian project 'The Christianization of Norway' at the Centre for Viking and Medieval Studies at the University of Oslo (Sigurdsson, Myking, and Rindal 2004).

Christianity and Christianization, as I previously mentioned, is also one of the central research themes at the Centre for Medieval Studies at the University of Bergen, and in 2003–07 the centre was involved in an interdisciplinary and international project entitled 'Christianization and the Rise of the Christian Monarchy'. Through this project we collected data from European polities north of the former Roman border. It turned out that most of the polities were Christianized at roughly the same time, with the rise of the monarchy taking place in the same period. The same impulses in the fields of writing, legislation, minting, and Latin, for example, were provided for each country in this area at the time of conversion, but the local socio-economic contexts, conditions, and needs differed, affecting how these impulses were followed up by the rulers (Berend 2007b: 30). The real turning point for the whole area was found to be the conversion of the ruler, although there may have been individual, voluntary conversions before this (Berend 2007b: 38). Sources for the old religion in Scandinavia need to be analysed carefully because each kind of source represents only fragments of evidence, often conflicting. For instance, when examining the pantheon of Norse gods, place names paint a different picture of the local importance of gods in comparison to the narrative sources (Berend 2007b: 10).

This survey of the history of research demonstrates that the discussions about Christianization from early on involved major aspects of the history of Norway, including religion, social organization, urbanization, and state formation. But just as all aspects of life were eventually ascribed Christian connotations, the converse is also true: it is not possible to discuss the conversion as a purely religious process, for it can also be studied from social, cultural, economic, and even technological perspectives. The origins of the impulses for Christianization have been extensively discussed and identified as coming from various directions, predominately from the German/Danish and Anglo-Saxon territories. The Latin Church has been

identified as the most important, although the Greek Church may have had some influence in the north. The conversion of the ruler as representative of the 'official' conversion signified an important political act, and the conversion of the people was to a large extent a result of this event and not due to a missionary and voluntary process. Scholarship has questioned the few and unreliable documentary sources from this early period, highlighting their opposition to archaeological and toponymic sources, and the need for more archaeological analyses has been emphasized.

If we attempt to identify the common strategy that lies behind the conversions of all the polities in northern Europe, the Curia in Rome comes into focus as a centre for international strategies. The view that the conversion of the ruler was a crucial event in the process indicates a top-down system, which could lead to significant regional differences in polities with dramatic physical topographies such as Norway. If Christianization was an official strategy dictated by the ruler, one would also expect great biases in the 'official' documentary records initiated by the rulers. As a result, recent scholarly literature on the Christianization of Norway emphasizes regional variations and differences in results which are based on material culture to those based on documentary sources.

Terminology Applied

This book will be based mainly on archaeological sources, which means that my analysis depends on past events that have left some physical trace in the landscape. Religious practice is normally called *cultus*, which is a Latin term for worship, and *cult* is used in the sense of being synonymous with *rite* — an action indicating a belief in a divine ruling power, the exercise or practice of rites or observances implying this, or the service and adoration of God (Saler 2000: 22). In this book *rite* and *cult* will cover the concept of religious practice in its broadest sense.

The terminology used in the literature on Christianization is not always self-evident, and therefore a discussion is necessary in order to establish the terms that will be employed throughout my analysis. As stated in earlier paragraphs, *Christianity* in itself is a problematic standard, but even more troublesome are the terms used to describe the societies before their conversion. Words like *heathen* and *pagan* are often applied, but this leads to a reduction of the variety of non-Christian belief systems to one system. There is no concise word known for the old religion(s) in this area. The word *heiðinn dómr* (Heathendom) is sometimes used in medieval sources, but this can only be regarded as a counterpart to *kristinn dómr* (Christianity), and does not refer to any particular religion. The word *pagan*

is a Christian characterization of people who do not believe in Christ, and was originally applied to rural people as a contrast to the urban Christians. *Heathen* is the Norse equivalent of 'pagan' (Steinsland 2005: 13–14). These words often have negative connotations, but a description of religious matters should be kept free from judgements; consequently, terms employed by people from one religious group to characterize another one should generally be avoided (Widengren 1971: 7).

Even if it was several hundred years before Christianity arrived in the northern part of Europe and even though it was greatly transformed over the years, Christianity is close to 2000 years old, and Christianity and its associated religious practices have differed from town to town and from church to church over the centuries. For instance, during some of the period in focus here (850–1150), Christians in southern Italy were unconcerned as to whether their own style of Christianity was closer to the Latin or Greek model (Ramseyer 2006: 109, 193). Christianity was approximately 800–1000 years old when it reached Norway, but we do not know whether Christendom at the time of the conversion of the Norwegian polity should be regarded as being later than other religion(s) that existed there at that time. In this respect it would be misleading to characterize the time before the establishment of the Christian Church as pre-Christian, which would point to a period 2000 years ago. On a local level, the term *pre-Christian* also gives the impression of an evolutionary development from a time before anyone was Christian in the region to a time when everyone was, which is an oversimplification of the situation, for the process of conversion from a mainly non-Christian polity to a predominantly Christian has always been an ongoing one (see Kilbride 2000, Saler 2000). Therefore in Norway as in other countries the term *pre-Christian* would create a false impression of religious life in Norway over the past two millennia. Nor are the words *Nordic* or *Norwegian* satisfactory alternatives: *Nordic* is too broad, while *Norwegian* places too much emphasis on the borders of the national state. Consequently, I prefer to use the word *non-Christian* rather than *pagan* or *heathen* to describe all people who were not Christian, except when the word is used as a quotation and therefore placed in quotation marks. Similarly, I will use the words *Norse* and *Saami* for non-Christian people in the region in order to indicate their religious–ethnic affiliation, for even if the term *Norse* pertains to the old language that was spoken rather than the religion itself, it still applies to the western Nordic countries — that is, Norway and Iceland — with which this volume is concerned predominantly (Steinsland 2005: 12). However, one has to be aware of the fact that words like *Norse* and *Saami* may cover a great variety of belief systems both in time and space, both for the Saami and the Norse religion.

The word *religion* probably derives from the Latin *religio*, and there are several opinions as to the original meaning of the word which could, for instance, refer to a doubt or scruple of any kind (Saler 2000: 64–68). A religious person, according to this meaning of the word, would be a scrupulous person, but its connotations have since changed, and although the meaning may vary from person to person, our modern understanding of it refers primarily to a system of beliefs. Peter Berger describes *religion* as being in essence ‘the human enterprise by which a sacred cosmos is established’ (Berger 1973: 34). Yet the concept of religion has been criticized during recent years: *religion* as a construction of a *whole* universe, consisting of the imagination of the world, the creation of the world, a theology and eschatology is mainly suited for describing the Middle Eastern religions of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. The term *religion* is problematic for other systems of beliefs, which is why Benson Saler advises us to borrow selectively from native categories and experiment with them as trans-cultural tools. This requires ‘as profound an appreciation as possible of the relevant cultural contexts and uses of those categories among the people who support them’ (Saler 2000: 263).

Saler’s advice sounds reasonable, but again, for the purpose of this study it is not viable. What is normally referred to as *Norse religion* is regarded as something based more on practical action than on myth telling, and an old Norse word for *religion* is not known. The most relevant word known to us seems to be *siðr* — which means something like traditional behaviour (*skikk*) — but the less common word *trú* (belief) also exists. At the time of conversion religion is called *for siðr* (the old tradition) versus *nýr siðr* (the new tradition). These words indicate that it was the actions that mattered more than their meanings, but the sacred was more integrated in daily life in the Viking Age than in later periods, and intellectual aspects were probably included in the concept as well as physical actions. The conversion is described as a *siðaskipti* (a change of traditions, habits) (Steinsland 2005: 267–68). It is quite possible that this is the most appropriate word to use for the Norse situation, but as it is not possible to conduct interviews with people living in those times, I am not in a position to take advantage of Saler’s advice, as quoted above. Given the quality of the written sources for the late Iron Age in Norway, they are not able to provide a reliable picture of the complexity of the belief system, nor determine whether any ‘religion’ existed among the Norse people before Christianity. Even if cult was more important than myth telling, we cannot reject the possibility that they had ideas about how the world was created, eschatology, and why and how they should make the right choices and actions. For instance, there were probably some distinct ideas underpinning the burial rites, which would explain why the dead were provided

with grave goods. Differences between a modern, western secular world view and a traditional world view where the religious aspect was more interwoven into daily life should not be underestimated. From this perspective, the *siðr* would have involved sacred aspects as well as secular. However, the *trú* and *siðr* probably did allow for some things being considered to be more sacred than others. In light of this background, I will use the same words, *religion* and *religious*, for the situations in both the Iron Age and the Middle Ages.

Main Objectives

If we accept the history as outlined above, Christianization should be seen as a process that took place over time. We need to know more about *when* Christianity was actually established in Norway and in what order the various elements appeared, first and foremost Christianity, monarchy, and towns. I have underlined the importance of bringing archaeological sources into the picture in order to develop a fuller understanding of its nuances and complexities, and in order to contextualize the sources in both time and space. Not much has been accomplished in this field in the case of Norway, but more electronic records, better dating methods and newly completed post-excavation reports from urban excavations have created a new, improved framework for further analyses. My aim is to observe the first establishment of any kind of Christian cult and organization on Norwegian territory. The cult need not have lasted for centuries, but it should be possible to trace it through archaeological sources.

The primary objective of this work is:

To improve the chronology of the Christianization process in the late Iron Age and the early Middle Ages in Norway based on new analyses of archaeological sources.

Adopting Christianity also meant adopting many related matters relating to organization and technology. The Church as an institution promoted new administrative tools (for instance, taxation, the art of writing, writing tools), new construction technology (including new architecture represented by churches, monasteries, and so on), new construction methods (including building with stone and mortar, stained-glass windows, etc.), new educational structures and methods (such as new schools and styles of academic learning), and advances in music (for instance, new instruments, choral singing, styles of notation, and manuscripts), just to mention some of the main areas of innovation. In particular, the Cistercians imported new cultivation technology. These improvements had

social implications, some of which were more widespread than others. For instance, when the Church organized the construction of buildings, it is quite possible that capable construction workers were imported from Denmark or England (see, for instance, Lidén 2000: 9–15). Because the Church and the king were alone in possession of the required technology and available resources to build stone buildings, ecclesiastical buildings, and royal monuments became even stronger, more efficient symbols of power and authority. Additionally, the art of writing was cheaper, and therefore more people could take part in it, depending on their access to training. However, it is unclear how widespread the adoption of Christian theological ideas was and to what degree people understood its ideas.

The Christianization process had thus changed society on many levels, but there were at least two important factions involved in the process: the Christians themselves and the people who were asked to convert and who were expected to adopt new ideas and to leave others behind. Therefore, the second objective of this study is:

To improve our knowledge of the local population, and at what point they left their former religion behind.

It is beyond the scope of this study to investigate and understand the Norse religion as a whole on the basis of the archaeological sources, but it is necessary to establish a basic understanding in order to be able to separate traces of Christian cult activity from non-Christian cult activity and establish some criteria for categorizing the two. In this respect it is also important to be aware of regional variations. Any traces of religious cult will be considered, but by far the largest group of material known of this kind is graves. Even so, we can rarely be sure of individual conviction on this basis, and there is always a risk that important traces are missing, either because of preservation conditions, excavation methods, or socially regulated behaviour (some parts of the cult may have been forbidden at times due to laws, social rules, and taboos). Thus the remaining traces may not always be what they appear to be. An article from a local newspaper illustrates a similar situation in present-day Norway: it is currently illegal to bury people outside the Christian churchyards, regardless of the religious beliefs of the deceased.

døden er fortsatt monopolisert. Stat og kirke utsteder billetten til vår siste reise. Om vi da ikke velger å bli strødd på det åpne hav eller fra en fjelltopp. Uten jord ingen spor.²

(death is still monopolized. The State and the Church provide us with the ticket for our last journey. Unless we choose to be [cremated and have our ashes] scattered on the open ocean or from a mountaintop. No earth, no traces.)

In spite of Norway's pluralistic contemporary religious society, future archaeologists will believe we were all Christians around the year 2000 if they base their interpretations only on the cemeteries. This is of course a problem for this study as well, as similar regulations are also found in early medieval laws in Norway. The oldest legislations forbid burial and other kinds of cult according to old traditions. For instance, in the Gulathing Codification:

Blot er oss óg forbode; me skal ikkje blota til heiden gud eller til haugar eller horger.
(Robberstad 1969: 44)³

(It is forbidden for us to make sacrifices to heathen gods or to barrows or *horger*)

The Frostating Codification declares that if a person leaves unbaptized from a church appointed with a priest, he should be banished as soon as possible, because everyone in the country should be Christian (Hagland and Sandnes 1994: 18). The fact that the preserved documents with the first Norwegian laws are not as old as the earliest Christian graves indicates that the monopolization of the burial cult was a fact from a certain time, which I believe was contemporary with the time when Christianity became the dominant (or the only legal) religion in the country. From this time onwards, it was not possible to practise old cult activities in public, such as *blot* and burials in tumuli, but this does not mean that the old Norse beliefs were discarded. In this situation the grave material will only indicate when Christianity was established, but not necessarily when other belief systems disappeared. As a result, the main scope of this study of the Christianization process in Norway needs to be rephrased in order to draw attention to the consequences of legislation. Consequently, the third aim of this investigation is:

To establish when non-Christian cults disappeared and when Christianity appeared and eventually took over to become the dominant religion in various parts of southern and central Norway.

² An-Magritt Jensen, 'Hvem eier de døde', *Adresseavisen* (19 February 2005).

³ The meaning of the word *borg* is debated, but some have thought it refers to a cult house in Norse religion (see Chapter 5 in this volume). The manuscripts with the Gulathing Codification are from the twelfth century and later, but are supposed to be of earlier origin (see Robberstad 1969, Introduction).

However, from the perspective of archaeological sources, this must be rephrased again. A more realistic objective is therefore:

To study the earliest features of Christian cult activity and the latest features of non-Christian cult activity that can be traced, documenting the earliest possible date for the existence of a Christian cult and the latest possible date for the existence of non-Christian cults.

How the process was carried out is also of interest; namely, if it was peaceful and gradual or forced and quick. This may also throw some light on the question of whether or not there was a crisis in the local religion that paved the way for Christianization. Therefore another question that will be addressed is:

Was there a gradual change in cult, indicating that the non-Christian cult was gradually adapting to Christian customs?

In order to see if there was a gradual change of cult as a consequence of the observance of Christian rituals, I will have to study the relevant traces of cult from the period prior to the one in which we assume that Christianity was established, to determine if there were any notable changes one way or another. In Norway, this period is known as the Merovingian period (560–800). The Nidaros Archbishopric was founded in Trondheim⁴ in 1152/53, and by this time the Christian organization can be considered to have been well established. This date will thus be the outer limit of the time frame for this study; any obviously later, relevant traces of non-Christian cult will be accounted for.

Consequently, the main period of investigation will be from around AD 560 to around AD 1150/1200.

Selected Material and Methods

The relationship between theory and practice is crucial to the interpretation of the archaeological sources, which in this case will mostly be understood as a result of collective rites. Thus, the focus of the analysis will be on *the rites themselves*, rather than on *individual objects found* at the cult sites.

⁴ Nidaros was an alternative, common name for the city in the early medieval period.

In the case of burial rites, there may have been rites both during on-site preparations and during the actual burial of the body, but also later, such as when ancestor rites were performed. A burial ritual in Norse society consisted of many elements, and thus many parts of the ritual could be changed. Some major parts of the ritual were as follows:

- Preparing the grave, beginning preparations at the burial site.
- Bringing the dead to the site.
- Arranging the body at the burial place:
 - This may have involved providing the dead with grave goods.
 - There may have been some preparation of grave goods, such as the deliberate destruction of artefacts.
- The essential burial rite:
 - This may have included a cremation ritual, taking place either during the day or at night.
- The process of covering the body.
- Possible follow-up rites, including seasonal rituals, ancestors' cults and collective and/or individual rites.

Several of these stages could also involve a ritual meal.

It is not possible to ascertain the full meaning of a ritual from its archaeological traces, but it is possible to group most of the traces of cult into at least three different categories: (a) those following local, non-Christian traditions; (b) those following Christian traditions; and (c) those showing evidence of a systematic change from local traditions to an intruding — in this case, Christian — tradition, beyond the churchyard.

Another important issue that will be addressed in the following analysis will be those traditions that can neither be categorized as Norse/Saami nor as Christian. Based on the three groupings outlined above, knowledge of category (a) is the necessary basis for the study of category (c). The distribution of evidence for (c) is particularly informative for our understanding of the conversion phase: how the process was experienced would have been very different depending on whether both traditions had lived side by side from the very beginning, whether the Christians had lived in isolation, or whether there had been a clear break in the Norse rituals from the point when Christians took over cultic activity. Consequently identifying the character of the religious situation in the community is vital for an understanding of the Christianization process.

When considering the symbolic meaning of an object, the question of *context* will be of decisive importance. When a site is interpreted as Norse, the Norse mythic and ritual context gives the place meaning. If any artefacts with origins in a different religious context happen to be present, such as Christian cult objects or Muslim coins, this does not change the impression of a purely Norse ritual site. Therefore, individual artefacts will not be important for this investigation.

The area known as present-day Norway is a relatively late construction. Many have argued, for instance, that the Oslofjord area of Viken was part of a Danish territory during the Viking period (Schia 1989, Schia 1991: 131–32). The territory ruled by the king of Norway and the archbishop of Nidaros (i.e. Trondheim) varied throughout the medieval period, with borders shifting to the north, south, east, and west (see various chapters in Imsen 2005). In certain periods it was divided into many petty kingdoms, while at other times the king's territory included both the islands to the west and some areas in present-day Sweden. The royal territory was never quite equal to the territory of the Nidaros church province. However, as the management of cultural heritage is bound to modern borders, it is practical to limit this study to the modern borders of Norway. As such, the use of the name 'Norway' will refer to the modern state, but also more generally to the medieval polity in its various forms.

Ideally, I should have based my analyses on well-documented material from the whole of the research area. In reality, however, the quality of the documentation and our knowledge of their chronology may vary considerably, but the selected sources must add something to our knowledge of cult activity in the period *c.* 560–1150/1200. The character of the grave material is the product of both geographical context and cultural action, and the key to understanding these sources lies in the observation and recording of archaeological finds and our ability to understand where they fit in a wider cultural context. The recognition of this fact has been a dominant trend in archaeology during the last few decades. The obvious need for a better understanding of context — regarding both time and space — is now promoting more small-scale studies. Sam Lucy has demonstrated the value of extremely detailed work with well-documented material from two Anglo-Saxon grave fields. Her methods are inductive — building a theory from the smallest pieces of information to synthesis — in contrast to a previous tendency to use a deductive approach (making generalizations from patterns observed over a larger area) (Lucy 1998: 24–26). However, Tania Dickinson has exposed weaknesses in this methodological approach, pointing to some important material that falls just beyond Lucy's area of research. Because of the high level of detail in Lucy's studies, she has missed some important material close to her research area

that would have had implications for her interpretations. Because Anglo-Saxon burial customs are so diversified, Dickinson argues that it may be difficult to find meaningful patterns. This can easily lead to endless comments on the variations (Dickinson 2002). These are problems that I clearly risk as well in my analysis of the material evidence from Norway. The details are important in order to understand the ritual context, but so are the conditions on a larger scale, such as natural topography, neighbouring communities, and knowledge of applied technology. There has to be a balance between the details of each site in its own specific context on the one hand, and general knowledge on a larger scale on the other.

For me, a very detailed focus was impossible, since farmers, construction workers or archaeologists excavated a major part of the material during the nineteenth or early twentieth century, and none of these groups produced a detailed record about the circumstances surrounding their find. Moreover, theoretical change does not automatically lead to a change in excavation methods. In fact, modern methods in burial archaeology in Scandinavia have met with criticism; a lack of stratigraphic excavation techniques at burial mounds means that we are not able to study the burial rite in detail, and traces of the possible cult that might have occurred at the burial site after the time of burial are not recorded properly (Gansum 2004: 303–06, 310–12). In this respect, the Osebergship grave excavation from 1904 was exceptionally well excavated and documented compared to more recent excavations. For quite a few of the monuments relevant to my investigations, I can only hope for one or two important relevant pieces of information, which could be artefacts rather than ritual aspects, and might only be datable to a relatively broad time span.

There is an overwhelming quantity of finds from medieval towns, and these alone probably number close to two million (Molaug and Nordeide 1999: 24). However, the material associated with religious cult is considerably less from the medieval period. Material from the late Iron Age (AD 560–1050) in Norway is also very rich and is dominated by grave finds, and these are particularly relevant to this study. On the peninsula of Inderøy in Nord-Trøndelag alone, more than 900 barrows have been recorded, and even if most of them are unexcavated and undated, there are generally more graves from the late Iron Age — and from the Viking period in particular — than from the early Iron Age. Throughout Norway, there are several thousand graves and barrows from the late Iron Age, but I will focus only on monuments that provide information about rites, inventories, and chronology, which means that I will limit my analyses to material from excavated monuments only. None of the mentioned groups of material have been surveyed

on a national scale nor are they easily examined through publications or electronic databases.

The investigation presented in this volume is based on museum catalogues and archives, and only rarely by studying the artefacts themselves. I have had the opportunity to check archives and artefacts in the museums of Bergen and Trondheim. The archives in Oslo, however, were researched by Merethe Desirée Nævdal who has worked systematically through the records and checked information and objects from the selected geographic areas, thus improving both the amount of data available to me and its quality. Nævdal has also provided the project with additional information on chronology and find circumstances of the collections in Oslo, predominantly based on standard chronology established by Oluf Rygh and Jan Petersen (Petersen 1919, Petersen 1928, Petersen 1951, Rygh 1885).

The old museum catalogues have been digitalized in the form of a tagged Microsoft Word file, which was accessible online in the case of the museums in Oslo and Bergen during the course of my investigations.⁵ Nevertheless, this is not a proper database, but only an electronic copy of old records. The file is neither very reliable nor efficient for searching, which makes it rather time consuming to use. One cannot, for instance, search for special periods, and a search for special objects is not very reliable. New finds are recorded electronically, but records have not been updated for recent results. Medieval finds in these records are rare, and if they occur, they tend to be recorded only in bulk from urban sites — such as, ‘finds from Storgaten 35’ — and do not specify the individual artefacts found (Nordeide 1998). The university museum in Oslo, the Historical Museum, has also constructed an Oracle database that could be searched according to chronology; I was kindly given access to it, which proved very helpful. By contrast, in Trondheim I had to search old, handwritten records, and the necessary information was often found in annual publications from the early nineteenth century. However, in the final stage of the project I was able to retrieve the data from Trondheim via the internet as well.

Even without having to locate the real objects or all the plans and reports from excavations, it was still a rather time-consuming procedure to survey the records as described above, and the quality of the search results varied. With this in mind, I decided to reduce the research area. However, I still considered it important to retain the project’s national perspective. From this point of view it was already a severe limitation to work only on the southern and central parts of the country

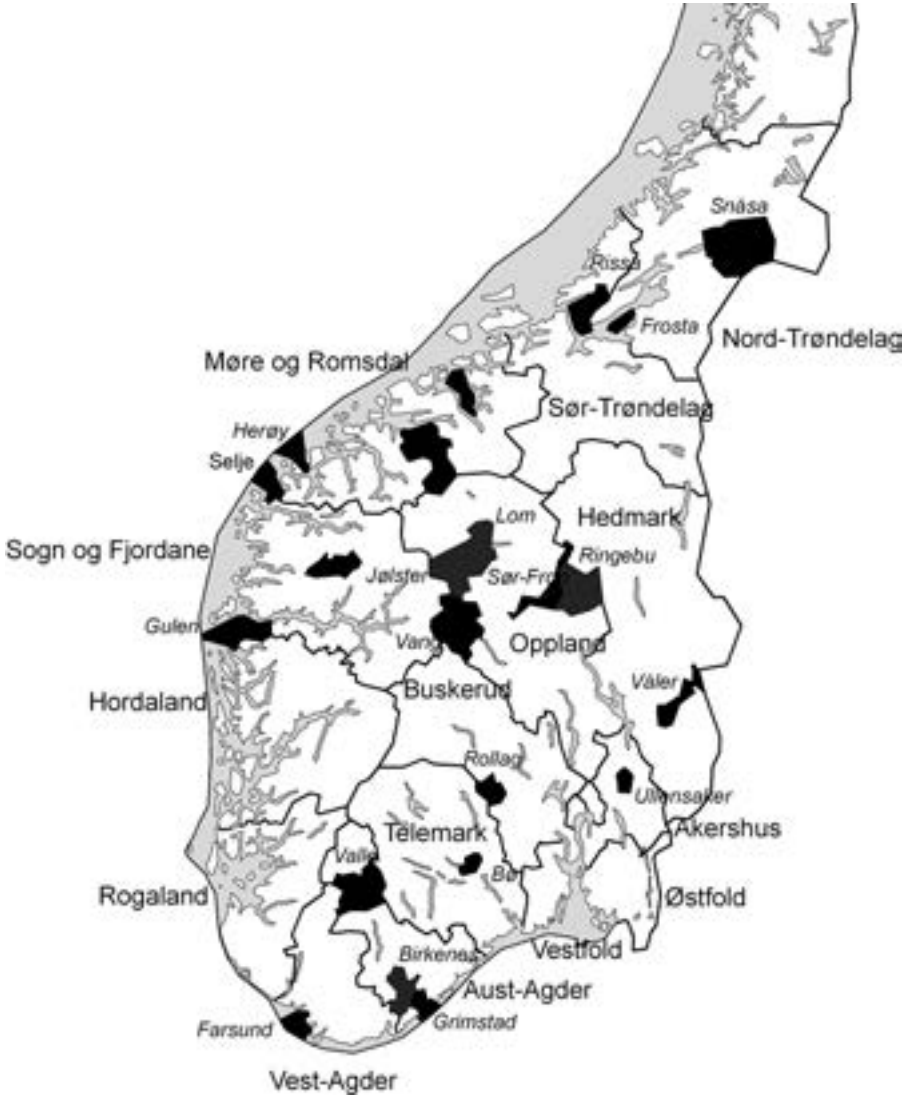
⁵ This project was initially referred to as ‘Dokumentasjonsprosjektet’, but later called ‘Museumsprosjektet’.

within the modern national borders. Nevertheless, conducting research on a national scale would have involved risking a level of generalization that was too great, while removing the possibility of grasping local variations within wider patterns. This problem was already raised by Jenny-Rita Næss in 1968 (albeit published in 1996), when she recommended focusing on a relatively small, topographically well-defined area (Næss 1996: 2). Fredrik Svanberg has since demonstrated the complexity of interpreting find patterns on a regional level, in contrast to the scholar's tendency to conform to the modern national state boundaries of Norway, Sweden, and Denmark (Svanberg 2003). As I saw the situation in my case, this was a risk that I would have to take. I had the choice between carrying out a national analysis with a relatively low level of detail, or an analysis of a small area as has been done before in various locations.

In my final filter for selecting material I felt strongly that I needed to retain both the local and the national perspective. I would argue that it is possible to both make generalizations, whilst still keeping an eye on specific details. It is not only a question about degrees of subjectivity and/or objectivity, it is also a question of how to aggregate conclusions and make analytical units that provide a reliable basis for these conclusions while at the same time making the variations apparent. This is an approach also supported by Nick Stoodley, who argues that meaning involves summing up data; the generalization of data is an artificial construct, but it could still be useful in the case of heuristic interpretations. Furthermore, if 'sample-sensitivity' is unavoidable, the methodology can be an advantage in the case of selected, manageable areas (Stoodley 1999).

As a conclusion to this problem of maintaining 'both-micro-and-macro-perspectives', I have selected what I think are manageable areas for the time span *c.* 560–1150/1200.

For the non-Christian cult, mainly the late Iron Age, I decided to make a selection of municipalities (Norwegian: *kommuner*) that would hopefully be representative of both general trends and context-specific variety in different parts of the country. From a total of 430 municipalities in Norway, I have selected 21 of these in southern and central Norway as cases for the study of Norse material (Map 1). They were not selected at random, but were chosen to represent different



Map 1. Regions (*fylke*) of southern Norway and selected municipalities (*kommuner*; shaded, names in *Italics*) for the non-Christian material.

ecological zones (for instance, the inland areas of Jølster and Lom versus the coastal regions of Herøy and Rissa), different cultural zones (Snåsa, at least in recent times, also contains a Saami population), or different types of Thing (assembly) locations (for instance, Frosta, Gulen, and Tingvoll). The selection was also based on known important finds relating to this study in the municipality (as in the case of Rollag and Valle), or because the information regarding the Christianization process was as good as a tabula rasa (such as in Våler). I have searched for possible traces of cult activity among the dominant burial rituals, in an attempt to date the earliest and latest traces of Norse (or Saami) religious activities in various regions. In this way I aimed to avoid the risk that my selection of areas would exclude material that was clearly of interest for the study of the Christianization process. The analyses will be supported by relevant results for the areas left out, mainly Rogaland, Hordaland, Østfold, and Vestfold in the late Iron Age.

The latter principle is also relevant to my selection of material from early Christian cult. I have studied relevant material from the entire region of southern and central Norway, basing my general information on previous research and examining in more detail sites known for their early traces of Christian cult. All major excavations revealing early material from church sites or the earliest urban centres have thus been included for their Christian material. The relevant urban material was selected on the basis of previous results such as excavation reports and books from Tønsberg, Trondheim, Skien, and Oslo (Map 2). Moreover, quite a few Norwegian medieval churches were excavated as part of a protection plan for churches. The reports and results from these investigations were also included in this study if any of the data was relevant to it.

In addition to this, some artefact groups are of particular interest and can be studied on a national scale: these are Thor's hammers and monumental stone crosses/cross slabs, which have been particularly emphasized in previous discussions about Christianization. These are examined separately in the discussion.

My analysis includes all excavated graves and other remains relevant to the discussion of cult activity, dated from the late Iron Age and early medieval period in the selected municipalities. The exceptions are:

- Finds of uncertain date, context, and/or interpretation
- Most stray finds.



Map 2. Medieval towns in Norway. Drawing: Ellinor Moldeklev Hoff.

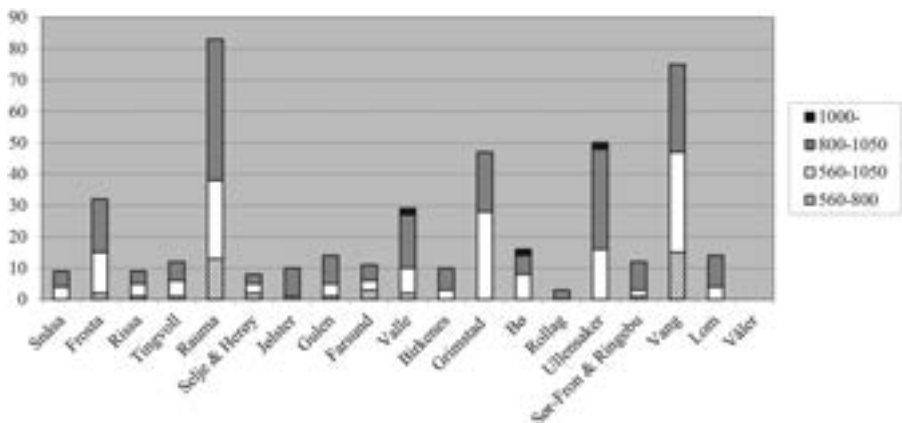
The interpretation of the material as stated in the museum records depends very much on the capability of the individual who has recorded the find. Antiquarians have traditionally been sceptical about farmers who say that medieval artefacts were found in a barrow, but they have automatically accepted the same kind of information for a find dated to the Iron Age. This was contingent on the antiquarians' interpretation of Norway having been christened in 1030, the conclusion being that the Norwegians did not bury their dead in barrows from roughly that day on (as discussed above, 'History and Background'). Luckily, sometimes this kind of information is noted, and the curator has added an explanation in which he argues that it should be understood as confusion on behalf of the farmer. In such circumstances it may be possible to re-interpret the find. Additionally, there may be other similar cases where the curator has decided to trust his own models and not refer to the information provided by the farmer at all, and in such cases it is not possible to trace grave finds later than the Viking Age. As a young student I personally participated at an excavation for Bergen Museum of a disturbed burial mound in the remote Røldal valley in the mountains in Hordaland, when a medieval axe was found. The artefact was interpreted as part of the grave goods

until the date of the axe was established, at which point the context was reinterpreted by the curators as being the result of a secondary disturbance. It is not possible to know how typical this situation is, as I have had to rely on the information given in the archives.

It has often been difficult to separate a grave from a votive deposit or hoard, especially in areas with few weapons or jewellery in the graves, such as in the inner eastern part of Norway, where more practical utensils and tools frequently occur both in graves and deposits. Votive deposits or hoards can often be found in cairns or scree, as graves often are as well. It is also difficult to separate a hoard from an offering site. A sacrificial ritual is interesting as it leaves traces of cult activity, while a hoard of loot is not, but the finds interpreted as sacrifices often consist of the same types of objects and are found in similar places to the finds categorized as hoards. During a sacrificial ritual an offering is consecrated in order to act as a tool of communication and communion between the sacred and the profane world (Bell 1997: 26, Widengren 1971: 159). Hence, fire could be relevant to a sacrifice, but not in association with storing objects. One of the criteria to support an interpretation of a find as being linked to cult activity or its identification as a grave in general is traces of burnt material, as well as if the find is similar to local finds that undoubtedly had their origin in a grave context.

The presence of human bones is the most obvious way to identify a grave site, but unfortunately these are often not preserved. Therefore I have based my interpretations mostly on other kinds of information, and I have searched the records for information on the find circumstances, particularly for special arrangements or constructions on the find spot, to indicate if some ritual was performed at the place where the artefacts were deposited. The interpretation as a grave has been considered for each case individually, following the criteria described above. As a rule of thumb, particular significance has been ascribed to a site if:

- Two or more objects of typical grave goods categories are found as one assemblage.
- Traces of fire are spotted on the objects or in their surroundings.
- Special constructions are observed, or if the finds are found close to features such as big stones, etc.
- Find circumstances are described as being situated in a cairn or a mound. Such finds are interpreted as graves, even if the date is medieval.



Graph 1. Number of graves selected for the analyses, as a total and per period for the various municipalities.

The selection criteria have produced a long list of graves that are included in my analyses, but the number of graves is variable: while one municipality has many graves recorded, for instance, Våler has no certain graves from the late Iron Age (see Graph 1). In the catalogue, a few relevant hoards are also listed (see Appendix).

Due to the low number of graves dated to the Merovingian period, the chances of proving tendencies for chronological changes in burial customs are not always high. Such changes can only be indicated for areas with sufficient material from different periods of the late Iron Age. The statistical basis for the evaluation of graves is definitely best for Frosta, Rauma, Valle, Grimstad, Ullensaker, and Vang. Rauma and Vang have a striking number of graves. It is not always the case that the results are biased due to a higher frequency of excavations in these areas in comparison to other municipalities, but certainly Ullensaker is one of the districts with high levels of archaeological activity (Skre 1996: 325), as is Grimstad. The distribution of finds should probably be explained rather in terms of population density, or the character of the burial customs: for instance, how obvious the grave forms or the grave goods are, and consequently how likely they are to be discovered.

This means that the graves in districts of rich graves with pronounced grave forms may be over-represented in comparison to other districts.

There is a general and considerable increase in the numbers of graves from the Merovingian to the Viking period. As the Iron Age burial rituals were probably the most visible, collective rituals that could be performed at the time, the increased numbers of Viking Age graves should not only be evaluated according to population growth, but also viewed as evidence of particularly vigorous cult activity during the Viking period. The Viking Age burials could demonstrate an increased need and effort to show the importance of Norse religion, and this is sometimes interpreted as a kind of tension provoked by the approach of Christianity (see Chapter 5, 'Cremation and Inhumation Burials'). Alternatively, the increasing emphasis placed on rituals could also be interpreted as a sign of anxiety, religious enthusiasm, or a creative response to a growth in economic and cultural encounters and social changes.

The question of chronology is, of course, essential to this project. To derive the greatest benefit from modern chronological methods, I started by identifying which graves had been dated through dendrochronology. This work was quick, as only three graves have been dated in Norway using this method. The dates of the three burial chambers are listed below. It is assumed that the method provides a date for the burials, but this is not necessarily the case, as the ships may have been older than the burials. The Oseberg ship was, for instance, built in 815–820 (Roesdahl 1994), while the chamber itself was constructed at a later date. The dates given for the chambers are as follows (Bonde and Christensen 1993):

- The Oseberg ship grave in Vestfold: the wood for the grave chamber was felled late in the summer of 834.
- The Gokstad ship grave in Vestfold and the Tune ship grave in Østfold: the grave chambers were built by wood felled around 900–910. Samples from both sites lacked sapwood, and so the exact year could not be determined.

At the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU) in Trondheim, information on radiocarbon dates is kept in electronic records in the Section of Archaeometry at the Museum of Natural History and Archaeology. However, at the start of my project, these were just about to be reorganized, since the old system was not very well suited to searches and printouts, and the new system was not yet ready. Additionally, the old radiocarbon dates were less precise than more recent results, for the methods employed and knowledge of sampling, measurements and calibration have improved constantly (Nordeide and Gulliksen

2007). The most reliable results — those measured during the last ten years — were, without special permission, only available to the individual who paid for the result. It would have been an overwhelming task to write the amount of letters necessary for permission to use the data taken from the selected objects. As a result, these records were considered unsuitable to be used in this project.

The book was planned as a three-year project only, and consequently I found that in the case of prehistoric/rural material, I had to rely on the classical chronology as recorded in the museum catalogues, based on evidence from coins and typological classifications. I have rarely studied the artefacts for this investigation, checking them only in special circumstances. The chronology of the material is mostly based on the typological system created by Jan Petersen and Oluf Rygh (Petersen 1919, Petersen 1928, Petersen 1951, Rygh 1885). The spears are, however, related to the somewhat later typology of Bergljot Solberg (Solberg 1984). Early typological studies have continued to be useful up to the present day, but the absolute chronology has been modified several times (see also Svanberg 2003). In this work, I have based dates and typologies on more recent work when available (for instance, Braathen 1989, Eldorhagen 2001, Hernæs 1985, Peirce 2002). In the case of coins, I have followed the dates established by Kolbjørn Skaare (Skaare 1976, Skaare 1995). For the urban/medieval material, I have relied more on dendrochronology, particularly in the case of the Christian material, where it is most relevant. Although at times the chronology is not entirely satisfactory, it has proved invaluable for strengthening the foundation upon which we base our discussions and analyses of the Christianization of Norway.

RELIGION: ACTION AND BELIEF

The religious lives of some are dominated by myth telling, for others, the focus is more on practical rituals, while generally speaking some societies have more rituals than others (Bell 1997: 266). In this study I have searched for traces of religious practices, cult activity, and places that might be interpreted as cult sites. One should be aware of the fact that not all rituals or parts of rituals left durable traces, and therefore it is not possible to study this kind of activity. For example, a Mass held in church would not have left many traces, but the character and organization of its physical context — that is, the church itself including its interior and surroundings — can guide us in our interpretations of whether the building in which the Mass took place was a church or not.

Maurice Halbwachs discusses how memory is collective in the sense that many of our memories can only be recalled by those such as family members, while others are accessed through mnemonic triggers such as names. Families and social groups also recollect memories through the rituals associated with burials; the burial rite represented an act of family commemoration:

On the one hand, the cult of the dead allowed the family the chance to reaffirm its bonds, to commune periodically with the memory of departed kin, and to reaffirm its sense of unity and continuity. On the other hand, when, on the same day of the year all the families, following roughly uniform rites, evoked the dead or invited them to partake of the food of the living, when attention was turned toward the nature and the kind of existence of defunct souls, they participated in a totality of beliefs common to all in their community and even shared by many others. When participating in the cult of the dead they focused their concern upon a whole world of supernatural powers of which the shades/ghosts of their parents represented only a very small part. (Halbwachs 1992: 65)

More common than the role played by memory in religious rituals has been the focus on other social aspects of the process. For example, taking part in a common religious act increases the individual's religious experience, while also ensuring a

communal identification. The French sociologist Emile Durkheim played a central role in highlighting the social function of the ritual (Bell 1997: 24, Durkheim 1915). Others have focused on the ritual as an act of performance; what the ritual does rather than what it means (Bell 1997: 73). This is an important aspect of theories such as that of *Religion als Spiel*, which interprets religion as the outermost way of expressing reality, emotions, and sincerity (Antweiler 1961).

The current attention given to the action itself rather than the communication process often leads anthropologists to talk about 'ritualization' instead of rituals, which is an important change in terminology. It has been argued that archaeologists have focused too much on rituals as religious performances, beyond the limits of everyday life, involving special people, special places, and a distinctive range of material culture (Bradley 2005: 32–36). This is an important observation, but all rituals involve actions repeated in a conventional way, and it would be reductive not to see the difference between ritualized behaviour in everyday life that could come close to being confused with a daily routine, and the ritualized behaviour that occurs in collective rituals accorded a higher level of religious importance. There is a considerable difference in the significance of various levels of ritual activities, such as a person flicking away a piece of tobacco to the gods or kissing a cross pendant on the one hand, and a community burying an old grandmother on the other hand. The first action may well be important in a person's daily life, but it may also be unrecognized by the people as a group. The second type of action, however, involves more people from the community, and has higher levels of social, economic, and religious significance. Individual and collective religious rites would be relevant to any study of conversion, but it is rarely possible to trace and interpret the relevant individual ritualized behaviour in this case.

According to Halbwachs, in order for us to understand a religion fully, we must focus on the important role played by history itself as an aspect of cult activity:

If society preserves elements of ancient rites and beliefs in its religious organisation, this is not just to satisfy its most undeveloped groups. But to appreciate a religious movement or religious progress exactly, people must recall, at least in rough outline, the point from which they took their departure long ago. (Halbwachs 1992: 85)

A ritual could thus connect people to ancestors as well as to ancient beliefs. Yet it is only possible to obtain a fragmented picture of those rituals through their physical traces, and it can be difficult to interpret the traces. There is always the danger of making the same mistakes that we know have been made before: fitting traces into existing theoretical models and presumptions (Rydving 1991: 46).

Furthermore, because the religious cult may have involved important social and economic aspects as well, it may be hard to separate those traces of cult activity that operated on purely a religious level from those that had a primarily social meaning. One obvious example is the great variations in wealth found in the Norse graves, which cannot be explained in religious terms only but must also have important social implications. Even if barrows were only constructed for the most important persons in the community, the ritual was probably collective, something in which everyone could participate. In this way the rite would have been important for legitimating and reinforcing the social order.

The general believer would probably not have analysed the cult in this way, nor is it likely that he or she would have categorized the component parts of the ritual according to their various cultural aspects. However, it was possible to use the rites for other purposes, for example to manipulate the social order to gain power. Hence, the religious as well as non-religious functions of ritual activity could also be important from the perspective of historical source criticism, for instance, regarding the representative nature of sources.

Religious Symbols

The question of religious symbols has potentially important implications for my interpretations. As part of a religious rite, a symbol is a carrier of certain meanings, without which the object or action would be something quite different and potentially much less important. In his book *Symbols in Action*, Ian Hodder pointed to the fact that symbols are actively involved in social strategies (Hodder 1982). He also showed how structures of meaning relate to practice and how symbol sets are negotiated and manipulated in the course of social actions. This led him to address in more detail the necessity of studying symbols within the particular and unique geographic and historic context in which their meaning was constructed. Just as the meaning of a rite can change, the meaning of a symbol can also change. It is therefore important to establish an idea of the context for a rite or symbol, and interpret it in light of this. The exact context depends on the types of questions being asked, and also includes historical context. Hodder summarized his argument in the following way:

A more precise definition for the context of an archaeological attribute is *the totality of the relevant environment*, where 'relevant' refers to a significant relationship to the object — that is, a relationship necessary for discerning the object's meaning. (Hodder 1991: 143)

Many of Hodder's points were not new, as he himself noted. In connection with this, I might mention that in 1910 Arnold van Gennep had already stressed that a comparative approach has its limitations, and that myths and rituals must be analysed within their own specific contexts to stand a chance of being properly understood. He argued against the tendency to study data outside its factual or verbal context, because everything depends on surrounding circumstances (Gennep [orig. 1910] 1973).

The meaning of a symbol is most often evident to those who share the same symbol, but the meaning may change through time and space. We may therefore find symbols that more or less share the same form but have different meanings. For instance, crosses are found with a variety of appearances, including those used in the Bronze Age rock carvings, those that were part of the decoration of the Viking period, those employed by Christians as one of their most important religious symbols, and, in modern times, upside-down crosses that are used by Satanists, who are nevertheless associated with Christianity. In terms of its design, the cross bears resemblance to both the Thor's hammer and the 'sun cross', the latter of which is a symbol of time. Both the 'sun cross' and the Thor's hammer are used as symbols by modern neo-Nazis. Often, the cross also has a practical function, such as marking borders or in types of construction work. Even a definitely Christian cross can be difficult to understand, as in the case of the early medieval masterpiece of a cross-marked soapstone fishing weight. The cross is Christian, but it is also a mason's mark, showing that this particular object was made by one of the masons at Nidaros Cathedral.¹ The reasons for the cross on the fishing weight could have been several: it may have been a witness to the craftsman's work of which he was proud, a small religious ritual, or a case of the mason adding the cross to express his desire for the weight to fulfil its role and catch a lot of fish. Furthermore, particularly in a period of religious change, the cross may have been a symbol for both Thor and Jesus, due to the similar shape (Birkeli 1973: 26–27). Hodder has the following to say about material symbols:

Material culture symbols are often more ambiguous than their verbal counterparts, and what can be said with them is normally much simpler. Also the material symbols are durable, restricting flexibility. (Hodder 1991: 126–27)

As a consequence, the cross should not be automatically taken to be a symbol of Christian faith around the turn of the first millennium (Price 2004).

¹ Catalogue no. N67207.

Several symbols and human-like figurines have been interpreted down the years as representing different Norse gods. For instance, all manlike figures with one eye have been identified as Odin, such as the stone decorated with a big cross and a human head on a stone by Hustad Church in Nord-Trøndelag (Figure 1).² However, the identifications have rarely been very successful, and it is generally a bad idea to match the figures mentioned in texts to human-like figures on objects. The only object that can be linked to a Norse god with any degree of reliability is the Thor's hammer as a symbol for the god Thor (Price 2004, Staecker 1999: 391). Nevertheless, bearing in mind that the meaning of a symbol may change, we should not even take this for granted. The mingling of form and meaning in a symbol is underlined by a story from Snorri's *Heimskringla*, which tells how King Håkon the Good made a gesture in the shape of a cross, but since his companions were hostile to Christianity, the gesture was interpreted as a Thor's hammer.³ Consequently, one concern for the study of Christianization is that even a cross that was obviously originally Christian should not automatically be interpreted as a Christian cult object when the context is obviously not Christian.

The problems associated with interpreting two of the most relevant religious symbols underline the importance of analysing a symbol within its specific context and also according to how it concerns the rite in question. As the written sources are rarely linked directly to specific grave forms, and those who participated in the rituals died a thousand years ago, we are left with physical traces and objects. These may have a more or less similar form and composition but still have different meanings. To take a modern-day example, various people throughout the world practise



Figure 1. The 'Odin stone' — a cross slab from Hustad Church, Nord-Trøndelag. Photo: S. W. Nordeide.

² This object will be returned to in more detail under 'Trøndelag, Including Trondheim/Nidaros' in Chapter 4, and 'Free-Standing Cross Slabs and Stone Crosses (High Crosses)' in Chapter 5.

³ See the quotation under 'Thor's Hammer: An Antipathetic Response to Christianity?' in Chapter 5.

cremation but the meaning differs according to different systems of belief. Even if the form of the ritual and its actions are naturally rigid, individuals may have different perceptions of the meaning of that same ritual (Widengren 1971: 115).

In general terms this is part of the long-standing discussion about the relationship between myth and ritual, between theory and action. In light of this, Gro Steinsland and Preben M. Sørensen have described myth as follows:

I snever forstand er en myte en beretning om gudene, om skapelsen av mennesker og ting og om verdens kosmiske forløp. I dikt, fortellinger og bilder er slike myter fra Nordens fortid bevart og gjenfortalt fra middelalderen og inn i nåtiden. I førkristen tid betydde mytene imidlertid mye mer enn selve fortellingen. Mytenes formål var å skape sammenhenger. De var en del av det religiøse livet, og derigjennom var de et middel til å forklare verden, det kjente og det ukjente.

Myten representerer en tenkemåte som er fremmed for den moderne kulturen. Myten søker ikke logiske sammenhenger og naturlige forklaringer, men sammenhenger på tvers av det rasjonelle. I seg selv er den mytiske fortellingen enkel og forståelig, men for det førkristne mennesket har den også vært sann. (Steinsland and Sørensen 1994: 26)

(In a restricted sense a myth is a story about the gods, about the creation of man and things and about the world's cosmic development. In poetry, stories and pictures of such myths are preserved and retold from the Middle Ages until present times. In pre-Christian times the myths meant a lot more than the story itself. The aim of the myths was to create relationships. They were part of religious life, and thus a tool by which the world could be explained, both the known and the unknown.

The myth represents a way of thinking that is unfamiliar to modern culture. The myth does not search for logical connections and natural explanations, but connections that transcend the rational. In itself the mysterious story is simple and understandable, but to the pre-Christian person it was also true.)

Steinsland and Sørensen describe the rite and the cult as follows:

når vi kommer til de religiøse handlingene, alle de ritene og ritualene som til sammen kalles kultus, står vi overfor elementer av konservativ karakter. Et ritual er en fastlagt, regelbundet, hellig handling. Derfor skal ingen ting tas bort eller legges til; man skal følge det rituelle mønsteret som tradisjonen foreskriver. Kulten er kjernen i hedendommen. (Steinsland and Sørensen 1994: 71)

(regarding religious acts, all the rites and rituals that together are called cult, we are dealing with elements of a conservative character. A ritual is a determined, regular and holy action. Because of this nothing should be taken away or added, one should follow the ritual pattern which is described by tradition. The cult is the core of paganism.)

According to Steinsland and Sørensen, the Norse people were very tolerant in the way in which they thought about their religion, but more conservative and exclusive in their cult. The Christian Church did not experience any opposition

movements from the Norse people before the Christians began attacking their cult during the eleventh century (Steinsland 2000: 88, Steinsland and Sørensen 1994: 71).

The interpretation of Christian objects in non-Christian contexts has often been viewed as *syncretism*. *Syncretism*, however, has been criticized and debated during recent years, and different scholars have chosen various solutions in order to avoid the problems. Some scholars have still chosen to employ the concept today, but with a different meaning, and others have rejected using the concept, and prefer other terms like *acculturation* instead (Gräslund 2002: 15, Kaliff and Sundqvist 2004: 11, Rydving 1993: 9–11, Steinsland 2005: 433).

The word *syncretism* as it is applied by different scholars could describe various situations. For instance, when Jesus, Mary, and various saints are incorporated into a Maya or Aztec pantheon it is described as syncretism (Saler 2000: 29). Often the word *syncretism* describes the various aspects of the process when two religions meet. Anders Hultgård has discussed alternative interpretations of syncretism, suggesting that the term covers the deep-felt changes of a religion as a whole or of elements within a religion as a consequence of its contact with other religions. He would rather use the term *religious acculturation* for a wider and more general description of the influence and adjustments that result from a meeting of different religions that does not change the fundamental character of the religion (Hultgård 1992). As archaeology can hardly provide answers to deeply held, personal religious convictions, archaeologists generally prefer this latter concept (Gräslund 2002: 15–18, Kaliff and Sundqvist 2004: 11).

A side issue related to the concept of syncretism concerns how profoundly each religion must change before we can call it syncretism, acculturation, or conversion. Håkan Rydving discusses the theme ‘religious change’ in particular, and he describes two types of religious change (Rydving 1993: 9–10):

1. An internal change in a religion where, in spite of the changes, the religion is still the same.
2. A change of religion leading to a new and different religion.

Rydving sees the change when two religions meet as a result of a process of acculturation, and because of the pejorative associations of the word *syncretism*, he prefers to avoid the term altogether.

Even if an originally Christian cult object were found in a Norse grave, in my opinion, it should not be interpreted automatically as a Christian or Christian-

influenced burial. Such an item would normally represent all the characteristics that could be seen as desirable for a person from any point of view — for instance, its exotic aspect, its value (if made with precious metals and/or advanced techniques), or its decorative function. These reasons would make the objects desirable as personal possessions in addition to their function as religious symbols. A simple equal-armed cross or any other cross design could have functioned as well as a symbol for Norse belief.

I agree with most of the authors quoted above, and so will avoid the word *syncretism* in my discussions. Syncretism is a difficult concept to use in our case, trying to trace the difference between the Norse religion and Christianity, but it is natural to look for an actual ‘influence’ or ‘change’. Christianity is considered to be an intolerant religion, and theoretically a true Christian would neither tolerate non-Christian elements in terms of cult activity or theological doctrines. Syncretism as a kind of mixture of both Norse and Christian religion would therefore make no sense from a Christian point of view. This is, however, a question of how well-educated the individual Christian was, and to what extent Christian conventions were adhered to.

On the other hand, if a new god with the name *Jesus* were added to the Norse pantheon, this would not have been considered to be syncretism from a Norse point of view either. Because the Norse belief system was particularly tolerant and polytheistic, it would not be problematic for them to adopt Christ as a new god beside the others without changing the nature of their beliefs. So, Jesus and Mary could be integrated into the Norse pantheon of gods without the fundamental tenets of the religion being changed. The believer would simply have had more gods to choose between for various tasks in his or her personal life. In this respect, there is a particular mould that may support this view, which may have produced both Thor’s hammers and Christian crosses, found at Trendgården in Denmark (Graham-Campbell 1980: 187). This could be interpreted as religious ignorance, syncretism, or the possibility that a Norse believer could worship both gods. The use of the word *syncretism* to describe this phenomenon would, in my opinion, be misleading at best. Instead, it should be described as an internal change in the religion, as Rydving suggests. Such changes could also have taken place as a result of internal, cultural changes through time, not necessarily dependent on an acculturation process that came about through exposure to other religions.

The ritual of *primsigning* is an interesting one in connection with the concept of acculturation. Not much more is known about the ritual of *primsigning* than that it was a Christian rite performed to enable a person to move in both Norse and Christian circles, but it did not go as far as baptism. According to the saga of

Egill Skallagrimson, this was usual for non-Christian merchants and others who served Christian men. The non-Christians could then work for or attend gatherings with Christians, but could still choose the beliefs they liked best (Heggstad 1962: 90–91). The *primsigning* must have acted as an assurance that the person had accepted Christianity to a certain degree, even if they had not converted fully. This ritual was useful to both Christians and non-Christians, for Christians were expected to avoid coming into contact with ‘pagans’, else partake in a type of cleansing ritual afterwards, while the non-Christians could still be accepted by their own religious group even if they had extensive contact with the Christian population. In Norway, it seems to have been the aim of missionaries to work directly towards the goal of baptism, but early medieval legislation distinguished between *primsigning* and baptism (Molland 1968).

It is almost impossible to identify traces of an actual *primsigning*, since the actual form of the ritual is not known. Some artefacts are discussed as possible evidence for *primsigning*, for instance, a figure made by dots on a wax plaque found in the huge barrow ‘Storhaug’ at Avaldsnes, Karmøy in Rogaland, dated to around AD 680–730/50. The barrow with a ship indicates a Norse grave, and the wax plaque has been discussed as a symbol showing that the dead person had been *prim signed* (Solberg 2000: 313).⁴ This object consists of some dots observed on an 8cm long, oval wax disc. The dots are interpreted as making a Christian cross by forming one long line and at the end of this is a transverse. Only the left part of the transverse survives, however, while both a part of the right and the supposed top of the cross are broken and therefore not preserved (Opedal 2005: 59–64). Regarding the early date and the shape of this find, this figure could be interpreted just as easily as a Thor’s hammer, if it represents anything at all.

In light of this background, it should be evident that it is impossible to try to date the religious change without considering its associated rituals. The ‘context’ has to be established both in the sense of the surrounding physical and geographical environment as well as the historical environment and the particular meaning of the surviving evidence. Consequently, I will analyse the material in the following way: ritual contexts in various regions will be mapped and characterized, and then analysed in terms of both general trends and uniqueness. Religious objects will be interpreted in light of their final, meaningfully constituted context. This means that if, for instance, a Christian cross pendant is found in a barrow, it will not be

⁴ See ‘Thor’s Hammer: An Antipathetic Response to Christianity?’ in Chapter 5.

interpreted as acculturation or as Christian influence, but as a purely decorative object, or even as a Norse symbol.

Interpreting Norse Graves

Burial rituals have religious, economic, and social functions, and an equally important practical function. The practical function was to get rid of a body. In many parts of Norway this could be problematic during the winter if the burial involved digging in frozen ground. During the Viking period, the Norse dead were buried fully dressed with dress accessories, sitting or lying in extended sleeping position with their faces up, sometimes in a boat, with weapons and other equipment beside them. Tools, boxes, and other utensils were often placed by their feet. Sometimes, the dead were also buried with a horse and/or a dog, and occasionally with riding equipment. Both cremation and inhumation graves occur during the late Iron Age. In general, these are very different from the Christian burials, which took place in consecrated ground, in a Christian cemetery associated with a church. The Christian grave was oriented east–west and inserted into the ground under a flat surface. The body was not cremated, and grave goods were not normally included. The body could be wrapped, put in a coffin, or supported by headstones, and sometimes charcoal was used in the grave. Even if the Christian graves vary, it is normally possible to distinguish them from the typical Norse grave. When looking for evidence of gradual change, however, it is problematic that all of the criteria for Christian graves also occur among the non-Christian graves, except the location at a contemporary Christian churchyard. In addition, ‘the typical Norse grave’ among those found is most likely to be upper-class. Even if several thousand graves are known from late Iron Age Norway, these cannot be representative of the whole population over several centuries. The average person was probably buried very simply, in a way that is rarely recognized, and in a way that might be even more similar to a Christian burial.

The funerals were occasionally organized in several stages. As a Norse funeral often involved both a lot of work and large quantities of various artefacts and resources, it certainly included economic factors as well. The ritual also provided the community members with a religious experience — the possibility of establishing communication between the past and the present, a time for the depiction of myths, and the repetition of actions performed by generations to ensure that life would continue. A burial ritual was meant to ensure both that the dead received a safe and dignified passage to his or her new existence, and to assist the living in continuing their lives according to this new situation, for the living members may

have had to take on new roles or accept new aspects of their positions. A burial could represent the start of a change in several social positions within a local group. Thus, the social significance was important: the burial ritual was an essential means of socializing and for maintaining social order.

How surviving traces from a funeral should be interpreted is not immediately clear. Due to poor excavation methods it is rarely possible to sort out the various stages of the rituals that took place at the cemetery, such as post-burial rites. The differences in the 'richness' expressed by two graves depend on the original ritual, excavation methods, as well as preservation conditions. Differences in the wealth expressed by graves found within what could be understood as the same context could generally be interpreted as resulting from socio-economic signals as well as religious considerations. Social and religious statuses were probably part of the same ontology, which is why the burial rituals were an effective means of legitimating the social structure. It should be kept in mind that the separation of the religious and secular spheres was not as clear cut then as it is for most people in our part of the world today.

Grave Goods

The consideration of grave goods is crucial to the interpretation of the burial ritual. Usually grave goods are considered to be personal belongings that followed the dead into the grave. On this basis we can judge whether the dead person was 'rich' or 'poor' according to how many objects and types of objects were found in the grave, if they were imported or local, if they were of high or low quality, made of precious metal or other rare and costly materials, and so on. In other words: quality, quantity, frequency, and how attractive an object was are important factors. How a particular object might have been obtained is also worthy of consideration. While the answers are, of course, only estimations made from our modern point of view, they provide some kind of basis for making an interpretation about the deceased's social position and their economic and social status in life.

Grave goods have also been interpreted as traces of religious belief that might illuminate the following questions. Why were the objects put in the grave in the first place? Could personal equipment and dress accessories have had any function other than a practical one? Why were grave goods sometimes deliberately destroyed before they were put into the grave? There may be several answers to each of these questions, because we can assume that the meaning of the grave goods varied from place to place and from person to person.

Many of the objects categorized as grave goods were found more than a century ago, quite often by farmers or other non-archaeologists. Swords are found more easily than beads because their long length makes them more obvious even to those using a digging machine or a plough. Quite often horse's teeth are observed, but nothing else of the horse, making it possible that only the horse's head was deposited in the grave. At any rate, the listed objects must be understood as *a small percentage of what was originally put into the graves*: grave robberies occurred from early on, and many artefacts may have disappeared over the years.

Different kinds of objects are listed in the catalogue (see Appendix), sorted into various categories according to function, material, foreign provenience, numbers, and chronology.⁵ Based on this data, an average number of grave goods for the graves in each area can be calculated. This number indicates how many types of artefacts are found in the graves, and not how many objects. For instance, if arrowheads and beads occur, they will frequently be represented in relatively high numbers, but as a category, they will count as only one item. The total number could indicate something about the wealth of grave goods, but in my research I have found it more significant to concentrate on how many types and which types of grave goods we find represented in the grave. This is based on the assumption that a possible Christian influence would have affected the type of grave goods, rather than the number of each type represented. Already in AD 600–50 the *Pactus Alamannorum* forbade grave goods in Christian graves, and there is no reason to think that this had changed by the time of the Christianization of Norway (Hassenpflug 1999: 61–63).

The number of object types also varies from place to place, as can be seen from Table 1. Municipalities such as Tingvoll and Jølster appear to be 'richer' than others, and the possibility of being able to date the graves is often proportional to the number of item categories.

Boat Graves – Ship Graves

The term *boat grave* implies only that the remains of a boat were found in a grave. The difference between a boat and a ship is rather subjective, but depends on size rather than character: a ship is bigger than a boat, and is normally defined as being longer than twelve metres or six pairs of oars.

⁵ In the catalogue the swords/seaxes with single-edged blades and double-edged blades are listed together under the general category *sword*. This prevents me from struggling with the identification difficulties regarding badly preserved or badly described swords.

Table 1. The average number of object types (NOTG) in the graves in the selected areas.

Municipality	(NOTG)
Snåsa	2.7
Frosta	2.7
Rissa	2.4
Tingvoll	6.7
Rauma	4.9
Selje & Herøy	3.8 & 3.5
Jølster	7.0
Gulen	4.2
Farsund	5.7
Valle	4.6
Birkenes	4.6
Grimstad	5.2
Bø	3.8
Rollag	5.0
Ullensaker	5.0
Sør-Fron & Ringeby	2.8 & 5.0
Vang	3.3
Lom	5.9

The distinction also depends on the dialect, and word usage differs from district to district.⁶ For instance, the vessel with five pairs of oars at Setnes, Rauma, is called a ship, while it would be called a boat by those from other districts (Marstrander 1963). I prefer to use the word *boat* when discussing the object in general terms, because quite often there is not sufficient information to calculate the size precisely. I will only use the word *ship* in special cases, concerning unambiguously long boats usually referred to as ships.

The tradition of including a boat as part of the grave inventory is primarily Nordic. In the Norwegian area the earliest grave with a boat is dated to the Roman period, but it was generally from c. 700 that this tradition became more common. During the Merovingian period ships appeared in graves in places such as Vendel in Sweden and Sutton Hoo in England, the latter being perhaps the best known

⁶ This information is taken from personal correspondence with Arne Emil Christensen, 2004.

of all the ship burials. The earliest ship grave in Norway also appeared at this time in the Storhaug barrow at Avaldsnes, Karmøy in Rogaland, dated to around AD 680–730/50 (Opedal 2005: 164). The number of boat graves in Norway is probably closer to five hundred than to one hundred, but they are not evenly spread out, and are mostly found by the coast (Næss 1969). A large number of boat graves have generally been observed in Vestfold, Rogaland, and Nordfjord, with smaller concentrations in Etne, Steinkjer, Namdalen, Helgeland, and the middle regions of Sognefjorden (Solberg 2000: 223).

A relatively large number of boat graves were found in the cemeteries around Viking-Age Kaupang in Vestfold. All cremations there were found in mounds or cairns, while seventy-two inhumations were flat graves that could easily have been mistaken for Christian graves, although forty-five of them were richly equipped boat graves. Only four boat graves were found in mounds, which means that the boat graves at Kaupang were predominantly flat graves. There were twelve graves with coffins at Kaupang, but one of these was also found together with a boat (Lia 2001: 55). The presence of a coffin or a flat grave at Kaupang is therefore no guarantee that it is a Christian grave.

Interpretations that have been proposed for the role of the boat in a grave range from its use as a coffin to a practical vehicle for this life or the next. But it may also be interpreted as a means of ritual travel to the land of the dead as described in the mythological narratives in written sources (Næss 1969). If a boat were interpreted as a coffin, it would be relevant to discuss the appearance of the boat as a Christian influence. However, a chamber is often present in addition to the boat, indicating that the boat alone was not sufficient to function as a coffin. According to Jens Peter Schjødt, the significance of the ship is as a means of transport, and the symbolic content has to be understood within the context of the related myths (Schjødt 1995). If the mythic context is unknown, any interpretation will be arbitrary.

Archaeologists do not always support such mythic interpretations, because the orientation of the boats is so varied. A deceased person buried in a boat was not buried according to rigid rules of orientation, as one would assume if the boat were heading to Hel or Valhall, for instance. Therefore, it has been suggested that the boat should be considered to be a grave good just like other grave goods and not as some means of transportation for the ritual journey to the other world. The boat was a necessary means of transportation along the coast, and as a symbol of wealth that would make it possible for the dead to receive a practical and good living in the next life, wherever that life might be (Nilsen 1997: 103). In that case the chronological shift between ship and horse in the graves at Gulli in Viken

reflects some kind of a change in the lives of the people, where the horse took over the position of importance in society previously occupied by the boat. However, it has been argued that the ship in the Oseberg grave at least was not meant for sailing, as it was tied to a big stone and filled with stones (Røthe 1994: 130).

The Grave Forms

By the term *grave form* I am referring broadly to the visible appearance and construction of a grave above the surface of the ground. The preparation of the burial place and the grave itself relate to the grave form. All aspects of the preparations of the grave were probably important parts of the burial ritual in its entirety, and rituals could go on for a long time, for years after the burial. A monument could easily remain in its original position over the centuries, and it could even be revitalized by secondary burials.

The tumulus is occasionally interpreted as a sign of landownership, especially in the case of graves containing weapons (Brøgger 1937, Solberg 2000: 268, Thäte 2007). If a barrow testified to landownership, increasing or decreasing numbers of graves or barrows could be explained by the clustering or fragmentation of landownership (Bødal 1998), or they could have been the result of other factors, such as demographic change. However, the Christianization process should probably be regarded as the most important influence on the number and character of grave forms such as barrows, and as having influenced them in several ways. Firstly, in terms of legislation: early Christian medieval legislation strictly forbade burial in barrows in an attempt to prevent the practice of non-Christian cult in public. The reduction and/or disappearance of barrows was probably a result of how and when these laws became effective throughout the country, and also due to the penalty for breaking the law. The end of barrows coincided in many places with the date of these early laws, even when the date of the law is also debated (Landro 2005: 67–88). Secondly, the arrival of writing coincided with the Christianization process. Among the Lombards in Italy, graves had been important testimonials to property; however, according to Rothair's Edict from AD 643, inherited or sold property was to be agreed upon with a written document instead. From this time, graves lost their importance in proving landownership (De Vingo 2007, Drew 1973: 97). The same may also have occurred in Norway.

Although analyses of grave forms should be open to interpretations other than those of a purely religious nature, it is obvious from early Christian legislation that the practice of building barrows was brought to an end because it was an

expression of paganism, and therefore seen as something to be prevented (see, for instance, the quotation in Chapter 1, 'Terminology Applied').

Visible grave forms are most likely to be over-represented in the archives, and the larger they are the more this is the case. However, such monuments provide a firm basis for statistical comparisons between various geographical regions, as they are well represented everywhere. In the case of the flat graves, these are more difficult to trace and their numbers more easily biased by later activity such as high or low levels of land cultivation. Consequently, these graves do not provide us with sufficient evidence to allow for regional comparisons of the kind afforded by more visible grave forms; further research is required in this area that explores the physical contexts in which the flat graves are found, their topographical surroundings and their cultivation history.

Cremation or Inhumation Burial

The treatment of the body was probably the pinnacle of the funerary rite. The act of cremation in particular is a naturally dramatic event, especially when performed in the dark. As a result of poor preservation and insufficient information about contexts, it is not always easy to tell whether a burial was a cremation or not. A steatite vessel or another kind of vessel may have been part of the grave goods, but may also have been a sepulchral urn from a cremation in which the bones were not always preserved. The finding of a sword in or under a cairn may be recorded but with no further comments on the context. Or a grave may be interpreted as an inhumation burial without further information, even if thick layers of charcoal were observed, such as in the case of Nesstranda in Rauma.⁷ It was not unusual to place charcoal in the grave, and it is also possible that the charcoal came from rituals during the years after the burial; consequently, interpreting this part of the ritual requires detailed stratigraphic observations that are frequently missing. Charcoal is rather easy to detect, because the black colour is visible, and fires often improve preservation conditions for some of the objects. In any case, the material that would disappear during a cremation rite would normally not be preserved anyway. Inhumation graves are often only spotted as a result of single objects found in the soil, for unburned bones, wood, and rusted artefacts often have a

⁷ See the Museum of Natural History and Archaeology's catalogue in Trondheim for find T12998.

similar colour to the surrounding soil and are therefore not easily discovered. As a result, the cremation graves may be overrepresented in the material.

In this investigation, burnt human bones have been interpreted as being definite remains of cremation. Traces of burning on typical 'grave good objects' are quite a strong indication of a cremation as well, even if no bones are found. However, the find of one single object with traces of burning has not been considered sufficient evidence for interpreting a grave as a cremation. Furthermore, even if charcoal detected in association with the finds is a quite strong indication of a cremation, it is not decisive evidence.

Helge Gjessing suggested that the grave goods lost their function in cremation, and this caused a reduction in the number of grave goods for a time, before numbers began to increase again at a later date. He saw this later period of increased grave goods as the result of a variety of impulses, which again caused a greater variety of burials (Gjessing 1923). Nevertheless, since Gjessing's publication, it has been noted that the same grave goods found in inhumation graves were also found in cremation graves from the Viking period (Solberg 2000: 223). This indicates that cremation did not necessarily influence the choice of grave goods. In addition, Gjessing's theory corresponds to the idea that people in the past believed that the items placed in the grave were transferred directly to some other place of existence in the world of the dead, or that this other life was to be lived in the grave itself (Nilsen 1997: 100–01). However, this is not necessarily correct. In recent years, the cremation ritual itself has become regarded as an important social, cosmological, and ontological event. The theory is that society, humanity, and the cosmos were recreated through the cremation ritual, and the graves became anonymous. The cremation rite has been discussed as being more important to a social group's identity and ethnicity than as a focus on the individual, and the relationship between the cremation ritual and ethnicity in particular is seen as evidence for the Germanic immigration to England during the fifth and sixth centuries, since cremation is regarded as a predominantly Germanic tradition. However, this does not explain why some groups chose to continue with cremation rituals while others did not. The cremation ritual in England in this period was perhaps more of a statement of ideological and political affiliation with parts of northern Europe (Williams 2002). Common to many of these theories is the idea of building group identity, with the process of socialization being more important to the cremation ritual than the identity of the dead body. Substantial local differences in the ritual are, for instance, observed at Voss in Hordaland (Næss 1996: 106). In this context, the differences from village to village could be interpreted as the result of different ethnic or social groups living separately in their own part of the countryside. From this, one could argue that if one group

converted to Christianity, their identity would have changed as well. This might also indicate that such a group would have settled in a separate part of the countryside, building their own community without disturbing their neighbour's traditions.

Orientation of the Grave

The Christian orientation of the body was meant to be east–west. Therefore the alignment of the body is one of the characteristics of a grave that potentially could provide information regarding any influence from Christianity. However, the orientation of the body in a grave is rarely obvious; the skeleton is seldom preserved, and many graves have been excavated unprofessionally. Nevertheless, it is sometimes possible to reconstruct the orientation on the basis of the distribution of the finds, for example, from the position of the sword, which normally was placed along the side of the deceased, with the grip close to the arm, pointing downwards. Brooches can also be used to reveal the position of the head in the grave.

Gender

The concept of gender is important to several aspects of my work. Firstly, it is sometimes difficult to decide if an assemblage of finds are from a grave or not, due to the lack of information regarding contextual circumstances. The skeleton is rarely preserved, and even more rarely has the sex been determined on the basis of an osteological analysis. In this situation it is helpful to know what can be termed the 'standard gender kit' which I shall now summarize (see Stoodley 1999). Secondly, Gräslund has claimed that women were especially eager pioneers in the Christianization process in Sweden (Gräslund 2002). Even though this theory has been criticized (Hvass 2003), it is interesting to see if it can be supported by Norwegian evidence as well. Thirdly, but no less importantly, it is valuable to know whether a potential decorative element like a cross pendant has been found in a grave that is male or female. Even if fine dress accessories are found in male graves, it seems that men, in contrast to women, rarely used jewellery. An object like a cross pendant would therefore be more likely to be interpreted as a religious symbol of belief if found in a male grave; in a female grave it can also be interpreted as a purely decorative object, even if it is plain.

More male than female graves have, in general, been found in Norway. For instance, among the 1501 excavated grave monuments from the late Iron Age in central Norway, roughly each fourth grave is a female grave (ratio *c.* 1200:300)

(Nilsen 1997: 51). The reason for this has been debated: one possibility is that more female babies than male were exposed (abandoned), but even so this cannot account for the full discrepancy. Monumental graves at striking locations are over-represented in our records because they are more easily observed than others, and other aspects of source criticism could also affect the picture of the grave forms. Grave goods as well as grave forms present similar difficulties: a sword, a spearhead, or an axe are much easier to spot and recognize by ploughing than a bead or a small brooch, for example. A grave without any distinguished markers above ground and with no grave goods is difficult to notice at all. Moreover, it is arguable that the contours of a round mound are easier to see than an oval mound that blends in more easily with natural formations (Skre 1996: 565). In central Norway, long and oval mounds are primarily female graves, while male graves are predominately found in round mounds (Nilsen 1997: 83). Even if this pattern is not as obvious in other regions of Norway, our selected material shows this tendency, and the appearance of the burial monuments should be considered to be potentially gendered. As a result of these various factors, we may be dealing with a situation where male graves and graves containing male grave goods may be over-represented in our records.

How the gender of the grave's inhabitant should be decided is a moot point, particularly when it is determined according to factors other than skeletal analysis. Several projects, such as Iron Age Man in Denmark, have proved that it is fairly safe to determine sex on the basis of grave objects. One result of this project was the finding that weapons (including axes and riding equipment) were only found in male graves throughout the entire Iron Age period, while spindle whorls and spindle hooks were only found in female graves. Additionally, male graves from the Viking period contained blacksmith's equipment, while annular brooches were found exclusively in male graves. Some female graves contained tortoise-shaped and disc-shaped brooches, trefoil buckles, arm-rings, and neck ornaments, and some also had caskets. Beads, however, were not necessarily exclusively female items. In the Viking period, both sexes could possess various buckles, combs, clay pots, wooden vessels, knives, coins, and whetstones (Sellevold, Hansen, and Jørgensen 1984: 233–34). Anglo-Saxon graves have been similarly divided regarding the grave goods found in male and female graves, the main groups being 1) weapons; 2) dress accessories and jewellery; 3) personal equipment, such as combs and tweezers; 4) other objects, for instance pots. In addition to these categories, graves without grave goods also occur. Only the two first groups were found to be gender specific. However, in the Anglo-Saxon cases, weapons were not exclusively associated with males. A small number of all types of weapons,

except axes, were recovered from female graves as well (Stoodley 1999: 29). In spite of the fact that weapons have occasionally been found in female graves, Stoodley argues that this exception does not change the rule that weapons and tools are predominantly found in male graves, while jewellery, dress fasteners, weaving tools, and strap items tend to be found in female graves. The overall result in Stoodley's cluster analyses is that biological sex was the underlying factor for the cultural behaviour in burial rites, and in the grave goods that were provided for the deceased (Stoodley 1999: 48).

Stoodley uses the terms 'feminine assemblage' or 'female kit' in contrast to the 'male kit', as well as 'ambiguous gender', 'blurred gender', and 'graves without sex-linked gender' (Stoodley 1999). Only around 2 per cent had the 'wrong gender kit' in relation to biological sex in Stoodley's results. Stoodley's interpretation of this is that gender is very important, and that the few exceptions confirm the rule. He also found that the standard male kit was established in early Anglo-Saxon graves by the fifth century, while the female kit was established slightly later, but both were firmly in place by the sixth century (Stoodley 1999: 74–90). Similarly, in Sam Lucy's analysis of material from Anglo-Saxon graves, a small number were found to be associated with the 'wrong' sex, but more graves did not contain any jewellery or weapons at all. Lucy concluded that one should be more careful in inferring gender from Anglo-Saxon graves. However, Lucy also concluded that biological sex was an important expression in the burial rites, as well as age and social position (Lucy 1998: 48, 107).

Dagfinn Skre used the following gender criteria for Iron Age finds from eastern Norway:

Funn av sverd, spydspiss, skjoldbule eller øks samlet eller enkeltvis regnes som mannsgrav, dersom ikke funnomstendighetene skulle tilsi noe annet. Funn av ett eller flere smykker regnes som gravfunn. Spinnenhjul, perler, nøkkel, nål, nålehus, og lignende er regnet som kvinnegrav, men ikke dersom en av gjenstandstypene er funnet alene. (Skre 1996: 565)

(The finding of a sword, spearhead, shield buckle, or axe either together or as single finds counts as a male grave, if the find circumstances do not tell us anything else. The find of one or two pieces of jewellery counts as grave finds. A spindle whorl, bead, key, needle, needle house and the like are regarded as evidence of a female grave, but not if one of these objects is found alone.)

Keys and locks are specific to female graves, at least in Trøndelag, and also in Hordaland where finds include three bronze keys that might be St Peter's keys (Gellein 1997, Nordeide 1999). A key and a lock were also among the grave goods in one of the two graves in this investigation in which the biological sex was determined to be female. The tradition of keeping keys and locks as female items

was still alive in the medieval period, as can be conjectured from a passage in the Borgarting Codification, which was valid for the Oslofjord region (Viken):

Hvis nu en mand fraraner sin hustru nøkler eller laaser, da er han skyldig at bøte 3 mærker. (Torleiv Olafson's Preface to *Ældre Borgartingslov*: 1, 1914a: 17)

(If a man takes the keys and locks from his wife, he is guilty and must pay a penalty of 3 *mærker*.) (1 mark = 215.8 g. silver.)

In the urban settlement area of Trondheim, spindle whorls seem to be a gender-specific tool for females from the late Viking period through the Middle Ages. In spite of the fact that a (male?) shoemaker might have also used a spinning whorl, this artefact was not found in the production waste from a shoemaker in medieval Trondheim (Nordeide 2003). Keys and spindle whorls are relatively rare in graves and therefore should not be used as basic criteria for gender classification, but they can act as supplementary evidence.

I find Stoodley's concept of a standard gender kit useful, but as the skeletons that form the basis of my analysis are rarely sexed, I have based the gender identification predominantly on grave objects. As previous projects concerning the late Iron Age have observed, the most reliable indications of female gender are jewellery and dress accessory finds, while the presence of weapons is the strongest link with male gender, and this is the criteria followed here as well, though there may be exceptions.

For the purpose of analysing graves included in this volume I have divided the graves into four groups on the basis of grave goods: 1) graves dominated by weapons, probably male; 2) graves dominated by jewellery, probably female; 3) graves containing finds from both these categories, probably indicating that both genders are represented; and 4) graves with finds that are not particularly convincing either way.

The existence of only one object in the form of a simple weapon — for instance, one arrowhead — or jewellery — such as one bead — is not enough to classify a grave as male or female, especially if other objects do not support this interpretation, but one sword is a more convincing indication of a male grave than one arrowhead. Arrows were useful both for fighting and hunting, and even if neither of these activities were typically female, a woman was probably more likely to participate in hunting than in fighting. The dress accessory is probably a more reliable indication of a female grave because it was a specific dress item that a male would probably not have worn. In early Icelandic law it was even forbidden for men to wear women's clothing and vice versa (Sørensen 1993).

Even if comparable legal prescriptions are not mentioned specifically in the early law codes from medieval Norway, it is likely that the position was similar. Up to the present day, there have been relatively big differences between the clothes worn by men and women and the everyday items typically used in their daily lives. With this in mind, it seems reasonable to assume that the general distribution of the material culture related to my investigation will reveal patterns related to gender and social structure. It is with this assumption in mind that I now turn to a discussion of the Christianization process in medieval Norway.

THE CHRISTIANIZATION PROCESS: AN OVERVIEW

In studies on the Christianization of Norway, scholars who base their research on documentary sources tend to confine themselves to the same thematic parameters as those employed by the medieval writer Snorri Sturluson, that is to say, medieval Norway, Christianity, and Norse religion, but with the question of Saami population rarely brought into the equation. Elsewhere, in studies in which evidence from material culture is key, the primary focus is on geographical areas. Most of the archaeological research relevant to the Christianization process in Norway is based on graves and church sites, and other non-Christian places or constructions with cultic functions have rarely been traced. It seems that the extremely varied burial customs, the ever-growing number of excavated monuments, and the ever-expanding corpus of documentary evidence have probably prevented scholars from studying the archaeological material from this time on a national level. In the past few decades, this has been a particular challenge for contextual archaeology because of the high level of detail required for both artefacts and contexts. Therefore while analyses relevant to the Christianization process have been carried out, they only cover small geographical areas or shorter sections of the chronological period. To a large extent, the studies have concentrated on traces of the Christian, Norse, or Saami religions individually and have not given much thought to the relationship between them in various regions on a national level (Solberg 2000: 314). Although the main objective here is not the nature of these religions, but the change of religion, background information on these religions is needed, especially where it has relevance for research based on archaeological sources.

Norse Religion and the Christianization of the Norse

Traces of Norse Religion in Place Names and Documentary Sources

In addition to the archaeological material that is the focus of my research, the main sources for Norse religion are runic inscriptions, toponymic evidence, and written sources (such as sagas and poems). In documentary sources, Norse religion is described as a polytheistic religion. Evidence from place names supports this picture, and this has been important for contextualizing possible locations where non-Christian cult activity may have taken place. Place name combinations using gods' names such as Ull, Frey, Ty, and Thor can sometimes be interpreted as traces of significant places that were once used for cult activity linked to the respective god. However, some of these names were also popular men's names in Norway at the time, and so the place name could have been associated originally with a farmer who at some time resided on or cultivated the land. In order for a place name to be unquestionably *theoforic* (that is, containing a god's name) in origin, Jan de Vries has argued that it should be a combination of a god's name and a name related to cultic worship (De Vries 1956–57, 1: 48). To address some of the difficulties associated with using sacred place names in the study of the history of religion, Håkan Rydving has suggested categorizing place names according to whether they contain theoforic, cultic, or sacred linguistic elements. Furthermore, he has argued that for a name to be considered as theoforic in origin, it should normally be in the genitive, for instance 'Torshov'. Rydving has grouped the names into four groups: 1) those that are both cultic and theoforic; 2) those that are cultic but not theoforic; 3) those that are theoforic but not cultic; 4) those that are neither theoforic nor cultic. Group 1 is the best source, as also argued by De Vries above, while group 4 is the most difficult to study in order to reach reliable conclusions (Rydving 1990). The place names are not distributed evenly around Norway, which could indicate major regional variations both in terms of which gods were worshipped where and the different forms of cult activity practised. To give one example, place names indicating the presence of a cult of Thor are found only in southern Norway (Nordeide 2006).

Additionally, places with combinations of words such as *hov*, *hof*, *vang*, *lund*, and *horg* may pay witness to traces of ancient cults, but the actual meaning of these names is not certain and their reliability varies (Olsen 1915, Olsen 1978 [1926], Rygh 1897–1936). Magnus Olsen thought that the name *horg* was likely to reflect a cult building, but Jørn Sandnes later voiced doubts as to whether *horg* could be linked to cult activity at all, arguing that *horg* referred to a particular type

of big rock formation (Sandnes 1964). Sandnes based his theory on the fact that this is the meaning of the word *borg* in Central Norway, and while there may be semantic differences across various Norwegian dialects, the word *harg* is interpreted similarly in Swedish examples (Zachrisson 2004: 166). Sandnes's theory was also supported by the archaeologist Olaf Olsen, who argued convincingly that a *hov* or *borg* did not mean a cult building, and questioned whether there had been cult buildings at all in the Norse religion (Olsen 1966). Olsen's view dominated scholarship for a long time, but his theory has since been modified. Archaeological excavations in Sweden and Denmark have revealed remains of buildings that have also been interpreted as cult buildings, for instance at Tisso in Sjælland and Uppåkra in Skåne (Jørgensen 2002, Larsson 2006). This is also the case in Norway, where similar structures have been identified (see, for instance, Gjerpe 2005: 47–151).

Some important poems interpreted as being of Viking Age origin were written in Iceland during the thirteenth century. The collection of poems known as the *Poetic Edda* (also known as the *Elder Edda* or *Sæmundar Edda*, preserved in the Codex Regius manuscript from around 1270) contains works that originated in oral tradition, including ten poems that describe the deeds of the Norse gods. The poem *Völuspá* ('The Prophecy of the Seeress') is a mythological account of the world from its creation to the time after the final, fatal battle of the gods (Steinsland and Sørensen 1999). Another important source of information is *Hávamál* ('The Sayings of the High One'), a compilation of gnomic wisdom and snippets of mythical information that is largely spoken in the voice of Odin. A similarly useful text is *Skírnismál* ('The Lay of Skirnir'), which tells the story of the god Frey (*Freyr*) and his love for the giantess (*jötunn*) Gerd (*Gerðr*). Other key medieval sources that provide us with information about the mythology of Norse religion and life in the Viking Age are Snorri Sturluson's *Prose Edda* — written around 1220 but with its earliest extant manuscript dating to around 1300 — and his *Heimskringla* from around 1230, a collection of kings' sagas beginning with the legendary dynasty of the Ynglings (Steinsland and Sørensen 1994: 22–24). The first part of Snorri's *Edda*, *Gylfaginning* ('The Tricking of Gylfi'), is particularly informative, describing the deeds and characters of the Norse gods and structured according to a framework of the creation and destruction of the world.

Based on literary sources such as these, Norse religious perspectives can be reconstructed tentatively (Steinsland 2000, Steinsland 2005, Steinsland and Sørensen 1994, Steinsland and Sørensen 1999). It seems that the people of the Viking Age saw the world as a round disc divided into three concentric circles: in the centre was Asgard (*Ásgarðr*), the home of the gods; surrounding *Ásgarðr* was Midgard (*Miðgarðr*), where humans lived; and outside *Midgarðr* was Utgard

(*Útgarðr*), where dwelt the enemies of the gods and humans, such as giants and other kinds of undesirables. Even if the word *As* is a general term for god, the gods belonged to different families, the *Æsir* and *Vanir*. The world serpent *Miðgarðsorm* — child of the god Loki and the giantess Angrboda — lived in the ocean surrounding Midgard and kept the world together by biting his tale (Steinsland 2000, Steinsland 2005, Steinsland and Sørensen 1994, Steinsland and Sørensen 1999). This creature fulfilled a duel function, born of the powers of chaos whilst also keeping the world in order. Humans therefore depended on it to live in *Miðgarðr* (Steinsland 2000: 32). In the middle of *Ásgarðr* stood the cosmic tree, *Yggdrasil*, growing simultaneously through the three levels of the world: from the underworld to the sphere of the living and up into the sky (Figure 2) (Steinsland and Sørensen 1994: 28–30). Together, these elements create a picture of a world consisting of three dimensions, both horizontally and vertically, with *Yggdrasil* at the centre linking all parts together. The name *Yggdrasil* means ‘Ygg’s horse’, and *Yggr* was one of the many names of Odin (Price 2002: 100–07), which illustrates the multilayered mythological resonances of *Yggdrasil*. The tree was fixed in the ground by three roots: one in *Ásgarðr*, one in the home of giants where *Ginnungagap* once was, and one in the realm of the dead, *Niflheim*. By one of the roots there was a spring called the well of *Mimir*, filled with wisdom, while the well of *Urd* (*Urðr*) was located by another root. *Urðr* was one of three female Norns — along with *Verdandi* and *Skuld* — who represented the three stages of time and destiny. *Yggdrasil* thrived by taking water from *Urðr*’s well, and this water dripped back from the tree to the ground, thus making the world a green place (Steinsland and Sørensen 1994: 31–32). There was also a squirrel, *Ratatösk*, a messenger who took messages between different creatures living in various parts of the tree. *Yggdrasil* thus combined life and fertility, wisdom and destiny, while also acting as a communicative medium in the widest sense of the word. *Yggdrasil* was a truly cosmic tree, binding different levels of life, space, and time together and symbolizing the world, life, and eternity. Given the significance accorded to *Yggdrasil* in Norse mythology, it is quite likely that trees in general, or rather special trees, may have been important to the cosmology and cult of the Viking Age.

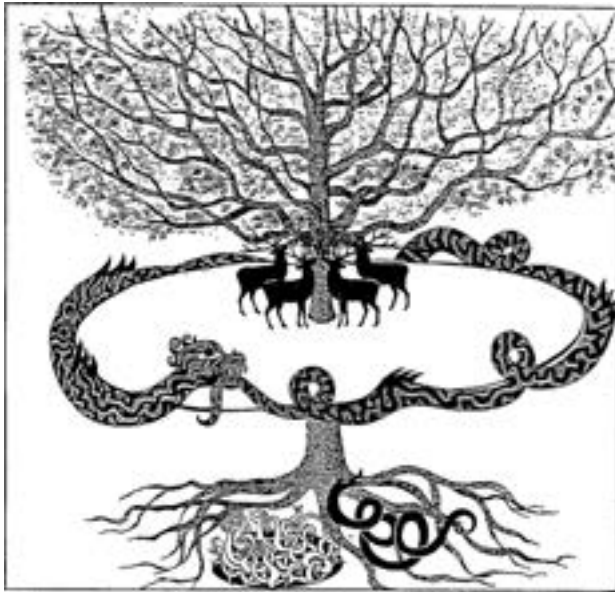


Figure 2. *Yggdrasil*, as pictured by Gro Mandt and the illustrator Ellinor Moldeklev Hoff (Mandt 1996: 36). Reproduced by the permission of Mandt and Hoff.

Such a cosmic tree — a symbol of life, immortality, and wisdom — is not unusual in the worldviews of various cultures. In the Old Testament there are references to trees of immortality and wisdom (Eliade 1976: 86–88), while in the New Testament even Jesus’s cross is described as a tree rising from earth to Heaven — the tree of life — facilitating communication between Heaven and Earth (Eliade 1974 [1958]: 292–94, Eliade 1975: 119).

The stories told in the written sources include stories about how the world was created, and also about how it will be destroyed by *Ragnarök*. The first humans Ask and Embla were created from two figures lying on the ground, shaped by dwarves who themselves came into being when female giantesses visited Asgard (Steinsland and Sørensen 1994: 37–38). Ask and Embla were then given life by Odin and his brothers. Thus human life came about as a result of cooperation between the powers of good and evil.

In the pantheon as it is so described in the medieval Christian sources, we find gods with many individual qualities and character traits. Some of them specialize in matters of fertility (particularly the Vanir, Njörd, Frey, and Freyja), some in fighting and warfare (such as Thor), and some are well known for the negative parts they play in the mythical stories, particularly Loke, whose role as a trickster

and calumniator of the gods sets him in sharp contrast to the god Balder, who is both handsome and kind. Most of the gods are known for several attributes, however, with the most important gods such as Thor and Odin possessing numerous nicknames and characteristics.

Many scholars have tried to interpret the grave material in relation to various references made in the written sources. Some have sought to link specific gods to archaeological objects and culturally significant monuments, but with varying degrees of success. Nevertheless, Anne Stine Ingstad has suggested quite convincingly that the central female of the Oseberg grave was a person of high social and religious rank, who fulfilled the roles of cult leader and Freyja's priestess, a *hofgyðja* (Ingstad 1982). Some of the objects found in the grave are similar to objects identified on tapestries, interpreted as a symbolic, figurative language that provides information about the dead person(s). Objects such as staffs, lamps, wagons, and oversized figures could indicate religious and cultic activity. A stick in the grave could have been a staff of sorcery, and at least one of the two women from the Oseberg grave could have been a *völva*: 'The staff was the attribute of the *völva*, the sibyl, and *völva* means "bearer of the staff"' (Ingstad 1995: 142). The nine cats decorating the wagon also signify a special relationship with Freyja, as the cat was thought to have particular associations with the goddess (Ingstad 1982, Ingstad 1995). Later analyses have, to some degree, supported these theories (Røthe 1994: 154–56, Heide 2006, Price 2002).

It is always tempting to tie the unknown to the known, and to force the anonymous archaeological material to fit historically known persons or events. This can again be illustrated by our most famous Viking Age grave at Oseberg, for there have been many attempts to identify the buried 'queen' with names from the written sources. The most common identification is with figures known from the sagas connected to the Yngling dynasty, such as Asa and Alfhild (Ingstad 1982). Conversely, a runic inscription with the woman's name Sigríð is recorded as having been found on a bucket in the Oseberg grave, but this is never mentioned in scholarship as a possible identification for either of the two women buried in the grave.¹

¹ James Knirk (University of Oslo) has cast reasonable doubt on the interpretation of this particular runic inscription (personal communication, 24 July 2008). This does not however change my point that scholars have ignored the inscription, preferring to link the women to names from the sagas.

Norse Cult Prior to the Coming of Christianization

As mentioned at the beginning of this volume (see 'History and Background' in Chapter 1), Engelstad had concluded with regard to the eastern parts of Norway that Christian impulses came by way of water, along the coast and rivers from western Norway, via Valdres to Toten-Hadeland, from Østfold along the River Glomma to Solør-Odal, and from Oslofjord to Ringerike. He saw the increase in inhumations in Gudbrandsdalen (where cremations had been the dominant form of funeral practice) as a result of a gradual process of Christianization (Engelstad 1929). On a broader level and contrary to Engelstad's results, it has more recently been argued that in inner parts of eastern Norway more Norse graves from the tenth and eleventh centuries have been found than from the ninth century. This is different from Østfold, where only four graves are dated as late as 950–1000 (Solberg 2000: 314).

This result stands in contrast to the results from a local study of one of the valleys in eastern Norway, Hallingdal, which shows that there are only a few graves from the period 1000–1100 compared to the earlier period (Carlstrøm 1994). The counties of Østfold and Vestfold along the Oslofjord show a marked difference during the Viking Age: Vestfold had, for instance, four times more Norse graves than Østfold, not including the Kaupang graves. The urban site of Kaupang from the early Viking Age in Vestfold is alone surrounded by a minimum of *c.* 700 graves at various cemeteries (Stylegar 2007: 65). But as the only known, urban site in Norway from this time, it is very special and not necessarily directly comparable to the general material in the region. In rural areas of Vestfold there were many huge mounds and prestigious objects — weapons, jewellery, tools, and rattles — that were totally absent from Østfold. While cremations more or less equalled inhumation graves in Vestfold, cremations completely dominated the graves in Østfold. The number of graves generally decreased from the ninth century, but in Vestfold the number increased again during the tenth century. Vestfold experienced what is called a 'pagan revival' during the tenth century, but in the period 950–1000 there was a sudden decrease in grave goods. A reduction in the number of graves has been interpreted as the result of Christian influence from Denmark, which would indicate that this influence was stronger in Østfold than in Vestfold. In Vestfold the horseman's grave and huge barrows have been interpreted as being the result of stronger resistance to the Danes in Vestfold than in Østfold (Kisuule 2000). This conclusion is much the same as previous results from the Viking Age in Østfold and Vestfold, including the graves from Kaupang (Forseth 1993: 196, 227). The

frequency of animal bones present in the graves increased, as did the ratio of male graves from the ninth to the tenth century in the approximately four hundred graves around Kaupang (Lia 2001). Recent excavations at Kaupang date the urban settlement mainly to the period 800–840/850, with the later, non-urban settlement continuing to around 960/980 (Pilø 2007). The gender pattern of the later graves should thus be interpreted in a different social context to that of the urban settlement.

A marked difference can be observed between inner and coastal areas in the south-eastern part of Aust-Agder. Only one grave can be dated to after 950, a male burial probably dating from the eleventh century, located by the coast at Bringsvær. The stone cist in this grave has been interpreted as being the result of influence from the insular area and early Christian graves, with the grave itself considered to be a Norse grave influenced by Christianity. In Setesdal the number of Norse graves increased from the ninth to the tenth century, and there are also graves from the eleventh century. In Vest-Agder only five out of forty graves could be dated to the tenth century and only one from the period 950–1000. One explanation for this distribution pattern is that Christianity was firmly established by the middle of the tenth century. A series of late stray weapon finds in Agder, however, leads Bergljot Solberg to conclude that the eleventh-century Norse grave cult was also widespread in Agder, and not only in Setesdal (Solberg 2000: 314).

Investigations into the Christianization process in western Norway have resulted in partly contradictory conclusions, due to differences in methods and also possibly in source material. Fridtjov Birkeli argued for the gradual Christianization of western Norway, suggesting that the mission reached this part of the country from the British Isles (Birkeli 1973). This theory was supported by a later study using some of the same material (that is, the high crosses) that Birkeli himself used (Gabrielsen 2002). Per Hernæs in particular has advocated western Norway as the area that was subjected to the earliest Christianizing impulses, analysing material from the southern *fylke* (region) of Rogaland. He searched for a change in Norse burial customs that might have been the result of Christian influence: for instance, a change from cremation to inhumation burials, evidence of east–west-oriented graves, the disappearance of grave goods and the appearance of candles, rock crystal, and cross symbols. As a result of his research, Hernæs suggested that Christianity was introduced to south-western Norway around AD 700 (Hernæs 1995: 113). However, Kristin Gellein's analysis of the same type of material produced the opposite result for the neighbouring *fylke*, Hordaland, for no traces of Christian influence during the Merovingian period were found here. The Norse burial customs increased and flourished during the tenth century, but

during the eleventh century a drastic decrease took place before these burials came to a relatively sudden full stop. Gellein's interpretation of this is that there might have been a longer period of Christian influence in the region, but the conversion itself came about quickly (Gellein 1997: 97). A more local study of Etne in Hordaland came to similar conclusions (Madsen 1998: 82).

At Vik, as at other places in Sogn and Fjordane, the number of detected Norse graves increased from the Merovingian to the Viking period, but decreased from the ninth to the tenth century. This has been interpreted as either the result of the influence of Christianity or the consolidation of land ownership into larger manor-like farms. More imported material is found at Vik than at other places in Sogn, and some of the female graves were found to be the richest, many containing insular material thought to be the consequence of marriage alliances between persons from an Irish community and Vik (Bødal 1998). In the region of Trøndelag there are no Norse graves dateable with certainty to later than the middle of the tenth century (Nordeide 1997a). Yet interestingly, a site has been excavated at Hove, Åsen in Nord-Trøndelag that has been interpreted as a possible place of cult activity. At this place, the name of which indicates an old cult, there seems to have been continuous activity throughout the first millennium AD, after which time the activity came to an end (Farbregd 1986a). Solberg's study of Iron Age Norway has identified general differences between regions. For instance, in Sogn, Nordfjord, and at the northern parts of Sunnmøre, a marked decrease in the number of Norse graves between the ninth and the tenth centuries can be observed, in contrast to Hordaland where the numbers increased. Furthermore, hardly any Norse graves from the eleventh century have been found. In light of this evidence, Solberg draws the following conclusion:

Hedendommen synes således å ha hatt et sterkere grep i Hordaland enn i øvrige deler av Vestlandet. (Solberg 2000: 315)

(Pagan religion thus seems to have had a stronger impact on Hordaland than on other parts of Western Norway.)

Solberg's conclusion is that Christianity had a significant influence on Norway during the tenth century, except on the inner eastern regions, Agder, Trøndelag, and in the north. In these parts, he argues, there are no traces of a conversion to Christianity before the eleventh century. Furthermore, Christianity can be traced in the coastal areas from Vest-Agder to Møre during a time coinciding with the reign of King Håkon the Good, which suggests that Birkeli was right when he claimed that King Håkon made some effort to make his kingdom Christian (Solberg 2000: 312–15).

Late Iron Age burial traditions in the Norwegian area vary, and there may be large variations even within small areas, with such divergences apparently associated more with place than time (see, for instance, Næss 1972, Næss 1996: 124). Furthermore, compared to other countries in Europe where the official² conversion to Christianity took place roughly at the same time, burial customs were more heterogeneous in the Norwegian area. For instance, burial customs among the Slavs were relatively uniform, generally in the form of cremation burials in small mounds (Urbanczyk and Rosik 2007: 272).³

Recent research from Sweden, however, tends to show bigger differences across Scandinavia than previously assumed. The complexity of the death rituals was previously ignored, with the assumption being that burial customs were interpreted primarily as *reflections* of Norse mythology and religion, and were more or less the same all over Viking Age (southern) Scandinavia (Svanberg 2003: 141–42). Fredrik Svanberg argues that there were perhaps supraregional burial traditions shared by a small social elite, but that the majority of people lived a highly localized life, with a varied cult practice. Archaeology in Norway follows similar trends as in Sweden, and this may mean that earlier results in Norway oversimplified the picture too, compared to more recent analyses.

From a source-critical point of view, this complicates the study of religious change in Norway: one cannot know for certain if the described (lack of) variations in early scholarly work are representative or not, or if lack of variation in descriptions of late Iron Age burial material could be explained by the focus on similarities rather than differences. The study of Christianization should thus as far as possible be based on primary sources, examined in relation to the rites from the period before any considerable influence occurred from Christianity. It would be easier to identify changes if the non-Christian cult had been practised in the same way everywhere, but unfortunately it was not.

Saami Religion and the Christianization of the Saami

One of the sources for the study of Saami religions are the Saami drums. Several articles have been published, first and foremost by Ernst Manker as early as 1935

² By this I am referring to significant events deemed crucial for the Christianization of the country, such as the conversion of the king, the death of the patron saint, or a decision at a Thing.

³ A general overview can be found in Berend 2007a, and at the associated web page <<http://christianization.hist.cam.ac.uk>>.

(Manker 1935). However, many of these studies have been criticized for making the interpretations fit previous models:

It is all too easy to build whole systems of interpretations on ready-made ideas about the drums, systems which are self-confirming because of the multitude of possible interpretations of each figure. (Rydving 1991: 46)

It has been argued by Neil Price amongst others that there are some similarities between the Saami and Norse religions, with the Saami borrowing elements from their southern neighbours. Examples of this are the identification of *seið* and other rituals associated with Odin, and the fact that Saami religions had a thunder-god equal to the Norse god Thor, known as Horágallis in the North Saami dialect (Price 2002: 233). The most important gods for birth and death were female (such as Sáráhkka and Juhksáhkka), and it was the female goddess Jábmeáhkka who dominated the place of the dead (Schanche 2000: 260). The Saami population has traditionally often been ignored by archaeologists (Schanche and Olsen 1985). For example, Solberg states:

I Nord-Norge er det omtrent like mange funn fra 900-tallet som fra 800-tallet. Her er også enkelte graver fra 1000-tallet [...]. Det tyder på at hedendommen var livskraftig til ut på 1000-tallet. (Solberg 2000: 315)

(In northern Norway there are roughly the same number of finds from the tenth as from the ninth century, in addition some graves are also from the eleventh century. This indicates that paganism was vital until the eleventh century.)

In this statement, Solberg appears to automatically discount the religious beliefs of the Saami people, for their non-Christian belief systems lived on much longer than those of the Norse. This is part of the problem for this area of research: the history of Norway has been written for and by the majority of the people, and the cultural heritage of the Saami as a minority has been ignored. Consequently, often too little is known about their religious rituals to interpret any surviving traces satisfactorily, or on occasions even to separate Saami material evidence from that left by the Norse.

We generally know most about the Saami religion and ritual places in the north of Norway. Although the burial forms have varied, one strong tradition is inhumation graves located in scree, or else in or under rock formations with the deceased often wrapped in birchbark and occasionally accompanied by a sleigh. These types of graves have only been identified in northern Norway, the southernmost ones from Nord- and Sør-Trøndelag comprising only a few finds (Schanche 2000: 154–87). While the dates of these graves in the north range from around 900 BC to the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries AD, there are only seven graves

from Trøndelag, dated from around AD 1300–1800 (Schanche 2000: 190). From the area that is the focus of this current investigation (Map 1) none of these typical Saami graves are recorded.

As far as we know from excavations in northern Norway, bare stone was a significant part of Saami burial customs, and the stone may have been seen as a passage to the underworld (Schanche 2000: 284). Animals and dress accessories were common grave goods in both Norse and Saami cultures, but the standard weapons and rich household equipment and boats that we find in many of the Norse graves seem to be missing in the Saami graves (Schanche 2000: 192–218). In particular, the oval buckles worn as dress fasteners, one on each shoulder, are regarded as signalling Norse identity (Eldorhagen 2001: 96).

The fact that we know little about the Saami religion in the south is a problem for this project. Although this area of research has been increasingly focused upon in recent scholarship, still not much has been done. Nor has it been easy to be certain of how to interpret our findings. The location of Saami settlement areas in southern parts of Norway is still a matter for discussion, as is the question of when these areas were occupied. For instance, a hammer for a Saami cultic drum was found in Øvre Rendalen, which is north of Våler in eastern Norway. This hammer has been dated to the twelfth or thirteenth centuries (Christensen 1993, Fjellheim 1992, Haarstad 1992)⁴ and was found in a heap of stones that had been heated and mixed with earth and ash, together with four spindle whorls, a spearhead, an arrowhead, a spur, a knife, scissors, and some unfinished products of soapstone and bone. The spur has been dated to the fifteenth century, and a combination of the objects and their age could indicate a heap of rubbish rather than a grave cairn. This makes it difficult to understand why and how this single find of a Saami hammer ended up here.

I selected the municipality of Snåsa as a sample area for an archaeological investigation into whether any traces of the Saami religion could be detected in surviving material evidence. Snåsa lies in a region inhabited by a southern group of Saami; down to modern times there has always been a considerable Saami population in Snåsa and their historical presence in this district probably goes back a long time. Yet none of the graves in the museum archives are identified as Saami, for the widespread neglect of their part in Norwegian history has been particularly problematic in southern regions.⁵ However, from what we know,

⁴ The catalogue number at the Kulturhistorisk museum, Universitetet i Oslo (the University of Oslo's Museum of Cultural History) is C26831a.

⁵ See, for instance, the article in *Snåsningen* 25/6-2008.

Saami graves can in any case be difficult to trace. The deceased could be placed in trees, directly on the ground, or on wooden tripods (Schanche 2000: 164). To give an example, a Saami woman called Malena Torkelsen (*aahka Meele*) died at the age of 83 in 1954. She died while sitting on the sunny side of Sjaarevaerie where she was smoking a pipe and was found a year later, with her rucksack and fishing rod beside her (Jåma and Fjellheim 1993: 27–28). Her body was collected and buried at the cemetery, but if this had not happened, it would have been difficult to locate where she had died. However, Malena's death is probably not typical, as the Saami people were few and marginalized in Snåsa during this period.

In Saltfjellet in the outer part of Namdalen, north-west of Snåsa, a bear grave typical of this area has been radiocarbon-dated to as late as AD 1530–1665. The complete skeleton of a bear was found buried by a big stone, with one of the corner teeth deliberately removed and the jawbone split (Dunfjeld-Aagård 2005: 93–98). This proves that it should be possible to find Saami, non-Christian graves of a late date in the region, but the graves investigated are still too few in number to reach a conclusion regarding the chronology and character of the material. As Iron Age graves in general are quite varied, more systematic analyses regarding this issue are needed in order to be able to identify the ethnicity of the graves from this period.

Even if several individual Saami had been christened at an earlier date (see, for instance, Mundal 2006; Mundal 2007), the Saami people as a population were Christianized in three major stages. Firstly, they were converted in Nord-Troms and Finnmark where they probably became familiar with Christianity as a result of the Norse colonization during the fourteenth century. Secondly, the Eastern Saami people in Finnmark were converted by the Greek-Orthodox Church from around 1500. Finally, the remaining Saami were Christianized by Norwegian missionaries during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. For instance, in 1723 eight Saami drums, used in Saami rituals, were collected in Snåsa as part of the Norwegian efforts to Christianize the Saami population (Dunfjeld-Aagård 2005: 93–98). It should be noted that it appears that in the northern regions the Orthodox Church tolerated a wider range of variations and local adjustments among the Saami converts compared to areas dominated by the Roman Church. The Saami practised burial traditions that were not very different from their old traditions, even if they were baptized and considered to be Christians (Svestad and Barlindhaug 2003: 9–10).

The Christianization of the Saami is at the fringe of the selected material and the main objective in this book, both in terms of time and space, and in terms of the current state of scholarly knowledge. Moreover, the research concerning the

southern Saami cult provides only meagre opportunities to recognize Saami traces of cult at present, and thus to gain new knowledge about the Saami cult and their process of Christianization.

Early Christianity and Christianization

Over a long period, the Christianization of Norway brought about a change of religion, but it is sometimes difficult to separate the concept of religious change from a fundamental change of religion (see 'Religious Symbols' in Chapter 2). To some extent, a new religion may adjust to local customs, and local variations may differ so much from the original blueprint that it can be hard to tell which religion it actually is. Furthermore, internal religious changes may result in different sub-groups and sects. However, if the differences are major, the question is whether this is still the same religion, or whether the differences are too fundamental to be accepted as part of the original doctrine. For instance, when it was decided that Christianity would be the official religion of Iceland at the Thing assembly of 999/1000, there were three conditions: the Icelanders should be allowed to continue to eat horse meat, abandon unwanted children, and perform their ritual sacrificial meals (Are 1963 (orig. 1122–33): 56). In light of the last condition in particular, it is reasonable to question whether the religion that the Icelanders adopted was in fact still Christianity.

The character of religious change as a theme for discussion is relevant to the Christianization of Norway, but also to the origin of Christianity itself. For decades the early Christian movement was also part of the Jewish community, and they participated in Jewish cult activities in and around the synagogue. Jesus did not think of himself as the founder of a new religion; the focus in his teaching was the kingdom of God. There was also an old Jewish tradition anticipating the arrival of a Messiah in the desert who would liberate the Jews from the heathens (Moore 1965: 107–09). In this respect Jesus was not in conflict with the Jews; however, they did not accept Jesus as the promised Messiah. For a long time the Roman authorities looked upon Christianity as one among many Jewish sub-groups (along with others such as the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the Zealots) (Skarsaune 1987: 26–32).

During the Apostolic period (AD 33–70), Peter played a decisive role among the apostles (Gerhardsson 1993: 303). In the beginning the disciples concentrated their activity on Jerusalem and addressed themselves to Jews only, avoiding towns inhabited by heathens or Samaritans. The number of apostles or missionaries — that is, twelve — was not a coincidence, for this was also the number of the tribes

of Israel, and therefore particularly significant. The area supported a multi-ethnic society, with first the Hellenistic people and then the Romans (from 63 BC) ruling Palestine, and there were certain ethnic differences even within Jews themselves (Gerhardsson 1993: 147–49). Jewish identity was not primarily a matter of ethnicity, but a matter of cult, focused on activities such as circumcision and the observance of Jewish rules of life. The concepts advocated by Jesus and his disciples were translated into different languages and different meanings were attached to them according to people's different backgrounds (Moore 1965: 118–19). While other people were more open-minded, the Jews, however, turned out to be reluctant to accept Jesus's teaching (Glaser 1973: 219–21). After a while the apostles also had more contact with mixed communities, and with religious persons who frequented the synagogues but had yet not converted to Judaism. In fact, the circles normally referred to as *hoi foboumenoi than theon* (those who fear God), seem to have been one of the main groups to first embrace Christianity outside Palestine (for more about this group see the Acts of the Apostles in the biblical New Testament). These people were mainly of Hellenistic origin and were attracted by the Jewish concept of monotheism, but did not want to become full Jews (Moore 1965, II: 122–23, Skarsaune 1987: 29–34).

After a while it became apparent that the differences between the theology of Judaism and the one spoken of by Jesus and his apostles were too great for the latter to be accepted as part of the Jewish religion. The apostle Paul has been credited with the theological formulation of the doctrine of Christianity as a religion in its own right (Glaser 1973, Moore 1965). Paul had a multi-ethnic background typical of someone living in this region at this time: he was originally called Saul of Tarsus, born of Hebrew, probably Aramaic-speaking parents who were Roman citizens. Paul was his Roman name, and Tarsus was a Greek city; but Paul went to study law in Jerusalem. He converted to Christianity after experiencing a vision of Christ in heaven on the road to Damascus, and subsequently spent several years in Arabic countries — Syria, Cilicia, Asia Minor, and Macedonia — as a refugee, missionary, and military prisoner. In the end Nero put him to death in Rome, sometime before AD 68.

Paul was aware of the fact that his gospel was his own, revealed to him by what he saw as a revelation of Jesus Christ. However, a general council in Jerusalem came to an agreement about some main points of common Christian teaching, with the participation of all the so-called 'pillars of the Church': Peter, Paul, and James the Lord's brother (Hjeldahl 1993: 234–42. See also Acts 15). At the council, Jesus Christ's divinity was confirmed, as was his identity as the Son of God and the creator of the world. The cross was established as a key symbol of

Christian belief, for by Christ's death and resurrection, salvation was offered to all mankind. Additionally, the Church was established as the body of Christ, in which his Spirit dwelt. Although Paul adopted many aspects of faith from Judaism, such as its sacred Scriptures and the idea of one god as creator and ruler of the universe, he also preached a gospel different from Judaism (Moore 1965: 125–27). Through the Acts of the Apostles and through Paul's preaching and texts in particular a new belief system was constructed, which made it necessary for Christianity to be defined as a separate religion with its own individual identity.

The spread of Christianity started as several movements, particularly in Palestine, Jerusalem, Rome, and in the Greek communities. The disciple Thomas travelled as a missionary to Iran, and groups of Thomas Christians in India credit him with founding their Church (Meistad 2000: 180). Christianity reached Rome by the fifth decade of the first century. After the attacks on Jerusalem and the temple in the year AD 70, the life of the old Christian community became difficult and the religion depended more on communities in the wider Christian diaspora beyond Palestine (Gerhardsson 1993: 334, Skarsaune 1987: 26–31). The influence of Greek thought was of special importance in this respect; from around AD 220 the Greek mysteries influenced the Church, and during the fourth century the worship of saints and icons developed in accordance with ancient traditions (Glaserapp 1973: 222). The Christian Church in the west was initially Greek-speaking, and it remained so until the end of the second century; the first Latin translation of the books of the New Testament seem to have appeared in North Africa around the year AD 200 (Skarsaune 1987: 90). The basic tenets of Catholic theology developed in the second century, and although Christian doctrine and the Christian Church as an organization eventually developed in various directions, the Christian emperors made efforts to keep only one kind of Christianity in their dominion, securing dogmatic uniformity through synods and councils such as the one in Nicæa in AD 325 (Moore 1965).

By the middle of the second century, Christian worship had developed into an elaborate, stately affair, and there were Christian congregations even in remote parts of the Roman Empire (Glaserapp 1973, Moore 1965). From the beginning, church organization was organized by the presbyters or bishops, who were trusted by the congregation. In theory, the bishops were equal to the rest of the religious community, but the church and bishop in Rome gradually became the centre of the great church of Western Christendom. Around AD 500 the bishop of Constantinople was given the title of Ecumenical Patriarch, and he claimed to have the same status as the bishop in Rome. Between 484 and 519 there was already conflict between the Western and Eastern churches, and in the ninth century the

situation became tenser again, resulting in a final break between the Latin and Greek churches in 1054 (Glasenapp 1973: 226–28).

During the third and fourth centuries an ascetic movement developed in Egypt, which soon spread to the rest of the Christian world. This was the start of monasticism (Moore 1965). Benedict of Nursia was an important reformer and organizer of Western monasticism in the sixth century, beginning with his avant-garde monastery at Monte Cassino (Glasenapp 1973: 226).

Besides baptism, the key rite in the early Church was the sacrament of the Eucharist, enabling baptized Christians to participate in a communion meal involving the body and blood of Christ. The rite of Confirmation later became an independent sacrament in its own right. From the beginning, the Church had its principal assembly on Sundays, while Wednesdays and Fridays were for fasting. Easter was already an established tradition as an annual Jewish rite — the Passover — but these associations were soon replaced by the Christian celebration of Easter in memory of the death and resurrection of Christ (Herrin 1987: 111). Probably from the fourth century onwards 25 December was celebrated as Christmas, the birth of Jesus. At this stage the role of martyrs developed: initially Christians prayed *for* those who had suffered and died for their faith, but soon the emphasis shifted and they prayed *to* them, and thus the secondary cult of saints began to develop.

The spread of Christianity was driven strongly by the Roman emperors who decided to adopt it as their own religion. For instance, Emperor Constantine (306–37), considered to be the first Christian emperor, decided that Christianity should be the official religion of Rome, even if it at this time it was the religion of only 5–10 per cent of the population. This was decided even though Constantine himself was not baptized until shortly before his death in 337 (Bagge 2004: 33, Moore 1965: 178). While it is possible that Constantine's decision was driven by religious motivations, it is also the case that the ideology of Christianity was very convenient to him, for his society was experiencing an organizational crisis. Christianity was responsive to the concept of authority and to the idea of only one ruler, with the emperor as God's representative on Earth. Thus, Christianity served as an excellent ideological tool to strengthen Constantine's reign and authority (Bagge 2004: 29–37).

Attacks on Christianity turned out to be beneficial to the spread of Christianity too: legislation against Christians or specific Christian sects — in the form of persecution and methods of execution such as crucifixion — created martyrs and saints and turned places associated with them into sites of Christian worship.

Subsequently, the religion spread gradually around Europe, although Europe as a whole has never become an exclusively Christian community.

Christianity was thus established long before the religion reached Scandinavia. Although the Roman authorities initially reacted to the Christians with organized resistance, the Roman Empire later became an important vehicle allowing Christian ideas to be disseminated widely, thus enabling the spread of this religion. During the first three centuries of its existence, Christianity had spread widely, from Britain to Iran, including all the shores around the Mediterranean, and was known even in the most peripheral provinces of the Roman Empire (Glaser 1973: 222, Skarsaune 1987). Yet until the fourth century, Christianity was only the religion of the Roman and Romanized people, and even then it was confined predominantly to the cities.

The Arrival of Christianity in North-west and Central Europe

The first significant Germanic people to embrace Catholic Christianity were the Franks in the lower Rhine area at the end of the fifth century. This region is probably particularly important as a location where Roman ideas and religious ideas could be diffused to the Germanic people. For example, it is interesting to note that the Roman cult of Mithras was similar not only to Christianity but also to the cult of Odin; this may have eased the spread of Christian ideas (Kaliff and Sundqvist 2004: 61, 99–100). Further west, Christianity was established amongst some groups in England even before it became the state religion of the Roman Empire (Stevenson 1992: 175). Yet conversely in Ireland, the population was less receptive to Christianity initially, for in the words of Edward Culleton, the early Christian Church at that time was still predominantly ‘urban-based, sophisticated, and literate and worlds apart from the largely illiterate, heroic, pagan, Celtic society of Ireland’ (Culleton 1999: 66). Nevertheless, according to written sources, Palladius had been sent from Gaul to ‘the believers in Christ’ in Ireland in 431. According to Bishop Patrick ‘many thousands’ were taken into captivity, which has been interpreted as an indication of the existence of numerous Irish converts in the late fourth century, or certainly by the early fifth century (Redknapp 1996: 738). Yet although the origin of the Ferns diocese can be traced back to the sixth century, formal dioceses were not established in Ireland until the Synod of Rathbreasail in 1111 (Culleton 1999: 180).

The Germanic invaders of Britain conquered native British Christians in the fifth and sixth centuries. Subsequently, they were themselves converted partly by Roman missionaries sent to Britain in 596 and partly by Celtic monks from

Ireland in the seventh century. Charlemagne converted the Saxons during the wars from 772 to 803. Afterwards large parts of Scandinavia, Moravia, Bohemia, and Hungary were Christianized during the ninth to the eleventh century. Russia was mostly converted from Constantinople. Finally, the Pomeranians and those in the Baltic area were converted between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries (Moore 1965: 235–37).

On the one hand, there is a great deal of variation in the ways that Christianity was spread across Europe. On the other hand, it is surprising to see how some phenomena associated with the establishment of Christianity seem to have taken place across wide geographical regions — such as the Nordic countries, central Europe, and the areas inhabited by the Rus — over a short period of time. Amongst the developments that took place in these regions during the decades around AD 1000 include the appearance of monarchies, the earliest pieces of legislation, the first production of national coins, and the appearance of the first patron saints (Berend 2007a).

Finland offers us a view of some of the latest occurrences of non-Christian cult activity and the delayed appearance of the first Christian cult. Non-Christian burial customs with cremations and grave goods continued regularly until the mid-twelfth century, and then sporadically until around 1200 (Asplund 2005, Shepherd 1999, Wickholm 2008: 28). Both the Roman and Byzantine churches tried to convert the Finns, and some scholars have argued that Christianity was established in Finland by the middle of the eleventh century, for from this time a gradual change from the old burial customs to Christian burials can be observed (Shepherd 1999: 28). The Christianization of the eastern Baltic areas was also late, and only began towards the end of the twelfth century. By this time, burial customs had changed in Lithuania, and the changes resulting from the influence from Christianity can be observed by the end of the twelfth century. The graves became east–west-oriented inhumations, with few personal belongings as grave goods. After the introduction of coinage in Lithuania by the end of the fourteenth century, however, people started to put coins in the graves, and this custom continued up to the seventeenth century. More than 5000 coins are found in graves from the fourteenth to the seventeenth centuries, and these are increasingly interpreted as ‘pagan’ remains, although they could just as plausibly be coins for St Peter (at the gates of heaven) or for Charon (the ferryman of Hades). However, other grave goods are also present, meaning that these burial rituals differ from Christian burial customs (Jarockis 2001).

As a result of the oft-repeated argument that the British Isles were the most important route through which Christian influence reached Scandinavia, it is

necessary at this point in the discussion to outline some of the theories regarding the Christianization of this region and its relationship to Scandinavia, particularly as reflected in traces of cult activity in cemeteries, churches, and churchyards. We know that people from Norway were taking part in expeditions to England at least as early as the end of the eighth century, and in this period it is also likely that Norwegians would have come across churches in Ireland during the course of their Viking raids. Indeed, the earliest known Viking raid in Ireland was in 795, during which churches and monasteries were specifically targeted (Culleton 1999: 163).⁶

It has been argued that there were particularly close links between Scandinavia and East Anglia. As the practice of ship burial is said to have started in Uppland in Sweden, and as some of the artefacts in the famous Sutton Hoo ship graves were supposedly made in Sweden, the link between Sweden and East Anglia is thought to have been particularly strong (Stevenson 1992).

The cemetery at Sutton Hoo, actively used from the late sixth/early seventh century until the end of the eighth century, contains what is probably the most famous example of English graves influenced by the late Iron Age, Scandinavian, non-Christian culture. The site has been interpreted as a princely/aristocratic cemetery demonstrating signs of antipathy towards the Christian power blocs. After this period, the place became an execution site, with the burial of criminals continuing until the eleventh century (Carver 2005: 489–92).

In the British Isles there was a mixture of different cultures practising various forms of religious cult activity. The burial traditions changed about the same time as Christianity was established, which can be explained as a consequence of religious, social, and economic change (Lucy and Reynolds 2002a). In Ireland, for example, the practice of inhumation burials seems to have been introduced through contact with Roman Britain. Slab-lined cists in which the bodies were buried with the arms loose or with the hands on the pubic area have been dated to the fifth century, and are either inserted into or distributed around prehistoric monuments (Laing 2006: 227). It is evident that formal Christian cemeteries were not yet the norm in the late seventh and early eighth centuries; late non-Christian Irish graves from the eighth century and Hiberno-Scandinavian graves from the late ninth and early tenth centuries have been found in a cave in rural south-west Ireland. This excavation proves that well into the eighth century Christianity had not yet penetrated all levels of Irish society (Connolly and Coyne 2005: 174–76). The finds may indicate a later and more problematic coexistence between

⁶ Namely, a church on Rathlin Island and the island monasteries of Inismurray and Inisbofin.

Christians and non-Christians than has been previously thought. It is otherwise difficult to explain why anybody would need this remote and hidden burial ground.

In spite of the early establishment of the Christian Church, there is evidence that Christians and non-Christians coexisted in England for a long time (Stevenson 1992). Non-Christian burial cults continued in England until the eighth century; among Scandinavians in England these customs continued until even later, and Christian burials at cemeteries without a church continued until around 1200 (Jonsson 2003, Lucy and Reynolds 2002a). In northern England inhabitants of religious communities, bishops, and kings were buried in churchyards or within churches from the mid-seventh century onwards, and the aristocracy may also have been buried in and around the major churches, or else in churches built on their own land (Hadley 2002). There is also some evidence that burials continued on the same sites from the non-Christian to the Christian period; in one case a Christian grave was even dug into an old barrow (Laing 2006: 224).

In the Anglo-Saxon period, the body was placed with the head to the west, but following a change in belief in the relationship between the body and the soul, the graves themselves changed in three ways from the ninth century (Thompson 2002): 1) the grave began to be supported by some substance, most often charcoal, spread in or above the soil; 2) a coffin was added to the grave; and 3) the grave itself was constructed of brick or stone.

It appears as though social status was still demonstrated in the graves of northern England during the period from the ninth to the eleventh centuries. The burial customs were constantly changing, and Dawn Hadley argues that it can be very difficult to identify Scandinavians or Christians on the basis of unfamiliar burial customs, and grave variations occur in different ways (Hadley 2002). The burial practices were not uniform among the indigenous population of England or their Scandinavian contemporaries whether at home or abroad. The locations of the Christian graves were not necessarily near churches, but remained fluid. This makes it even harder to separate Christian and non-Christian/graves of Scandinavian origin. Even so, the cremations were most likely performed by people of Scandinavian origins (Hadley 2002).

Burial features associated with Scandinavian settlers in England include charcoal and hogback tombs⁷ (Richards 2002). Charcoal is also found covering

⁷ According to Richards (2002: 164), hogback graves are a particularly distinctive form of Anglo-Scandinavian sculpture in the British Isles, with a particular concentration in the former Viking kingdom of York.

the ground beneath the body or in small jugs beside the body, a practice that can be observed in medieval graves from both Sweden and England (Andrén 2000, Solli 1996: 151). Features associated with Christian graves in Celtic Britain and Ireland include white quartz pebbles that may indicate that a prayer had been said, or else they could have been tokens to allow entry into heaven. The north side of the church seems to have been reserved for people murdered or killed in battle, and had therefore not received the Last Sacrament. In some cemeteries, at least in Scotland, males and females were separated, and in Carrickmore in Ireland there is a cemetery reserved for women only, a phenomenon that may be associated with members of the ascetic monastic sect known as the *Céli Dé* or the *Culdees* (Hamlin and Foley 1983, Laing 2006: 227). In the monastic cemeteries of England, Scotland, and Wales, social divisions were also made; members of the lay and monastic communities were separated by a wall, while special burial customs associated with gender or family have also been observed (Gilchrist and Sloane 2005: 35–36, 225–28).

Enclosed cemeteries were also associated with Christianity. These do not appear in England earlier than 700, and they mainly existed from the eighth to the tenth centuries. The enclosure was likely to be a rude stone wall or low earth banks with an outer ditch surrounding an oval or round area. It appears that the use of such cemeteries coincided with a shift towards more anonymous graves, and a period when people stopped using important high-status cemeteries where the focus was on status and kin groups. The more anonymous character of the graves followed the development of new theological stances on death: there was an increasing emphasis on the concept of Purgatory, so that the living were required to make greater efforts to help the dead through the process. The tradition of enclosed cemeteries possibly came from Ireland, which had a tradition of enclosed cemeteries going back to non-Christian times. Yet it seems that from the start the Church did not consider it a priority to bury most people; in Ireland at least they only took responsibility for monks and lay clients (Petts 2002). Later on there was usually a church in the cemetery and, in the Middle Ages as now, it was necessary for the churchyard to be consecrated by a bishop (Gittos 2002).

Where cemeteries at Minsters have been excavated, graves dating to after 900 tend to dominate, and in some cases the majority of graves are also high status. This indicates that during the period from 600 to 900 many — or perhaps most — people were buried in small, scattered, rural cemeteries around England. The process by which rural cemeteries and churchyards became associated with manorial sites during the early Christian period in England has been divided into three basic stages (Lucy and Reynolds 2002b):

1. An archaic stage, featuring a rural cemetery without a church. The lifespans of individual cemeteries may vary considerably, and occur as late as 1200.
2. An adaptive period, when the cemetery is less clearly defined, in chronological terms, dating to the tenth century or earlier. These cemeteries are like the archaic type before any church or chapel was built.
3. A pioneer stage, with newly founded cemeteries as a secondary consequence of the development of thegn-type residences during the tenth century. Often some time passed between construction of the residence, the building of a chapel, and the first graves. It is likely that it took some time to gain the right to be buried in such cemeteries, and the parishioners would have been required to break with earlier burial traditions once burial rights had been obtained by the new church.

During the eighth century the Christian burial rite was formalized, and new types of cemeteries appeared for those who had been denied a grave in sacred ground, such as execution cemeteries, which could hold thirty to forty individuals (mostly male). Signs of decapitation, bound hands, and hanging are common at these sites. The Anglo-Saxon high-status tumulus burials in England and Wales are looked upon as representing a challenge to the shift from the old burial traditions to the new Christian conventions. According to Lucy and Reynolds, the appearance of a well-defined social class with petty kingdoms who expressed their identity through geographically distinct graves marked a radical change. This highlights the importance of distinguishing between what happened as a consequence of social change and what happened because of religious change (Lucy and Reynolds 2002a: 1–23).

The Nordic Countries

Germany is regarded as second only to the British Isles in its importance as a channel for the spread of Christian influences to Scandinavia. Before a formal Christian organization was established in Scandinavia, the area came under the authority of the archbishopric of Hamburg, established in 831 as a centre for missions to the Nordic countries, and united with the archbishopric of Bremen in 845. However, as early as 822 Archbishop Ebo of Reims was sent to Denmark as a missionary, while over one hundred years later in 934, Archbishop Unni of Hamburg-Bremen initiated a mission to the Nordic countries and visited Birka (Tveito 2005: 28–71, 308). Archbishop Ansgar of Bremen (801–65) went to Sweden and Denmark as a missionary in the 820s/830 and again in the 850s, as

his document *Vita Ansgarii* testifies (Müller-Wille 2007). However, according to Adam of Bremen, Ansgar's mission was not very successful and left hardly any impression, particularly in Sweden. According to Adam, some Christian missionary activity in Denmark continued (Tveito 2005: 80). Some may think that the documents written about these matters exaggerated the actual results: the mission in the Nordic countries was the main purpose of the archbishopric of Hamburg-Bremen, and a lack of achievements would not have been beneficial to their cause. However, judging from the documented results, the actual achievements do seem to have been very poor.

The rulers of Denmark probably felt uneasy about the strong German emperor pressing in on their southern border. Both religious and secular authorities in the British Isles were natural allies to the Danes in this respect; it has recently been suggested that the Danish rulers had more contact and a better relationship with the British missionaries than they did with the Germans, and the Germans may have received a chillier reception as a consequence. This may again have led German literary sources by authors such as Adam of Bremen to neglect the earliest stages during which Christianity was established in Denmark, if it was in fact a result of the British missionaries (Staecker 2005).

The actions of the missionaries mentioned above are among the earliest Christian activities in Scandinavia reported in the written sources. Previously, Denmark's official conversion to Christianity was traditionally dated to the baptism of King Harald Bluetooth in around 965, but more recently it has been suggested that his father, King Gorm, paved the way for Christianity, with both he and his wife Thyra Christians by the time of their deaths (Staecker 2005). Some of the earliest churches and Christian cemeteries are found in Lund and Löddeköping. The cemetery in Lund is thought to have been established around 990, functioning as a Christian necropolis for Skåne (Carelli 2004). It has been calculated that around 3400 burials took place here, with the 125 graves with wooden coffins spread evenly throughout the period 994–1053, according to dendrochronological dating.

Much archaeological research has been done on the Christianization process in Sweden. The Christian burial customs are more standardized than their Norse counterparts in terms of alignment, grave form, treatment of the body and the lack of grave goods, but even here we find a great deal of variation (Carelli 1992). The social status of the deceased person is mostly evidenced by the design, quality, and size of the grave form, besides the location of the grave in the churchyard or the church. Medieval legislation in eastern Norway gave instructions for who could be buried where, and additional differences such as age, gender, and social

position have been found in the archaeological remains of Scandinavian churchyards (see, for instance, Arcini 1992, Cinthio 1992, Landro 2005, Vretemark 1992).

The earliest Christian cemetery in Sweden is probably found at the Viking Age urban centre of Birka, and what seems to be the earliest cross-pendant found in the Nordic countries also comes from there, dated to the tenth century. Christian influence cannot be traced by studying individual graves in Sweden, but according to Anne-Sofie Gräslund, by studying a larger number of graves the general picture becomes clear, showing a gradual change from non-Christian to Christian burial customs (Gräslund 1996). The earliest Christian graves seem to be found in or close to non-Christian cemeteries. For instance, in what are most likely Christian graves at Birka, many east–west-oriented inhumation graves with no grave goods are concentrated in one part of the cemetery, buried on top of each other (Nilsson 1996a). At some cemeteries, such as two in Västergötland, it has not been possible to trace any evidence of a church (Theliander 2005: 338).

Christian graves in both Sweden and Denmark show variations regarding body position, coffins, actual grave goods, if the body is buried fully dressed or wrapped, and so on. The organization of people by age and gender at the cemetery varies as well (see, for instance, Carelli 2004, Kieffer-Olsen 1993, Koch 2000, Redin 1976, Theliander 2005, Vretemark 1992). Additionally, some graves may contain charcoal or else may be whitened (Theliander 2005: 343).

Gräslund has followed Birkeli's divisions regarding the various phases of Christianization. Her conclusion is that Scandinavia was infiltrated by Christians probably as early as the Roman period, and then entered the phase of mission from the time of Ansgar's visit to Birka in 829–30. The establishing phase lasted until the beginning of the thirteenth century, by which time the church organization had been partly completed. The Christianization process in Sweden was slow and gradual, but probably with setbacks and cases of acculturation, such as mutual influences passing between the old and new religions. Gräslund regards the process as peaceful, with Christian cult performed at the same cult places of old, and she sees women and children as pioneers in the process (Gräslund 2002: 65–89, 127–28). Some of these conclusions are disputed, however, and discussions regarding the establishment of Christianity will continue (see, for instance, Staecker 2003).

Old religious traditions probably continued for a longer time in Finland than among Norse people. Non-Christian burials continued until around 1200 (Asplund 2005), and some peculiar flat inhumation graves have been found in old, flat cremation cemeteries where there are graves dated to the end of the eleventh/beginning of the twelfth centuries (that is to say, the transitional period between

non-Christian and Christian burials). Antique spears stuck in the ground among these inhumation graves, or coffins that are nailed with spears or other weapons, have been discussed as possible dedications to Odin, and as having strong connections with ancestors (Wickholm 2006, Wickholm 2008).

Sweden has a long coastline facing east, in contrast to Norway where the coast provided the easiest means of contact with areas to the south and west. Finland had associations with Sweden and Russia, while Denmark shared a border in the south with the strong German empire. The differences in political and geographic context may have led to large differences in the three respective countries regarding the Christianization process in the Nordic countries.

Early Christianity in Norway

Christian cult places were probably easily recognized by all believers, more homogeneously marked than the corresponding Norse and Saami cult sites. The Christian churches had to be visited relatively frequently and regularly for Mass, and consecration rituals and physical markings contributed to the institutionalization of Christian cult places. The cult building — that is, the church — had certain international rules regarding its appearance, and in spite of local adjustments, associated attributes such as crosses and sculptures probably followed European models to a greater or lesser extent. Provincial laws and other documents prescribed that the cemetery should be prepared and consecrated by the bishop, and the church and the cemetery were to be physically demarcated. It was strictly forbidden to bury the dead in cairns or burial mounds (Salvesen and Gunnes 1971: 100–05, Hagland and Sandnes 1994: 19–23, Robberstad 1969: 22–38). If people were obedient and followed the laws, a number of Christian cult places would have stood out as clear and obvious to anybody. The rituals and their physical appearance marked them out in the landscape for all Christians to see wherever they went.

Many medieval churches and sections of cemeteries have been excavated down the years and this material is of fundamental importance to our study of early Christianity in Norway. In particular, several wooden stave churches have been excavated, due to the need to restore the lower parts of the buildings. Furthermore, urban development in the few medieval towns in Norway has led to a need for excavations that also have included the uncovering of Christian material, often providing a more detailed chronology than what has been revealed by rural excavations. As a general overview of some of the material I would like first to list some facts concerning chronological dating. Table 2 presents a list of the oldest

coins found at different churches, many of which were found underneath the floors of the churches. These may give an earliest possible date for a stone church, but not for a church with a wooden floor. The wooden floors would have been repaired, replaced, and opened for burials, and the splits between the wooden planks allowed coins to slip through, either as intentional offerings or as the result of accidental loss (see, for instance, Nordeide 1989: 149–51, Skaare 1978).

Some coins have a more or less secure relationship to the various phases of Church development, and others have a specific relationship to Christian graves. As the archaeological context is often very poorly recorded for this material, the list can only give some ideas about this material's potential. It should be noted, however, that coinage in Norway began at the end of tenth century, under the reign of King Olaf Tryggvason. The coins manufactured under King Harald Hardrada (*Haraldr inn harðráði*) were very solid and produced from almost pure silver, while later coins were thin, small, and consisted of more copper than silver (Skaare 1995). Consequently, the size of the coinage, the character of the coins, and the collecting strategies will affect this picture.

Thousands of coins have been found in churches during excavations. For instance, 2245 coins alone were discovered during excavations at the stave church at Lom (Skaare 1978). The very early Kufic dirhams from Halden are from a churchyard, but they were not found in a context related to a medieval church or grave (Skaare 1976: 128). This find is more probably from a previous Iron Age grave on the site, in which such coins are occasionally found, rather than from a Christian grave. Similarly, the coins from Værnes were not found in a reliable Christian context.

The hoard found under the floor of the old medieval stone church ruins at Stein offers a more significant context. The hoard consisted of thirty-three German coins, eighteen Anglo-Saxon, three Norwegian, and one imitation of an Anglo-Saxon coin, deposited between 1023 and 1030 (Skaare 1976: 137). These finds indicate that the construction of the church occurred some time after 1023/1030. It is possible to interpret this find as a sacrifice made either in connection with the consecration of the site or at the time when the first church was constructed.

Table 2. Earliest coins found under church floors or at the sites of Christian churches and graves (based on Skaare 1976, Skaare 1978, Skre 1987: 60).

Place	Context	Date of earliest coin
Os, Halden, Østfold	Fredrikshald churchyard	742/3–834/5
Værnes Church, Nord-Trøndelag	Churchyard, c. 1.25m deep	944/5
Stein, Hole, Buskerud	Under floor, stone church	deposited 1023–30
Mære Church, Nord-Trøndelag	Under floor, stone church	991/7, 1047/74
Unidentified church, Borgund	Churchyard, in a grave	1003/9
Cathedral, Trondheim	Under floor, chancel	1029/35
Dronningensgt. 10, Trondheim	Treasure, later church ground	c. 1035 or later
Lom Church, Oppland	Under wooden floor	11th century, 1050/03
Urnes Church, Sogn & Fjordane	Under floor, wooden church	1035/42
Stange, Hedemark	Churchyard	1047/74
Rauland, Telemark	Churchyard	1047/74?
Nedstrand, Rogaland	Churchyard	1055/65
Kinsarvik, Hordaland	Under floor, stone church	1055/65
Rein nunnery, Rissa, S-Trøndelag	Relation to building unknown	1055/65
Bø Church	Secondary context, under floor	1065/80
Kaupanger Church, Sogn & Fjordane	Under floor, wooden church	1065/80

Except for the coins from the finds at Kinsarvik and Borgund, the coins listed were not found in a very reliable context. However, it is interesting that quite a few of the places have revealed coins from the period of the reign of King Harald Hardrada (1046–66) and King Olaf kyrri (*Óláfr kyrri Haraldsson*, 1066–93). Coins from the same era are found at church sites in inner parts of eastern Norway and in inner parts of western Norway, but it is not possible to reach more detailed conclusions on the basis of this material.

The data in Table 3 is more useful, as it provides direct dates for when the wood used in the construction of the church was felled. Consequently, the earliest such dendrochronological dates from church buildings are listed in the table. The

parts of the buildings that have been dated, however, vary from the sill beam to the roof construction, and while some belong to the original church structure, others may come from later stages when parts of the church had been rebuilt. As a consequence some samples are of a better quality than others in providing information about the dates when these various churches were first constructed. Sometimes the outer part of a timber is missing, and sometimes a number of years — often unknown — must be added to the result in order to arrive at the year when the tree was cut down.

Quite often we know from archaeological excavations about the existence of earlier churches on the site of a church, but due to preservation conditions traces of the earlier churches cannot provide us with timber of a quality that could produce a dendrochronological dating. On such occasions it might be helpful to use a date from a later church on the site as a *terminus ante quem* for the predecessors, although this cannot provide any precise dates for the earlier phases, for the early wooden churches with posts dug into the ground may in fact have been very short-lived.

The samples from Urnes in Table 3 are from the church that stands there now. In addition, two supposed parts of a former sill beam were stored in a shed, and these were also cored. The samples produced very early dates — 946 and 950 — but unfortunately the bark and outer rings were not preserved and some years have to be added to the results. Most trees used in the building at Urnes were felled during the winters of 1129/30 and 1130/31, except the trees used in the sill beam under the nave: these were felled late in the summer of 1131. Excavations have proved that there were at least two predecessors of the present church, and the sill beams from the shed could be from one of these. A lot of secondary used material — such as the famous north portal with its beautiful carvings — has also been incorporated into the present building. The outermost tree ring of the north portal is dated to 1050, but because the portal consists of several well-cut pieces, it is necessary to add quite a few years to this date to arrive at the year the tree was felled (Thun 2002). The north portal was put into the church then standing during or after 1131. Though the earliest dates from Urnes are interesting, they are not of satisfactory quality and it is difficult to attribute much weight to this find. The samples from the other standing churches are, in general, mostly too late to be of great interest for our present purpose.

Table 3. Presentation of the earliest possible years for construction based on dendrochronological dates of pine from early churches. Information based on Thun 2002.

Building	Part of building	Earliest year (AD) Outermost ring	Bark / last ring preserved?
Urnes Stave Church	North portal	1050	No
Urnes Stave Church	Sill beam, nave	1131	Yes
Urnes Stave Church	?	1129/30	Yes
Alstadhaug Church	Roof	1166–67	Yes
Ål Stave Church	Phase 1	1143	No. A few rings missing.
Ål Stave Church	Phase 2, latest sample	1247	No
Lom Stave Church	?	1157–58	No
Uvdal Stave Church	‘Original logs’	1167–68	Yes
Heddal Stave Church	Entrance, carvings	1196	No

Even if Christian rituals were generally more standardized than their non-Christian counterparts, there were still significant differences in the ways that the rituals were practised in various countries and regions. In Norway, churchyard activities were regulated to a certain extent in the early medieval provincial laws, showing some differences between the provinces. According to the Gulathing Codification, the death of a person should be dealt with in the following way:

Det er no dinæst at kvart menneske som døyr, skal me føra til kyrkja og grava i heilag jord, so nær som udådmenn, drottenssvikarar og mordvargar, tygdebrytarar og tjuvar og dei som sjølv tek livet sitt.

Dei menn som eg no talde upp, skal gravest i flodmålet, der som sjøen og grøntorva møtest. (Robberstad 1969: 36)

(Any living men who die should be brought to the church and be buried in consecrated ground, except for malefactors, traitors and murderers, oath-breakers and thieves, and those who take their own lives.

Such persons should instead be buried down by the sea shore, where ‘the sea and the green turf meet’.)

The Eidsivating Codification gives an even more detailed prescription: men should be buried south of the church and women north of the church. Distinctions were also made between those of various social classes, with the area to the south and east of the chancel reserved for those of the highest social rank and their

families, leaving the area closest to the fence for the slaves and their families. The law also determined who should or should not be buried in sacred ground (Sellevold 2001: 6). This part of the legislation may have been influenced by German and Icelandic traditions from the period from 1050 to 1150 (Landro 2005: 80–81). The Eidsivating Codification originally applied to the inner part of eastern Norway, Opplandene, but eventually came to cover a larger area of Viken, including the area of Oslo (Knudsen 1958).

In Kaupanger, Ringeby, Nore, and Mære the first Christian graves are older than the churches. This means that we may expect to find more instances of cemeteries without churches, as in the British Isles. Some of the first churches were also so small that only the priest and a handful of people could be present at any one time (Müller 1991, Skre 1995: 215).

Christian cult and burial practices have not been studied systematically in Norway, but according to the various provincial laws and canon law we can summarize how the burial ought to have taken place (Hagland and Sandnes 1994, Olafson 1914a, Olafson 1914b, Robberstad 1969, Salvesen and Gunnes 1971). To constitute a proper Christian burial, the following conditions should have been met:

- The burial should have taken place in a churchyard by a church, enclosed by some kind of fence:
 - The exceptions to this were some criminals and unbaptized people who were to be buried at the high water mark.
- The deceased person should be buried in a coffin.
- The grave should be dug down, covered by at least one *alen*⁸ from the top of the coffin to the surface.
- The graves should be spatially organized according to gender and social class (at least in some law districts).
- The new graves should not disturb earlier graves (unless they were sufficiently decomposed); disturbed bones were not to be exposed to open air and sun, and were to be reburied close to the coffin.
- Additionally, a deformed foetus could be baptized and buried alive at the churchyard if the parents so wished, covered by a flagstone and protected from soil and animals until it died.

Despite these prescriptions, people followed these norms to varying degrees. Particularly during a period of conversion and with major changes in the political

⁸ *The length of one alen* varied during the Middle Ages, but it was around 0.5 m.

and social landscape, it is important to consider the grave in a wider context, not expecting all Christian criteria to fit the graves at the same time. For instance, the orientation may vary slightly, there may not necessarily have been a church, or some kind of grave goods may be present. Cremations were performed until the sixteenth century in Estonia, and in Sweden they continued burying people at the old Viking Age cemeteries even after a church was built (Ros 2001: 215–17). Segregation by sex as prescribed in the provincial codifications in Norway is not obvious in Norway, but is observed in rural Christian cemeteries from the earliest Christian times in Sweden — from Västergötland in the south to Jämtland in the north — but for the urban churches, segregation by sex is only found in the earliest period. Segregation by sex seems to disappear at around the same time when positioning the dead person's arms by his or her side ceased to be the dominant form, but the timing for this change may differ: for instance, in western Denmark during the thirteenth century, but later in eastern Denmark (Kieffer-Olsen 2000: 118).

Consequently, archaeological observations of early Christian cult places and graves in Norway can be summarized by the following itemized points:

- The church may be very small.
- The first church is often wooden.
- There is not always a church at the cemetery.
- The body is found in various positions.
- Sometimes the grave includes a (usually wooden) coffin, sometimes it does not.
- The graves are inhumations.
- The graves are east–west oriented, with the head to the west.
- Very few grave goods are found, and no animal sacrifices.
- The graves are flat graves.
- The spatial divisions in the cemetery regarding sex, family and social class, and the evolution of the body's arm position are, with a few possible examples, yet to be proven in Norway, probably due to a lack of comprehensive analyses.⁹

Several regional studies have been performed in Norway, but so far there have been few attempts to summarize the situation. As a result, the criteria that should be used to characterize 'Christian material' in general will be investigated further in subsequent chapters.

⁹ Ongoing work in archaeo-osteology in a doctoral thesis by Stian Hamre, University of Bergen, has made some progress in this field.

Part II

Analytical Results

THE CHRISTIANIZATION PROCESS FROM A REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE

Most of the prehistoric data selected for analysis in this book is listed in catalogue form in the Appendix. However, the medieval sites are too complex to be listed in this way, and so in these cases I will refer to relevant scholarly literature in which further information can be found.

In the two chapters of Part II, the results from my analyses will be presented. Some of the sites are described and discussed in more detail than others, depending on the nature of the records, their relevance to this investigation, and any previous interpretations of the site. In this chapter I will examine the Christianization process, structured according to how it appeared in various regions of Norway. In the following chapter, Chapter 5, some artefact groups and general trends observed in the regional analyses will be presented and their relevance discussed on a national level.

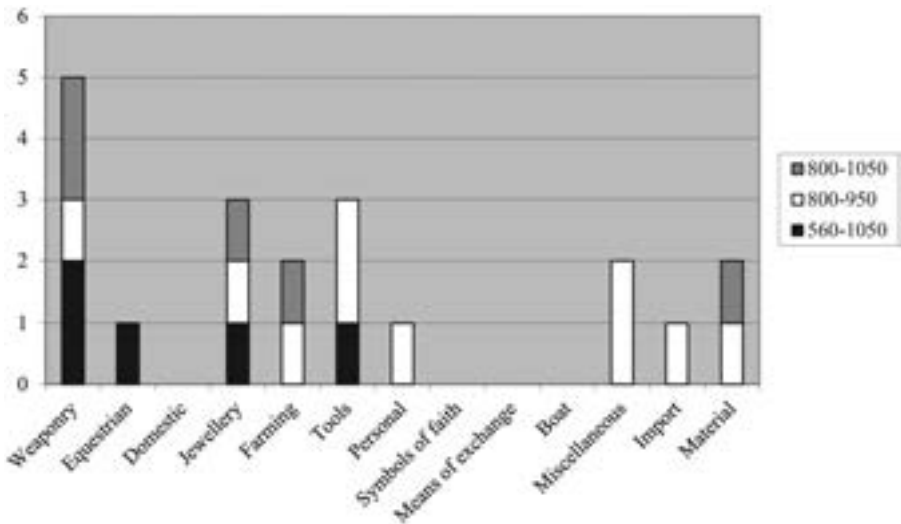
Trøndelag, Including Trondheim/Nidaros

Snåsa, Frosta, and Rissa

Nine late Iron Age graves from Snåsa are included in my analysis. None of the graves can be specifically dated to the Merovingian period, and therefore it is not possible to use them as evidence for chronological changes in burial customs that might have taken place in the area over time (Graph 2).



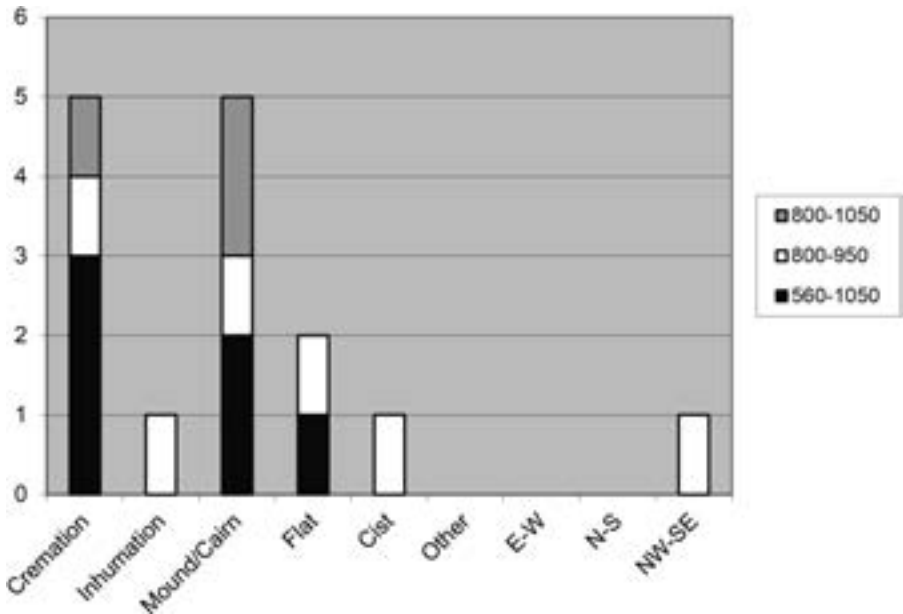
Map 3. The Trøndelag region. Names of municipalities in bold.



Graph 2. Categories of grave goods represented in Snåsa at various times.

The ratio of male to female graves is 5:3. The male kit consisted of one or two weapons (a sword or seaxe and possibly an axe). A whetstone, knife, sickle, or firestone might also be present in the grave in addition to this. Only one grave is richer, the one from Sandnes, containing four weapons — a sword, spear, axe, and shield — and a comb for personal use.

The female kit was equally sparse, with only buckles or glass beads, but the low number of these graves is worth noting. The only imported find in Snåsa is probably of Irish origin, and was found in a ninth-century (that is, early Viking Age) female inhumation grave at Finsås (*No. 130*).¹ The body was buried in a stone cist, probably with an internal wooden coffin, and with no monument above the surface. The body was laid down in a south-east–north-west direction with the head to the east, running parallel to the cliff along which the grave itself was arranged. The skeleton was analysed by Professor K. E. Schreiner and found to be a woman around twenty-five years old at the time of her death, with her



Graph 3. Grave forms and burial rites in the late Iron Age in Snåsa.

¹ Numbers in italics provide reference to catalogue numbers in Appendix, List 3.

cranium identified as the ordinary, long, and narrow Iron Age type.² The most significant object in the grave is probably a belt fitting of gilded silver with animal decorations, and there were also two oval buckles of bronze, a bronze hook, a knife, and a sickle. However, the grave was disturbed before a professional excavation took place, and thus the find assemblage may not be complete.

The graves in Snåsa are not very well equipped; on average each grave includes only 2.8 types of objects. No equestrian objects, household items, boats, barter utensils, or symbols of belief have been found, and the comb from Sandnes represents the only example of personal equipment. In terms of objects associated with husbandry or agriculture, only two sickles for harvesting were found, in two separate graves. The two richest graves are dated to *c.* 800–900: these are the probable male grave from Sandnes and the female grave from Finsås, both of which are mentioned above. Only the female grave described above is recorded as an inhumation grave (from the Viking period), while six are cremations (Graph 3).

The grave monuments in Snåsa consist of three barrows and two cairns. Two of these had no visible monuments above the ground and one contained a stone cist. In the case of the remaining two nothing more is known regarding their grave forms, which may indicate either that they had no visible above-the-surface monument or that these had not been preserved.

I have selected the region of Snåsa due to the presence of a significant Saami population, both in historical times and down to the present day. However, no obvious Saami graves could be found in the museum archives at Vitenskapsmuseet (the Museum of Natural History and Archaeology) in Trondheim. No objects found in the graves could provide a positive Saami identification for any graves in Snåsa, and while it is not necessarily the case that a lack of Saami ethnic identity symbols signal a Norse identity, the oval buckles such as those found at Finsås are regarded as a characteristic Norse identity marker which marks at least this one as most likely of Norse identity (Eldorhagen 2001: 96).

Even so, one find is worthy of discussion: a possible grave that was not professionally excavated. From this context only one arrowhead and the remains of an animal skull were collected; no remains of a human skeleton or traces of burning were recorded, although a layer of cobblestones had been used to cover the remains. The interpretation of this find as a grave is in doubt, but if it is in fact a grave, then it differs from the others and may therefore be Saami. However, there

² Catalogue text, catalogue no. T16407, Vitenskapsmuseet (Museum of Natural History and Archaeology), Trondheim.

are no artefacts to confirm its ethnicity, and the chronology of this find is not clear.³

Additionally, the excavation of a barrow at Vinje revealed at least seven intrusions containing layers of charcoal, but with no objects (*Nø. 137*). Only burnt human bones and some horse bones were found in the barrow, within the layers of charcoal. This barrow alone might have contained many different graves in the same mound, with a central grave in a pit under the central area of the mound containing only charcoal. However, it is not possible to say whether the intrusions represent later burials or some kind of ancestral cult. Although a few graves and features could be discussed, there is unfortunately not much to add to our knowledge of Saami history on this basis (see also 'Saami Religion and the Christianization of the Saami' in Chapter 3).

The body in the inhumation grave at Finsås was buried in a stone (and possibly wooden) coffin, which was more or less east–west oriented. The artefacts, listed above, are interpreted as parts of the costume and coffin. In addition, the buried female had only a sickle and a knife as grave goods. This grave might possibly have been influenced by Christian burial customs, and it is interesting that this is the only grave in Snåsa that contains an insular item; an Irish strap mount.⁴ Yet because there are generally very few, if any, grave goods in Snåsa, it is not possible to use the lack of rich grave goods as an indication of Christian influence. The typically poorly equipped graves in Snåsa could be the result of general Christian influences, but the extensive tradition of cremations and mounds does not support such a hypothesis, and it was not in line with Christian traditions to put sickles in graves. Consequently, it is just as likely that the influences came from the Saami population, or else it is possible that some of the graves are Saami themselves. In any case, in the absence of more conclusive evidence it is not possible to ascertain which of these theories is most likely.

When selecting my data, I have left out some material that I found too unreliable in terms of either the date or the context. If these examples had been included, however, they would have confirmed the overall picture of cremation as the dominant burial form during this period, with few or no grave goods. The

³ Vitenskapsmuseet (Museum of Natural History and Archaeology), Trondheim, catalogue no. T19583. The arrowhead was previously dated to the medieval period, but it is no longer possible to determine whether it is prehistoric or not (personal information from Oddmund Farbregd 1/6-2006).

⁴ An Irish import is also found as a stray find in 1836 in Snåsa, C758.

lack of grave goods contributes to the difficulty of dating some graves, and thus these graves are excluded from my analysis.

The latest date for a grave in this area is generally the Viking Age (800–1050), or the Iron Age/medieval period if the context of the arrowhead from grave T19583 is interpreted as a grave.

The medieval church at Vinje in Snåsa was built in stone in around 1200. The church's neighbouring farm was previously called Hov, but changed its name to Krossgarden during the medieval period. It is thought that the name was given because the farm belonged to the church, or rather was associated with a cross in the church (Røskaft 2003: 72–73). In southern Norway place names with *Kross-* may indicate the presence of a high cross, but this is unlikely in Trøndelag, where only two crosses have been found (see 'Free-Standing Cross Slabs and Stone Crosses (High Crosses)' in Chapter 5 and below). More likely, this could be an example of how Christianity inherited Norse cult places either by force or with the cooperation of the people; the Norse cult place — the *hov* — was literally taken over by the Christian cult place — the church — which was represented by the Christian cross.

If we now turn to *Frosta*, its central position and excellent agricultural conditions are probably the reasons why Frosta was chosen as the location for an important Thing (assembly) site: the Frostating. One of the key provincial law codes comes from Frosta, and the Things at Frosta and Øreting in Trondheim both played important roles in the social and political life in this region, although the dates when they were established have been debated (Sandnes 1977). Tinghaugen (No. 115, '*The Thing Mound*') at Rygg contained a grave with a person buried in a boat, fully equipped with weapons (a sword, spear, axe, and arrow) as well as a sickle and a comb. The grave has been dated to c. 900–1050. It is assumed that the Thing was held at the central farm of Logtu, located between the farms of Tingstad and Tinghaugen and only approximately 150 m west-southwest of the latter. The name Logtu testifies to its importance with the first element *Lóg* meaning 'law', and the location was probably associated with the writing of the provincial code of laws from Frosta, or else the place where they were kept. The exact place of the Frostating gathering is not known, but a stone church was built at Logtu and the farm was a royal estate during the medieval period. There is no archaeological or other evidence to indicate that Logtu was an important place before the Viking Age (Røskaft 2003: 110–11).

Thirty-three graves from the late Iron Age have been selected from Frosta, four of which are from the Merovingian period, nine from the early Viking Age, and

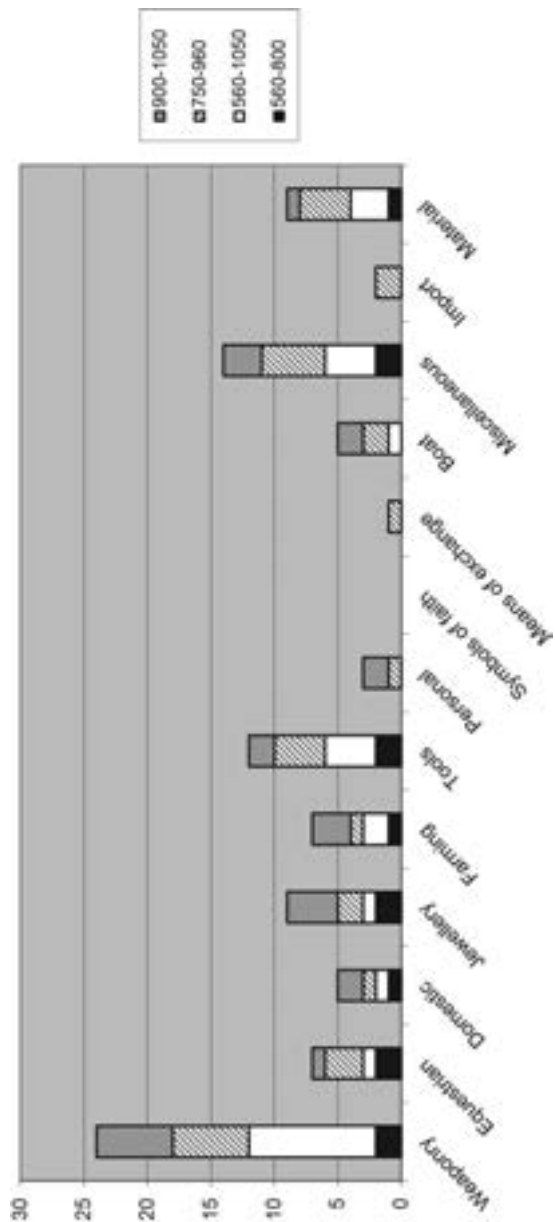
seven from the late Viking Age. The rest can only be dated more generally to the late Iron Age. Four types of objects found, on average, in the late Iron Age graves from Frosta. The graves from the Merovingian period are generally richer than the later ones (5.8 object types per grave), but these are few and include only one double grave. There is no change in the number of object types during the Viking Age (from 4.8 object types per grave in the early Viking Age to 4.7 in the late Viking Age).

The ratio of male to female graves at Frosta is 21:6, but it is also likely that two of the graves contain both a male and a female buried together, meaning that approximately 25 per cent of the excavated graves are female. The gender kit does not seem to have changed during the late Iron Age, and although the gender of the two graves could not be determined on the basis of grave goods alone, taken together the six female graves demonstrate that female kit consisted of one or two buckles occasionally accompanied by a sickle, a knife, or a boat. A rather richly equipped grave from Nygård, dated to 900–1050, also included two types of equestrian gear, a cooking pot, a frying pan, a casket, and scissors (*No. 110*).

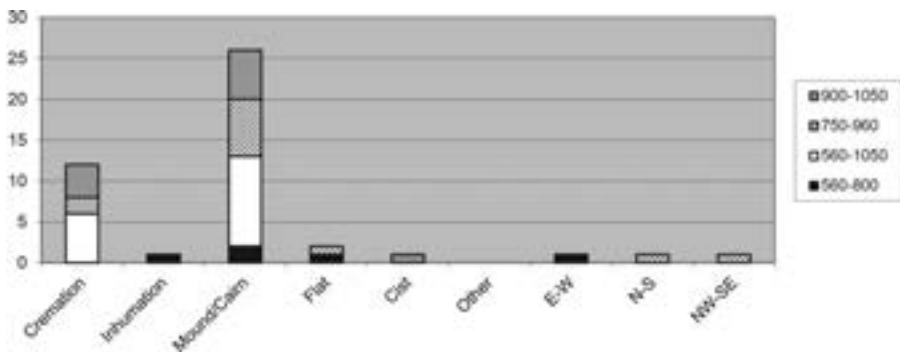
Between twenty-one and twenty-three graves are considered to be male. Male kit consisted of one to four weapons, most often including a sword, spear, and axe, but also a shield, arrows, and an adze. The last of these was probably a craftsman's tool, but could also have been used as a weapon. Except for these artefacts, the grave goods could also consist of some of the same items as the female kit: one or two pieces of equestrian gear or even part of a horse, one or two agricultural tools, a firestone and fire-steel, a whetstone, a knife, and a boat. Individual graves also display some interesting features: one of the cairns was built on top of a quern stone (*No. 102*), while one of the two uncertain male graves includes riding equipment that normally accompanied weapons, although no weapons were found in this case (*No. 101*). This grave also contains insular finds, probably of Irish origin, including a drinking horn with beautiful fittings.

Among the four graves that can be dated safely to the Merovingian period, there are no grave goods indicating activities such as trading, bartering, and importation, nor are there any boats or objects pointing to particular religious beliefs. There is one flat, east–west-oriented inhumation grave with no visible above-surface monument, while mounds or cairns cover the three other graves. None of these graves from the Merovingian period seem to be cremations.

Nine graves can be dated to the early Viking Age (c. 800–900/950). Two of these graves contain imported goods from Ireland (as mentioned above), and one also contains a coin from the Carolingian area. Four graves are characterized by objects of costly materials, such as copper alloy, silver, and glass. Two of the graves



Graph 4. Categories of grave goods per period in the municipality of Frosta.



Graph 5. Characteristics of the burial sites at Frosta.

are oriented north–south, and these are the only ones that contain a boat from the early Viking period. Two or maybe four graves are cremations, and two are probably inhumations. A mound or a cairn covers most of the graves, and only one has no visible monument above the ground.

Seven graves have been dated to the late Viking Age (*c.* 900/950–1050); of these, only cremations have been identified (in the case of three graves). Most of the graves from this period were covered by a mound (see Graph 5), and only one grave lacked a structure above the surface. One of the mounds (*No. 128*) contained a central cairn or a cist of stone and also a boat, with this second item also found in between one and three other graves (two of the three being inconclusive) from Frosta in the late Viking Age. No imported items have been found in the graves from this period, and only one occurrence of copper alloy and glass has been noted.

One of the graves from the Merovingian period shows the closest resemblance to Christian burial customs compared to others in this area: an east–west-oriented inhumation grave with no visible structures above the surface (*No. 120*). Nevertheless, the notion of potential Christian influences is made less likely by the presence of grave goods and the chronology of the burial. In the later periods, cremation practices dominated, only north–south alignments have been observed,

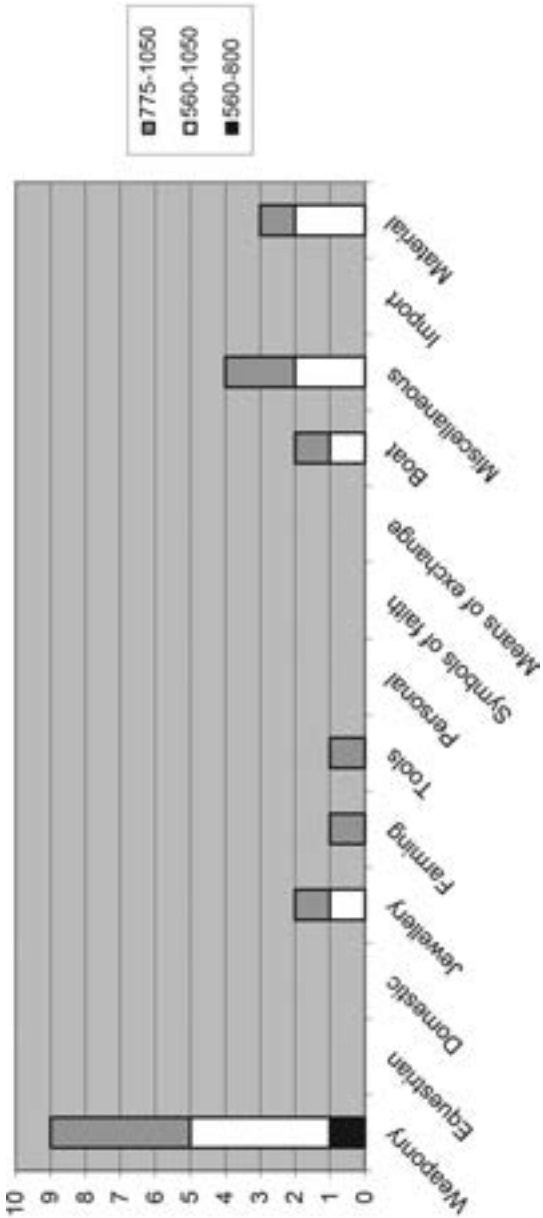
and a mound or cairn was constructed on top of the grave. The tendency towards cremation grew ever stronger from the Merovingian period to the late Viking Age, and this tendency is even greater among the graves that can only be dated generally to the late Iron Age, with seven cremations and only one inhumation. Even if inhumation graves and flat graves are under-represented here, there is no sign of an increasing adherence to Christian burial traditions towards the end of the Viking period: barrows and cairns continued to be built, cremation rituals were practised, and grave goods deposited. The latest Norse grave in this group is dated to 950–1050 (on the basis of Jan Petersen's spear type G, axe type K).

Rissa is a district with a wet and mild climate, situated close to the west coast by the inlet of Trondheimsfjorden. Nine graves from *Rissa* have been included in my selection. The average number of object types per grave is low: only 2.8. The grave with the most goods, a double Viking Age grave, contained eight different types of objects (*No. 141*). This rich grave is also the only grave containing glass materials, and one of two graves with objects made of silver (Graph 6).

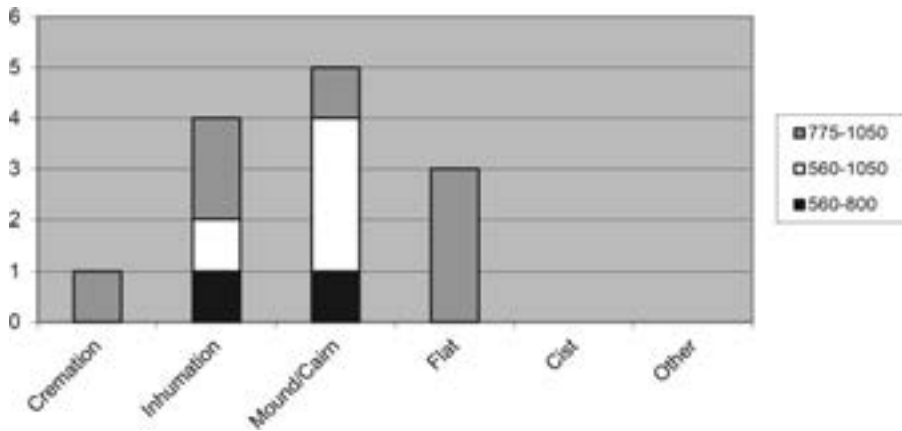
Throughout the late Iron Age there were generally few grave goods, although three of the graves from this period included in my sample contain a boat. No equestrian equipment has been found, nor are there any household utensils, personal items, or objects indicating trade or exchange, having been imported, or religion. There are few agricultural tools from *Rissa*, although four celts from the late Iron Age were found in a barrow. The existence of four objects of the same kind from one context and the simultaneous absence of other typical grave good objects might indicate that this was a depot rather than a grave, but we should not completely exclude the possibility that this was a grave, as the objects may also have been a part of the goods from a grave. Due to the difficulties surrounding the interpretation, this material is not included among the selection of graves in this investigation.

In *Rissa* only one grave is dated to the Merovingian period, and two to the early Viking Age. Two of these three graves contained only an axe each and were constructed in a cairn, whereas the third only contained a sword and took the form of a flat grave set between a few stones. The remaining six graves are later or have a wider possible chronological range.

No female graves are immediately evident, but one seems to be a double grave with both a male and a female, with the female presence indicated by four glass beads among the grave goods. All the graves contain weapons, but only of one or two types. The male kit for *Rissa* consists of only one or two weapons, and perhaps occasionally a boat.



Graph 6. Grave goods per period at Rissa.



Graph 7. Recognized features at the funeral sites in Rissa.

In addition to the graves, a rune stone was erected at Kriken, Hårberg. The inscription is dated to *c.* 900–1000, and the text reads: UTAR RAISTI STAIN AFTIR AURN FAUDUR SIN (Ottar raised stone after Ørn, his father).⁵ Rune stones are often related to a Christian tradition (see, for instance, Lager 2002), but this particular formulation offers no prayer or anything else that would demonstrate an obvious relation to Christianity, and so the date is very approximate.

Of the nine graves from Rissa dated to the late Iron Age, only one was identified as a cremation, while three or four were determined to be inhumation graves (Graph 7). There were no indications of the alignment of any grave, and no coffin-like constructions were present. Graves in a mound outnumbered the flat graves five to three. The latest date for a Norse grave in Rissa is dated to the Viking Age in general (800–1050). This grave aside, the youngest, more closely dated grave comes from the period 900–50 (Rygh type 521 and 562).

The few and impoverished graves from Rissa are reminiscent of the situation in Snåsa, but in contrast to Snåsa, inhumation graves completely dominate and the lack of female graves is striking. The scarcity of grave goods and the dominance of the inhumation ritual might be explained as being influenced by Christianity.

⁵ This is the text according to the archive for T17777.

This would also coincide with earlier theories about the early Christianization of the regions along the coast. However there is nothing else to indicate contact with Christian communities in Rissa: no imports, no finds suggesting a link with distant areas. This theory is also contradicted by the continued construction of burial mounds and cairns. A more likely interpretation is that the community at Rissa in the late Iron Age did not set aside many objects as grave goods, either because they were poor or because this was simply the tradition. Perhaps it was a relatively egalitarian society, but one dominated by males, which could explain the lack of both female and very rich graves.

The graves from Frosta are much better equipped than those from Snåsa and Rissa, and graves from the Merovingian period were even richer than those from the Viking period. Nevertheless, some particularly rich double graves significantly increase the average number of object types found at Frosta, with nine types of objects per double grave. In addition, the number of graves — nine late Iron Age graves in both Rissa and Snåsa compared to thirty-three in Frosta — underlines the centrality and importance of Frosta compared to the more peripheral areas. Differences between Frosta and the other municipalities can also be found regarding grave goods: while equestrian gear, household utensils, trading objects, and imports are almost completely absent from Snåsa and Rissa, such items are found frequently in Frosta. Other trends in grave goods illustrating Frosta's central position may have developed during the Viking Age; graves from this period containing riding equipment generally indicate that the buried person was socially important. Helge Braathen's analysis of such graves in Norway demonstrates that these were concentrated in eastern Norway, with just a few examples outside this core area. One of these is found in Frosta, dated to around 850–900, possibly indicating that this was an area with a special hierarchical social organization, linked to dynasties in eastern Norway (*No. 101*; Braathen 1989). Two graves from c. 800–900/950 contain imported goods from Ireland and a coin from the Carolingian region, struck for Charlemagne between 805/14. Four graves from the same period have been excavated with artefacts made of more costly material, such as copper alloy, silver, and glass. The proportion of boats and horses or equestrian equipment also increases in the Viking Age, which could indicate a greater focus on forging wider communication links.

In many respects, therefore, Frosta could be regarded as a central place in Trøndelag in the late Iron Age. However, the extent of Christian influence in this region is not obvious: in Rissa inhumations dominate, while cremations are prevalent in Snåsa and Frosta. The mound is also much more prominent in Frosta

than in Snåsa and Rissa compared to cairns and flat graves. The relative proportion of cremations grows even larger from the Merovingian period to the late Viking Age.

Even if inhumation graves and flat graves are underrepresented in the sources, there is no sign of any trend towards an increasing adjustment to Christian burial traditions in any of the selected areas by the end of the Viking period. Throughout the Viking Age as well as in the period preceding it, the people of Snåsa and Frosta continued building tumuli, practising cremation rituals in placing grave goods in the graves.

The Old Cult Place at Hove in Åsen, Nord-Trøndelag

Hove in Åsen is located in an area with excellent agricultural conditions, among the best in the area. Merete Røskaft has recently studied the *hov/hof* names in Trøndelag, concentrating on nine farms called Hov/Hove. Her conclusion was that the name Hov seems to indicate centrality (Røskaft 2003: 54–76). The medieval church in Åsen was built not at Hove farm but at a neighbouring farm, Vang, where the biggest barrow in the area was found (35 m in diameter and 3 m high). At another neighbouring farm Husby, around fifty barrows from the Viking Age have been found at one cemetery. These three farms represented the centre of the community in Åsen in the late Iron Age and early medieval period (Røskaft 2003: 66–76).

Excavations at Hove have revealed a long-lasting non-Christian cult place. The site is located on a relatively flat plateau on top of a hill and the traces are rather monotonous: three barrows, a lot of holes, and pits filled with charcoal and fire-cracked stones, the last of these being features that when found in Norway are referred to as ‘cooking pits’. The site was not completely excavated, but the excavations were particularly centred on one of the mounds and the concentration of pits, a total area of around 30 m by 50 m (c. 1500 m²). During the course of these excavations, it was observed that the pits converged on the slope near the top of the hill (Farbregd 1986a).

The excavated barrow was a cairn with a diameter of 11 m and a height of 1 m. It turned out that at least two individuals were cremated and buried there at an early stage of the period of activity at that place. This was probably not the earliest activity on this spot, as two pits were found at the bottom of the cairn, either contemporary with or preceding the burials. Both these and samples contemporary with the graves were radiocarbon dated to the second century AD (cal., Farbregd 1986a).

The cooking pits were approximately 0.5 m both in depth and width, and their concentrated distribution area was constrained by an invisible, basically straight line crossing from the south-west to the north-east. In the southern part of the area there were no visible markings, but in the northern part the perimeter of the cooking pit area coincided roughly with rows of small postholes and ten large, deep, stone-packed, cylindrical post(?) holes (Figure 3). The holes did not comprise a completely straight line; the line had a few right-angled breaks after which it continued in the same direction. The large holes were carefully constructed, each having a diameter of 0.4–0.6 m and a depth of approximately 0.5 m. There was no charcoal in these holes, and the stones were not heated. The stones were placed in the holes with great care, not mixed with soil, perhaps with the intention of being able to empty them again.⁶ An alternative explanation is that the careful filling in of the postholes was the result of a closing down ritual for the site. These observations, together with the fact that the holes could only complete one side of a construction, made their interpretation as cooking pits or postholes for a building unlikely. One of these holes was dated cal. AD 160 ± 90.

There was nothing found at the site to indicate a normal dwelling area. The finds consisted of a couple of animal bones and 50 kg of burnt clay. No building remains were found, no ordinary fireplaces, no tools, cooking pots, or other domestic items, nor could the traces be interpreted as evidence of a specialized working place. Only the barrows, the cooking pits, some minor postholes, and the large postholes existed on the site. A few animal bones from the pits could be identified, and were shown to come from sheep or goats. Quite a few pits at Hove overlapped with each other, demonstrating that the activity had been going on for some time, and providing the opportunity to determine a relative chronology based on the stratigraphy. However, no clear pattern emerged from this chronology; the dated samples were concentrated in the Roman period, but they showed continuous activity at the location until c. 1000 when this came to a full stop.

The name of this place and the nature and chronology of the finds led Oddmund Farbregd to conclude that this was a cult place. The large postholes were interpreted as possible supports for religious symbols and statues of gods, and this seems to be a likely possibility. The graves are obviously remains of an old cult, and the cooking pits probably had something to do with annual rituals and/or ancestral and fertility cult activities associated with the burials and the posts. The bear

⁶ Personal communication from Oddmund Farbregd (3 October 2008).

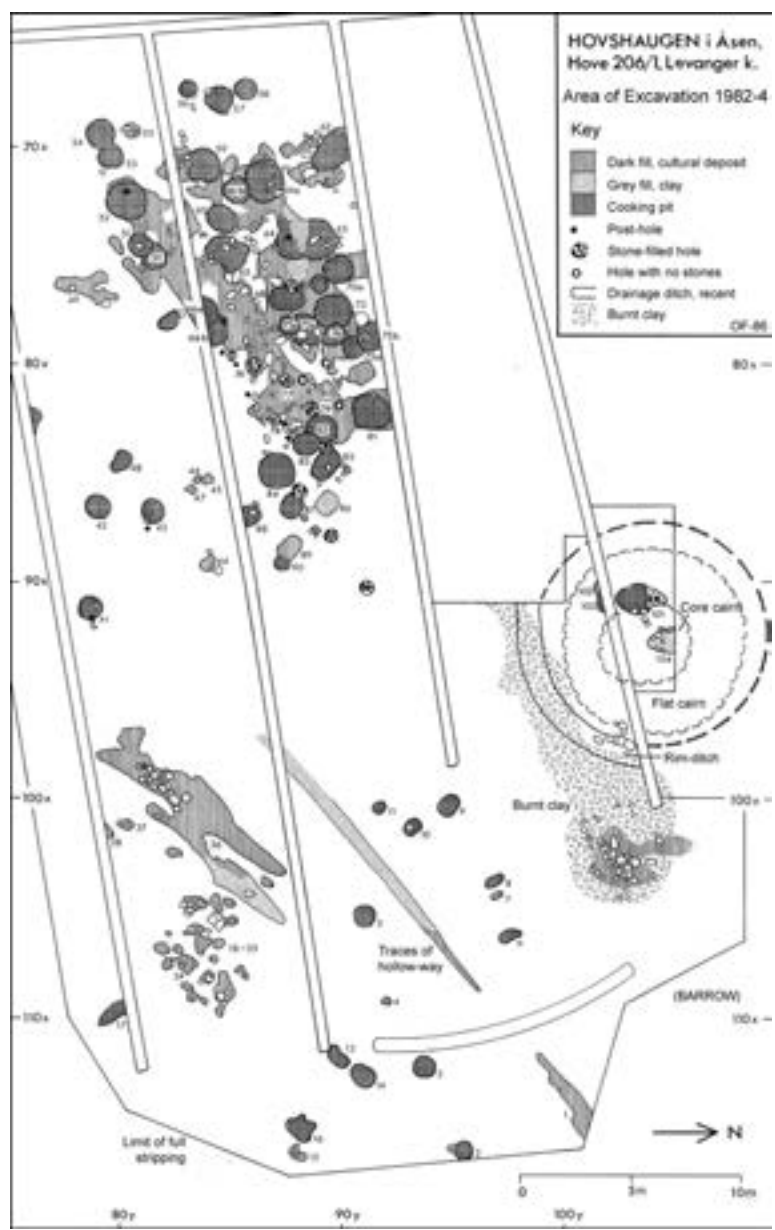


Figure 3. The possible cult place at Hove, Åsen in Nord-Trøndelag (Farbregd 1986a).
Reproduced by the permission of Farbregd.

claws found in the grave could be a natural symbol associated with death and resurrection and as a symbol of fertility in general: like plants, the bear follows annual cycles by going to sleep in autumn and waking up in spring. Present-day Norwegians still celebrate an annual rite around summer solstice, celebrating on a hilltop and sharing a meal around a bonfire.

Written sources use words such as *trégoð*, *skurðgoð*, *trémaðr*, and *likneski* to describe wooden posts with masks and decorations that depict gods, and a row of such posts made a *stafgarðr*, marking the sacred area. The *staf* was the sacred item itself, and according to the tenth-century Arabic travel writer Ibn Fadlan the Nordic people made food sacrifices to such god statues (Noreen 1922: 51, Steinsland 2005: 293). In light of the large differences in cult patterns in Norse cult, it is rather hazardous to use Ibn Fadlan's stories about his experiences in Russia as evidence to explain the patterns found at Hove in Nord-Trøndelag, but all the same, the traces testify to some similar activities. In his attempt to understand the nature and function of the postholes, Farbrege asked:

Har stolpane stått fritt og hatt betydning i seg sjøl? Ein kunne tenke på religiøse symbol og figurar som sto ute i friluft. Det verka i alle fall ikkje tilfeldig at den store konsentrasjonen av groper fanst like nedanfor dei fleste (stolpe-)hola. (Farbrege 1986a: 46, 50)

(Were the posts standing independently and did they have a meaning in themselves? One might think about outdoor, free-standing religious symbols and figures. At least it did not seem to be a coincidence that the greatest concentration of pits was found right by most of the (post)holes.)

The burial in the excavated barrow took place during an early phase of the activity at Hove, and it is possible that the cemetery may have been shifted to the neighbouring farm of Husby, at least in the late Iron Age, although the relationship between the two cult places is not clear. Even if most of the activity seems to have taken place in the early Iron Age, it is still relevant for the study of the Christianization process that the activity continued for around 800 years, ceasing in around AD 1000.

A 'Pagan Temple' and an Early Christian Church at Mære?

Approximately 45 km along the fjord to the north of Hove lies Mære. The church there, 'Ecclesiam sancte Margarete de Mæren', is one of the largest and most

important medieval stone churches in Trøndelag, built on a royal estate.⁷ It commands a beautiful and impressive position on a prominent hilltop that towers 70 m above sea level, surrounded by flat meadows that in turn lie around 20 m above sea level,⁸ and less than 1 km from the fjord. Excavations took place inside the church in 1966 (Lidén 1968, Lidén 1969, Lidén 1999).

A thin covering of charcoal was found in the nave on top of the prehistoric cultural layer. This layer sealed a series of intrusions, stake holes, postholes and pits, partly or completely filled with stones, charcoal, and burnt layers, with some shell and animal bones. The largest pits/postholes were 80–100 cm in diameter and filled with stones, but the remains of a wooden post were observed at the bottom. There was also a ditch with traces of a palisade and remains of a wattle-and-daub construction, while pieces of glass and pottery from the Migration period were found in the earliest occupation layers. In a trampled black layer in the eastern part of the chancel of the stone church, bones from common domestic animals were found, including horses, foxes, grouse, greater black-backed gulls, swans, grey lag geese, cod, coalfish, and seals. This layer was construed as the remains of a floor in a secular building as old or older than the wooden church (Lidén 1968: 12–15). These traces proved that some kind of activity was going on from the Migration period until the late Viking Age and early medieval period, at which time the Christian cult was established (Lidén 1968: 9).

The six earliest Christian graves had an oblique orientation in contrast to the later graves related to the two recorded churches (Figure 4). The later churches had a more correct east–west orientation, although their chief excavator, Hans-Emil Lidén, was of the opinion that a church would never have been oriented any other way. His theory was that the oblique but consistent alignment of the earliest graves was due to the fact that they were related to a building, and that building was not originally a church. Looking for this building, Lidén found that some of the pits or postholes to the immediate east of the earliest graves were located along a line with a right-angle pointing in the direction of these. He found 1.8 m of a palisade wall in an alignment corresponding to that of the oldest graves, right-angled to the line of postholes. This older building was associated with the finding of *gullgubber*,⁹ and was even older than the graves. This is thought to be a Norse

⁷ The Latin expression is quoted from DN, III, 13, 1277.

⁸ During the medieval period a lot of the meadows were probably bogs, reflected in several place names such as 'Myra' (English: 'bog' or 'mire').

⁹ A *gullgubbe* (pl.: *gullgubber*) consists of a golden foil upon which are stamped the images of one or two human figures.

cult building that was transformed eventually into a church (Lidén 1969: 21, Lidén 1999: 46).

This part of Lidén's theory is interesting, but unfortunately not quite convincing; medieval churches in Norway can vary in their orientation, particularly as a result of the local topography (Eide 1974, Appendix 6). It is likewise often observed that the earliest Christian graves did not have a proper east–west orientation. There was not necessarily a church at every Christian cemetery, but in spite of this, the graves may have had a fairly consistent orientation (Nordeide and Guliksen 2007). Furthermore, considering all the pits and postholes recorded, Olaf Olsen has rightly pointed out the lack of any obvious building-like structures:

If the placing of the post-holes in relation to each other is studied on the plan of the excavation, it will be seen that it is impossible to find any way of putting them into any convincing structural context. (Olsen 1969: 26)

Olsen was convinced that there was a Norse cult place at Mære, but he did not support Lidén's idea of the cult building, the *hov*. He preferred a different interpretation of the pagan cult building, namely a *temple* (*sic*) as a holy place where a large number of the wooden images may have stood together and at which votive offerings may have been made (Olsen 1969). In light of the later finds at Hove in Åsen, the earliest traces at the Mære site would fit this alternative interpretation, though not necessarily including the remains of a building. The two sites share similarities in terms of the charcoal, the heated stones, a few animal bones, the many holes — some of them stone-filled and with the remains of posts — and, not least, the absence of items that would indicate production activities or residential occupation. The locations are also similar: both are positioned on a hilltop with good views to and from the site. During this period, it is possible that Mære was situated on an island surrounded by marsh — like a holy island — which may have underlined its sacred position. The postholes with the remains of posts and *gullgubber* could also be the traces of a *stafgarðr*. Olsen argued that the *gullgubber* could be votive offerings made to wooden images, but as they were mostly found in the pit dug for the posthole, the objects would have to have been inserted as sacrifices in connection with the erection of the posts during the construction phase, rather than as offerings made at a later stage.

Gullgubber are generally found in connection with postholes, except at Bornholm, where more than 2600 such items were found in the occupation layers. At present *gullgubber* are thought to have a particular function in connection with the hall or a building of similar function and status, situated at a place of particularly high status and used not only for daily life but also for feasts and Norse cult

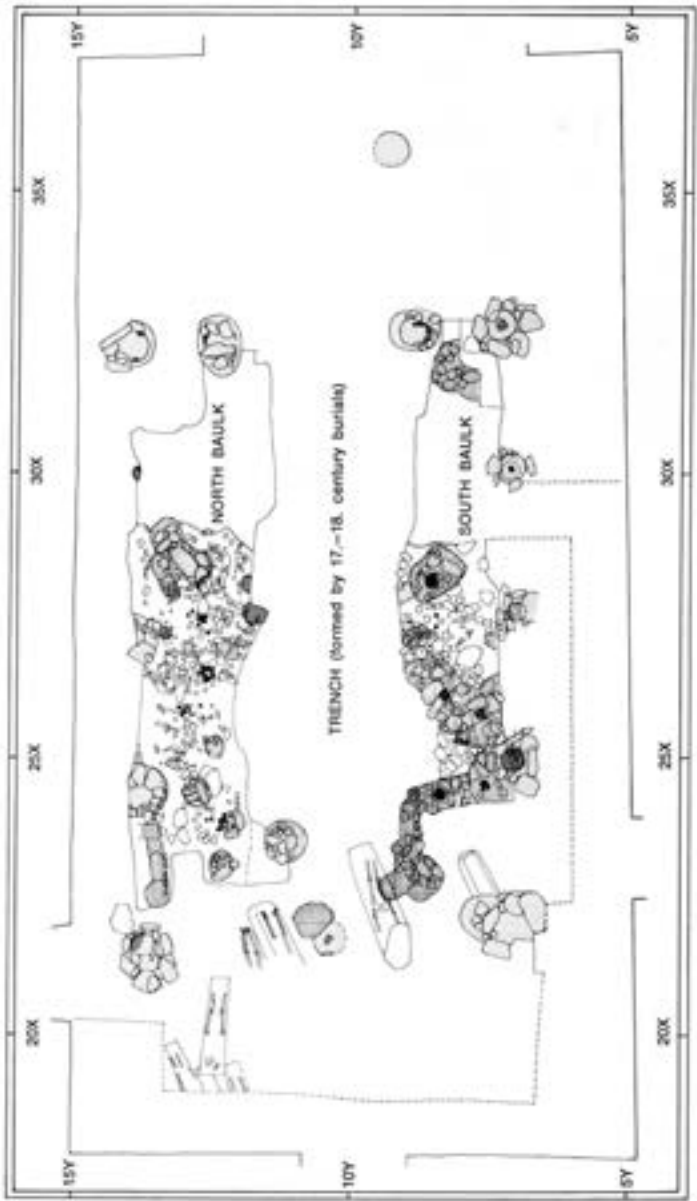


Figure 4. Excavation site in Mare church with oldest graves (Lidén 1969: 10). Post-holes from wooden church shown dotted; latest Iron Age situation shown by horizontal hatching; earliest Iron Age situation by vertical hatching. Pits and excavations which cannot be relatively dated shown by cross hatching. Reproduced by the permission of Lidén.

activities. In Norway such a combination of finds has also been found at Hauge at Jæren, at Borg in Lofoten, and at Hov close to Lillehammer (Solberg 2000: 263). The four places are all located in very different parts of the country, and could well represent different centres in the power structure of each region. In the case of Hov, it has been suggested that the structure associated with the gold foil figures may have been a hall building, but the lack of a convincing building structure at Mære weakens this hypothesis.

Several coins were found in the postholes for the wooden church, and in one of them there were sixteen bracteates struck during the reign of King Sverrir Sigurdsson (who ruled from 1177 to 1202). According to Lidén, the coins were placed there when the posts were pulled up during the demolition of the wooden church (Lidén 1999: 22), so perhaps this was a part of a closing ritual that took place when the old church was taken down. One of the coins was an English coin from 971–991, but most of the coins were Norwegian from the reign of King Sverrir. Lidén has argued that the stone church was built around the wooden church, ready to take over as soon as the wooden church was pulled down (Lidén 1968). This therefore provides us with a date of around 1200 as the earliest possible time when the stone church was finished. A written document states that the west tower fell down in the 1270s, thus giving us the latest possible date for when the church could have been finished. The wooden church was built on posts inserted into postholes in the ground, and was probably not long-lived as the posts would have decayed rapidly. Although the posts may have been replaced, it is reasonable to date the construction of the church to the end of the eleventh century, as has been suggested by Lidén.

From a total of eighty-two medieval graves, most of the bodies were placed east–west on their backs with heads to the west, and no grave goods or textiles were found. One of the skeletons was lying on its right side. All the bodies were lying in wooden coffins constructed of planks and iron nails, mostly with a trapezoid shape. However, one coffin was cigar shaped, and one had only a bottom and a lid of planks, with four small stakes in each corner to keep them in place (Lidén 1999: 26–28). Of the 136 graves, only ten skeletons were in good condition. Of the sixty-nine medieval skeletons for which it was possible to identify an age, more than 40 per cent had died before the age of fourteen (Holck 1970a, Holck 1970b).

Most of the bodies had their arms on their stomachs or their chests, except four that had their arms by their sides. Only one of these four, grave no. 29, belonged to the earliest phase (Lidén 1968: 23). Six skeletons were found in a disorderly state even though they had not been disturbed, suggesting that the

bodies were placed in the graves when they had already decomposed, perhaps because they had been moved from the original place of death or burial. One of these skeletons was also from the earliest phase of burials at this site.

The area under the eaves, particularly on the south side of the church and especially by the chancel, was the most popular burial location. On the south side of the chancel, five phases of burials were recorded on top of each other, and at least one of these was a woman. On a 'shelf' at a higher level than the average adult grave, a number of children were buried on the south side of the nave, so close to the stone wall that the wall was almost put at risk. Children were also buried to the west of the church, and at least one man was buried to the north of the church (Lidén 1999: 27).

Very little has been excavated from the earliest phase of the cemetery, and the preservation conditions are poor. However, to judge from Lidén's records and interpretations, these graves were not very early. Even if the comparative material of early Christian graves is meagre and subject to debate, the positions of the bodies indicate that the graves are not among the earliest found in Scandinavia (see, for instance, Kieffer-Olsen 2000, Redin 1976). The few gendered skeletons in the earliest phase give no reason for us to assume that this was a cemetery organized according to sex, or at least not according to the customs prescribed by the Eidsivating and the Borgarting Codifications for eastern Norway, which stated that males should be buried to the south and females to the north. In general, though, the numbers are too low to permit a definite conclusion concerning this matter (Lidén 1968: 23), although it does seem as though the area closest to the south wall was a preferred place for burying children, even if they have also been found in other places.

It should be noted that first *gullgubber* and later coins were found in connection with postholes, indicating some kind of continuity of cult associated with the construction and/or demolition of posts. In two of the postholes they were found in quantities that could be characterized as a hoard, with thirteen *gullgubber* in one posthole and sixteen coins in a later one. Mære should therefore be understood as some kind of a cult place where there was a continuation of cult activity from prehistoric times to the medieval period.

The date of the conversion at Mære is not quite clear, particularly because major intrusions caused by the construction of the two later churches have made it difficult to establish detailed interpretations and a nuanced chronology. However, Lidén observed that the construction layers for the wooden church were lying directly on the burnt layer for a presumably older building where Norse cult activities had been performed, which, according to Lidén, was converted into a

church. Lidén saw no time-delay between the construction of the wooden church and the demolition of the preceding building; the burnt layer from the former cult building was cleared and trampled as the wooden church was built. The stratigraphic relationship between the burnt layer and the earliest graves would be a crucial piece of evidence in enabling us to prove or disprove the theory that a former cult building was converted into a church, but such an observation is sadly missing.¹⁰ There are at least two possible conclusions that can be drawn from the existing evidence:

1. The burnt layer sealed the six oldest graves. Either (a) the burnt layer was a result of the burning of a Norse cult construction, in which case the burials were performed at a Norse cult site and may in fact have been Norse, or (b) the Norse cult construction was converted into a church, and the graves were Christian. If this second scenario were true, then Lidén's theory would be correct, and it is only the structure of the building which is not clear.
2. The burnt layer was cut into when the six earliest graves were dug. This would imply that there was probably a very short interval between the time when the Norse cult was stopped and the time when the construction of the wooden church began, but during this time a few Christian burials were performed. The burning of the Norse cult buildings was probably carried out by the Christians, although no church has yet been recorded in association with these graves.

I would consider the second alternative as the most likely. As the construction of the wooden church is dated to the end of the eleventh century, Norse cult activity probably still continued up to the middle/end of the eleventh century, at which point the Christians took over the site.

The Early Christian Cemetery at Hernes, Frosta

The first part of the name Hernes probably means *herr*, which could signify a gathering of people or an army. This may have been one of the earliest farms situated at Frosta, perhaps a place for the gathering of the conscripted coastal fleet known as the *leidang*. The farm was already a royal estate in the early medieval

¹⁰ Naturally, Lidén cannot add any information concerning these aspects today, forty years later (personal communication, 2006).

period (Farbregd 1986b, Røskoft 2003: 108–09), and both the Viking Age finds and the name itself indicate social power and wide contacts. It is interesting then, but perhaps not surprising, that one of the earliest traceable Christian cemeteries in Trøndelag is situated at Hernes. Excavations in 1915 and 1984 have revealed a total of seven flat graves, all east–west oriented and with no grave goods (Figure 5). The skeletons from 1915 have not been analysed, but the three graves found in 1984 include (Farbregd 1986b):

- A man of around fifty years old with a stone set on either side of his head, no coffin, and his arms resting on his pelvis.¹¹
- A man of around forty to fifty years old, in a rectangular, wooden coffin, and his arms placed by his side.
- A man of between forty and fifty years old, placed in a trapezoid wooden coffin, his head upside-down, and his skeleton in disorder, possibly buried as a skeleton.

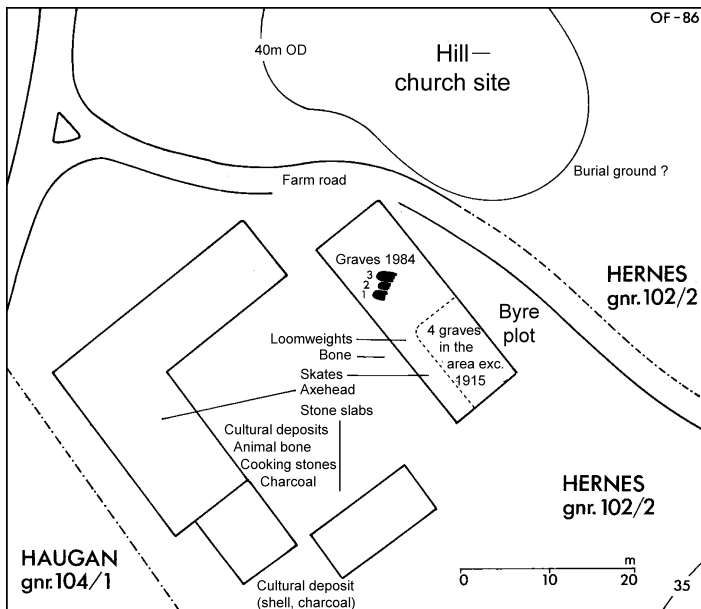


Figure 5. Christian graves at Hernes, indicated by the sites from 1915 and 1984, after Farbregd 1986: 38. Reproduced by the permission of Farbregd.

¹¹ The position of his arms has been determined from photo included in Farbregd 1986b.

No construction remains are documented in association with the Hernes cemetery. It could have been an open cemetery, but as only a small area has been excavated, there may well have been a church in the area. If there were a church, this might have been a predecessor to the church at Logtu. The number of analysed skeletons is very low, but the exclusively male representation could indicate either a sex-segregated cemetery or an exclusively male community.

Table 4. Radiocarbon dates of Christian graves at Hernes, Frosta.

Lab.no.	Dated material	Date BP	Date AD, 68.2%	Date AD, 95.4%
T-5834	homo sapiens	980 ± 50	1040–1220	1020–1270
T-5835	homo sapiens	1050 ± 40	1020–1160	990–1220
T-6347	pine, coffin	930 ± 70	1020–1180	990–1260

The radiocarbon dates of the three graves excavated in 1984 (Table 4¹²) confirm that these are relatively early graves, but they still date from well into the eleventh century or the twelfth centuries. These dates seem to be in line with comparative archaeological material from elsewhere:

- In England, graves with ‘earmuffs’ (stones set around the head) are characteristic of later Anglo-Saxon graves from the tenth and eleventh centuries (Hadley 2002). They are most common in monastic cemeteries from the eleventh and twelfth centuries, but occur in some areas up until the sixteenth century (Gilchrist and Sloane 2005: 138).
- In Lund, there was a mixture of both rectangular and trapezoid coffins before c. 1050, but after this date the trapezoid form dominated. Later on, rectangular coffins became more common again.
- Sex-segregated cemeteries occurred in Lund from around 1050, but by the time the practice of placing a dead person’s arms by their sides had ceased, sex-segregated cemeteries were also diminishing. However, the chronology for this may vary from place to place (Kieffer-Olsen 1993: 121).

When making such observations, the very low number of skeletons analysed and the distance from Frosta to Denmark and England should be kept in mind.

¹² The results from 1986 were kindly calibrated in 2004 by Steinar Gulliksen from the NTNU (Norges teknisk-naturvitenskapelige universitet i Trondheim), using the calibration curve from Bronk Ramsey 2002, corrected for marine diet, the level of C¹³ indicated as c. 25+/-10 per cent.

Nevertheless, the three bodies excavated in 1984 at least do not contradict these observations from Lund and England.

Trondheim/Nidaros

According to Odd (*Oddr Snorrason*), there were buildings and a *kjöpstad* (market-place) at Nidaros during the rule of King Olaf Tryggvason (995–1000), and Olaf himself was elected as king at Øreting, the central assembly site in Trøndelag (Odd 1977, Olaf Tryggvason's *Saga*, chaps 23, 42). The date of the archaeological remains of the oldest urban settlement fits rather well with the written documents, though there is the possibility that some activity was going on in the area at a slightly earlier date (Nordeide 1997a). Even so, very few finds could possibly relate to Norse graves. Only stray finds found in the town and the closest surroundings suggest the existence of any possible Norse graves — at most, two to five — none of which are dated as late as the town (Nordeide 1997a).¹³ This could be explained by the fact that there was very little space available on the peninsula before the establishment of the town given the fact that the land is continually rising (Nordeide 2003: 68–79). On the other side of the river there are quite a few graves at Lade, which were most probably associated with the important farm and earl's residence there, mentioned several times in the sagas. A few Norse graves were also situated at Gløshaugen, south-east of the town: a possible male and a female grave were discovered there, as indicated by finds of an oval brooch and a late Viking Age sword.¹⁴ However, Trondheim is definitely not surrounded by numerous Norse graves as is the case at Birka and Kaupang, and no Thor's hammer has been found even though the town was established during the late Viking Age. The few Norse graves are not many or late enough to change the current view that the people who settled in Trondheim were Christian from the beginning, or else we need to postulate that the non-Christian inhabitants buried their dead elsewhere.

¹³ A Merovingian sword from a cremation (catalogue no. T1230) was found at Kalvskinnet. A recent find of a spear from the same area and period could come from the same find. An iron ring found in the same area is recorded as a 'ringed pin', probably from the Merovingian period, but this is uncertain. A whalebone ironing plate could be from a female grave in the south-east part of the later urban area (catalogue no. T5634), and an oval brooch could indicate a female grave, Viking Age.

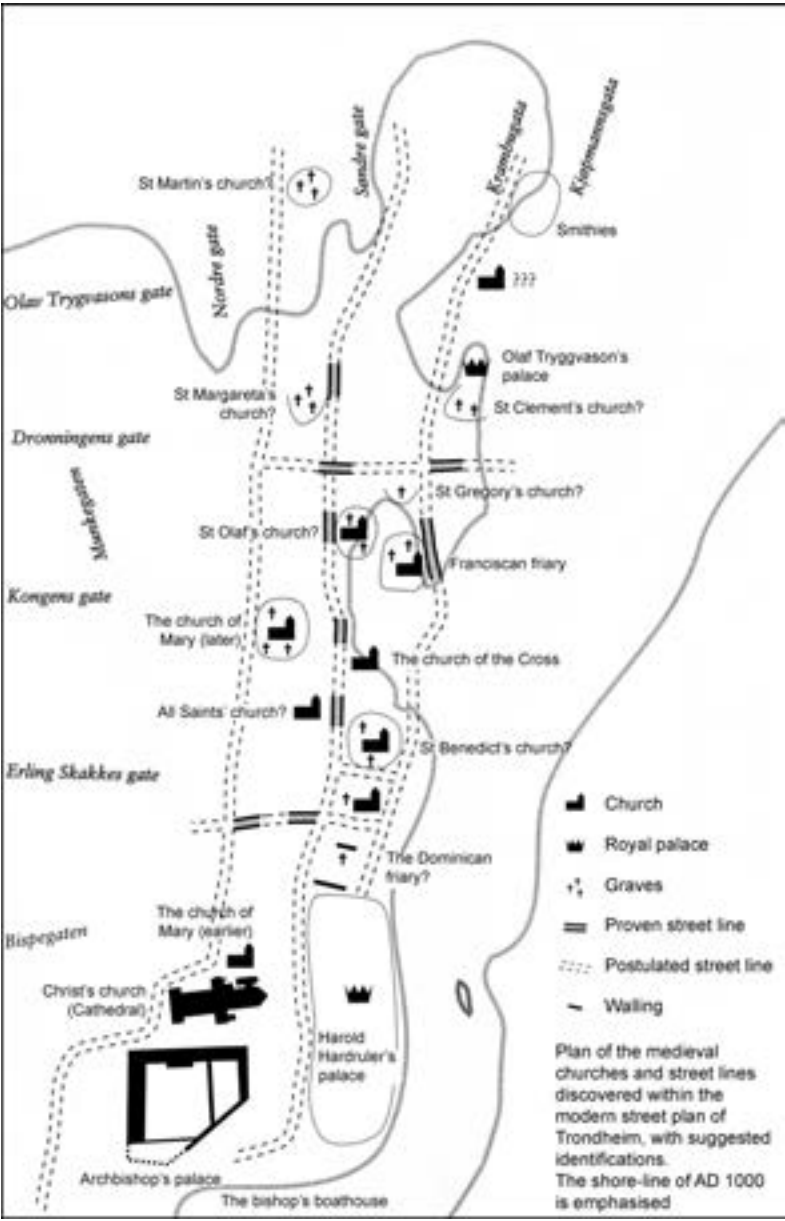
¹⁴ Catalogue nos T14820 and T14572, Vitenskapsmuseet, Trondheim. The brooch was of type R652.

According to the sagas, Christian institutions arrived early in Trondheim. Nidarholm, a monastery on a small island west of the town was, according to English written sources, founded as early as the reign of King Cnut the Great (*Knútr inn ríki*) in around 1028. However, Norwegian/Icelandic sources credit Sigurd Woolstring with Nidarholm's foundation during the reign of King Magnus Barefoot (*Magnús berfættr*) in around 1100 (Lunde 1977: 216). King Olaf Haraldsson had already made provisions for a church dedicated to St Clement, and although this church has not been discovered, it has been suggested that skeletons found in the northern parts of the town were associated with its cemetery (Lunde 1977: 213). It is not known, however, if there was a cemetery attached to St Clement's, and it is not necessarily correct to assume that there was. As an alternative theory, it has been suggested that St Clement's became the church of the later Franciscan monastery (Olsen 1978), but later excavations have proved that the date of this church and its cemetery cannot be dated to as early as the tenth or eleventh century (Christophersen and Nordeide 1994).

It is not possible today to point convincingly to any church remains that would support a foundation as early as the year 1000. Nevertheless, the earliest Christian graves in Trondheim have been found under the church that was thought to be St Gregory's, although more recently it has been identified as St Olaf's (Olsen 1978, Nordeide 1997b, Ramstad 2002). The stone ruins are dated to the middle of the twelfth century, but there are earlier graves with earlier dates. The radiocarbon dates for the earliest are as follows (Ramstad 2002: 76–78, App. C):

- Skeleton under the foundations of north wall, nave, predating the nave:
AV 36: 1032 ± 36 BP cal. AD 981–1025 (68.2 per cent).
- Skeleton under the foundations for section to the north of the chancel:
SKJ 159: 1026 ± 36 BP cal. AD 982–1028 (68.2 per cent).

The graves are east–west oriented, and at least AV36 had its head to the west. This skeleton was lying on wooden planks. Unfortunately, the age of the person buried is unknown. This could influence the interpretation of the date, as the ^{14}C contained in human bone is not deposited evenly throughout a person's lifetime. Consequently, the amount of ^{14}C measured in a bone most probably reflects an earlier time of death than the real one, if the person died after the age of 15–20 years old (Geyh 2001). Yet even so, not more than about forty years could be added to the dates, and the short and early range of date indicates that these are some of the earliest Christian graves found in Norway thus far.



Map 4. Medieval Trondheim with ecclesiastical institutions related to streets and shoreline from c. AD 1000. Folkebibliotekstomten is located on the peninsula by the Franciscan monastery (after Nordeide 1997b: 55).



Figure 6. Crucifixes found in Trondheim, in a hoard dated post-1035. Photo: Per Fredriksen, Vitenskapsmuseet, Trondheim. Photo courtesy of Vitenskapsmuseet.

Table 5. Possible Christian crosses and crucifixes recorded at Folkebibliotekstomten in Trondheim. C = cross, CP = cross pendant, CX = crucifix. 'Certain?' indicate the certainty concerning the interpretation as a Christian symbol. 'JS type' refers to Jörn Staecker's categorization (see Staecker 1999).

ID-no.	Artefact	Symbol	Material	Description	Certain?	Context date	JS type / date
T16978	2 CP	CX	Ag	Filigree	Yes	post-1035	2.1.5 900-1075
N32951	Disc	C	Wood	Inscription	No	end 11th-1150	
N33306	Vessel, bottom	C	Wood	Inscription	No	1050-end 11th	
N36339	CP	C	Wood		Yes	1050-1150	
N36807	Shaft	3 C	Wood	Inscription	No	end 10th-1025	
N36820	Crucible	CP			Yes	1085-1150	1.4.4 1000-1100
N37243	Crucible	Encolpion			Yes	1050-1080	3.4.3 1000-1100
N37510	Crucible	Encolpion			Yes	1050-1080	3.4.3 1000-1100
N37602	Disc	C	Wood	Inscription	No	end 10th-1025	
N37761	Crucible	Encolpion			Yes	1050-1080	3.4.3 1000-1100
N38058	Crucible	Encolpion			Yes	1050-1080	3.4.3 1000-1100
N38329	Lid, small		Wood	Inscription	No	1050-1100	
N39301	Vessel, bottom	Svarika	Wood	Inscription	No	1025-1050	
N40267	Shaft	4 C on C-shape	Wood	Well shaped	No	end 10th-1025	
N40585	Vessel	C	Wood	Inscription	No	end 10th	
N93648	Vessel, bottom	3 ankhs	Wood	Inscription	No	1025-1050	
N96913	Vessel, bottom	C in a walknot	Wood	Inscription	No	1050-1100	
N115067	Medallion	With C/Cx	Enamel	Gilded	Yes	1050-1100	
N175465	CP		Ag / Sn?	Decorated	Yes	1000-beg. 12th	1.4.3B 1000-1100
N202418	CP		Pb	Decorated	Yes	12th century	1.2.1A 975-1125

Apart from Christian graves, symbols and inscriptions are found in Christian contexts in Trondheim from the late tenth or eleventh century. Among the first objects with a definite Christian origin and function are two cross pendants from a hoard with 936 foreign coins. These two large and beautiful silver pendants were made using filigree technique, and the hoard is dated post-1035 (Figure 6); Skaare 1976: 166).¹⁵ A Christian cemetery was established at the same site, functioning during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries at least, but no church was documented by the excavations performed in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Nordeide 1993).

Excavations at the Folkebiblio-tekstomten site have revealed urban occupation layers from the end of the tenth century onwards (Map 4; Christophersen and Nordeide 1994). I have conducted a systematic search of the artefacts from this site (except for the shoes and combs) looking for religious symbols in general, but found only Christian symbols (Nordeide 1990b). Table 5 shows the earliest artefacts, in addition to other early Christian material from Trondheim. The interpretation of quite a few crosses is uncertain (see 'Religious Symbols' in Chapter 2). Some of the symbols found in Trondheim also appear on church paintings, and could be symbols of time (Stigell 1974: 46). The symbols may be Christian in this particular context, but some of them are also found on items from the Bronze and Iron Age in Scandinavia, for instance the walknot, the cross, and the swastika (Stigell 1974: 47). The centre of the cross on N40585 is identical to the centre of the round disc, perhaps a marking from the centre where the disc was produced that was subsequently elaborated into a decorative element. Many such discs have a rough cross on one side, made by something like a simple knife, and these may well be production marks as well. It may be significant, however, that the crosses were found on the outside of what seemed to be a lid or a bottom for a wooden vessel. This could well mean that they were meant to be decorative and obviously visible, rather than (or as well as) a production mark. However, at the moment it is not possible to interpret these signs as having any particular meaning.

Crucibles constitute a group of finds with potential significance for this discussion, for they include the remains of symbols that are unquestionably Christian. Even more valuable is the fact that they attest to the production of Christian symbols, encolpions, at the Folkebibliotekstomten site at the time of King Harald Hardrada (*Haraldr inn harðráði*) (1046–66) and/or King Olaf kyrri (Staecker 1999: 185–86). This was most probably associated with the cult of St Olaf,

¹⁵ Catalogue no. T16978, Vitenskapsmuseet, Trondheim.

proving that there was a production of reliquaries as early as the decade following his death.

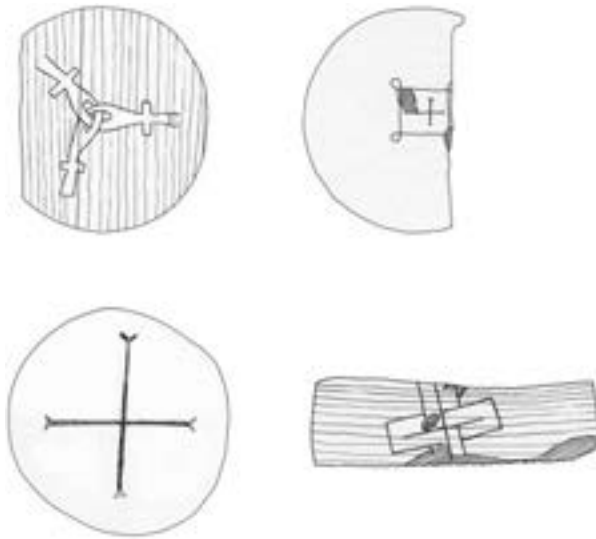


Figure 7. Some symbols of uncertain meaning, from the artefacts listed in Table 5.

From top and left: catalogue nos N93648, N96913, N40585, N39301,
from the end of tenth and the eleventh century.

Drawing: Sæbjørg Walaker Nordeide and Gørill Skaale Johansen.

King Olaf kyrri has been credited with initiating the construction of a stone cathedral in Trondheim, and encouraging pilgrims to visit the shrine of St Olaf. The oldest part of the building which stands today is clearly a Romanesque building (Fischer 1965), but a ruin to the north of the cathedral is supposed to be the older church of Our Lady, excavated during the nineteenth century. The excavations revealed a well in the chancel, thought to be the original well of St Olaf. According to written sources this church was demolished when the new cathedral was built, and a monumental stone throne was built above the chancel of the old church to be used for the crowning and consecration of a new king. This secured a strong, symbolic link between Norway's patron saint, St Olaf, and the rule of every king of Norway, each of whom would literally base his reign on the powers of the saint, manifested by the holy spring. Parts of the stone throne have been detected, but today the ruins lie below the surface (Klüwer 1960 [1823], Lysaker 1992). If the written sources are to be trusted, this ruin could be

older than the cathedral, but on this point the archaeological material is inconclusive (see, for instance, Nordeide 1997b).

Discussion: The Christianization of Trøndelag

According to the sagas, Trøndelag played a key role in the process of the Christianization of Norway. For instance, the country's patron saint King Olaf Haraldsson was killed there, and the archbishop's seat of Nidaros was later established in Trondheim in 1152/53,¹⁶ as confirmed by the archaeological sources (Nordeide 2003, *Heimskringla*, The Saga of Olaf Haraldsson, chaps 209–35). Yet if we are to believe the sagas, there was also some resistance to the Christianization process, and this will be discussed below in the light of the archaeological evidence.

From the areas we have selected, it is not possible to see any gradual change in the Norse cult due to people adjusting to Christian rituals. The non-Christian cult was practised at Hove until approximately 1000 and at Mære until 1050/75. Mære was probably a place where continuous cult activity occurred, but the religion changed when the Christians took control of the area: an example of the *Ecclesia Triumphans* theory whereby the Christians placed their church on the ruins of the pagan cult building (Olsen 1969). This was in contrast to the cult at Hove where the place was abandoned, signalling a clear break in cult activity. It appears that the cessation of cult activity at Hove may have been intended as a temporary measure. However, perhaps due to Christian dominance, it was forced to cease altogether. At the very least we can say that the postholes at Hove were filled in, while at Mære the constructions were burned down and the postholes filled in. In light of the character and timing of the end of the Norse cult, it seems reasonable to assume that the conversion to Christianity was not completed too willingly in Trøndelag during the eleventh century.

How do the towns and the Thing places fit into this picture? The Christian law of the Frosta Codification is only preserved in copies that date from around 1250 (Landro 2005: 12). This is not a very reliable source for the Christianization process in the area, although the Thing was probably important before this time. Even if there are some relatively early Christian graves at Hernes, no particularly early Christian cult has been traced in Frosta. According to Snorri, King Olaf Tryggvason met with resistance to his programme of Christianization at

¹⁶ In the early medieval period, the town of Trondheim was also known as Nidaros.

Frostating; during his reign people preferred to perform Norse cult activities at Frosta and at Mære instead (*Heimskringla*, Olaf Tryggvason's Saga, chap. 67).

The Christian cult in Trondheim is, however, the earliest detected in the Trøndelag region and the absence of late Norse graves is striking. The founding of Trondheim is also crucial to the understanding of the Christianization process in Norway, at least if we are to trust the saga writers Odd and Snorri.¹⁷ Odd describes King Olaf Tryggvason as a missionary king who built a church in the town (Olaf Tryggvason's Saga, chap. 42). Snorri describes King Olaf Tryggvason as one of the important missionary kings of Norway in addition to other kings, in particular King Olaf Haraldsson. Snorri supported Odd's identification of King Olaf Tryggvason as the founder of the town and claimed that King Olaf Haraldsson funded the construction of St Clement's church (*Heimskringla*, Olaf Tryggvason's Saga, chap. 70; St Olaf's Saga, chap. 53). In Odd's *Oláfs saga Tryggvasonar* he wrote that King Olaf was born in secret, close to Randsfjorden. His mother Queen Astrid, along with some close relatives, 'gave him his name and poured water over him' when he was born (Odd, Olaf Tryggvason's Saga, chap. 2), although Odd did not explain if this was a Christian baptism ritual or not. Astrid's husband, King Tryggvi, had previously been killed in battle, which is why she had to flee. King Tryggvi was buried in a cairn, and in light of this burial, it is perhaps possible to interpret this pouring of water not as a Christian ritual but as a similar Norse ritual. After all, similar water rituals occur in a number of religions, with the Christians inheriting their own practices from earlier religious cults in the Middle East (Eliade 1974 [1958]: 194–212).

After his birth, Olaf was brought up in Novgorod (Odd, Olaf Tryggvason's Saga, chaps 2–8). Odd cites Sæmund the Wise and Ari the Wise, stating that Olaf went to Denmark and Ireland when he was an adult and was baptized there. This is the second piece of supporting evidence for the idea that Astrid's name-giving ritual was not Christian, if indeed such a ritual took place. The adult Olaf built a church in Trondheim and preached Christianity; he brought a bishop with him and he persuaded people in Norway to be baptized as Christians (Odd, Olaf Tryggvason's Saga, chap. 25).

From Trondheim the king could control the traffic on the fjord from the west coast to the important communities further east in Trondheimsfjorden, such as the Thing site at Frosta. The Thing at Ørene in Trondheim, 'Øreting', had two

¹⁷ Parts of Odd's saga may be his own invention, particularly the episodes describing Olaf's conversion and his engineering of marriage alliances for his three sisters (Bagge 2005b). Consequently, this work should not be overly relied upon as a source.

main functions: legislation and the selection of the king. The relationship between Frostating and Øreting is still debated, but it is argued that Øreting was linked to the foundation of the town and monarchy (Sandnes 1977). There is no doubt that this Thing was of crucial importance to the early monarchy of Norway.

It is highly likely that King Olaf kyrri (the Peaceful) would have favoured, maybe even initiated, the production of cross-encolpions for St Olaf. However, the earlier king, Harald Hardrada, could be a likely candidate for promoting such activities too. According to the sagas, he built his royal residence close to one of the places held sacred due to its associations with St Olaf's legends, where the cathedral was later built. His reign was characterized by a great deal of coin production, and Trondheim was one of the places where his minting was supposed to have been carried out. It has been previously suggested that the minting during the reign of King Harald Hardrada took place on the site of the Folkebibliotekstomten. This hypothesis was based on finds such as an exceptional number of coins, including a badly stamped coin and a blank, associated with the site of a goldsmith (Nordeide 1989: 63). It is not unlikely that the king had some control over an important group like the goldsmiths in the area during the eleventh century. The king was in control of the minting, but he may also have taken the initiative in the production of cross-encolpions and various other objects for sale in order to promote the national saint.

The production of cross-encolpions proves the presence of persons with knowledge about Christianity and Christian cult in the second part of the eleventh century, including the cult of saints and particularly that of the local St Olaf. Someone there had the technology, resources, personnel, and spatial opportunity necessary to produce precious metal objects as reliquaries, and they probably knew how to organize the reception of pilgrims. The small finds indicate that Christian symbols were relatively common in daily life in Trondheim, at least in the second part of the eleventh century. Even if some finds are dubious, the number of 'maybes', when added to the absolute absence of traces from non-Christian cult, supports the possibility that several of these finds may actually reflect Christian practices. In any case, there are no traces from any other religion in the urban area of Trondheim, not even from its embryonic stage.

The distance from Hove to Trondheim is only about 35 km by boat. According to the written sources, at about the same distance again to the north of Hove, King Olaf Haraldsson was killed on 29 July 1030, although both the day and the year of the battle have been debated to some extent (Sandnes 1997). The correspondence in time between the missionary activities of King Olaf Trygvason and King Olaf Haraldsson and the cessation of cult activity at Hove is striking. In the

same area at Hustad and Rol, on either side of the region of Mære, the only stone cross and cross slab from Trøndelag are found.¹⁸ These two Christian stone monuments are the most northerly of their kind in Norway. It has been argued that conversion in Trøndelag was slow and gradual, but much of the evidence for this conclusion comes from the assumption that the cross slab from Hustad displays both Odin and the Christian cross (Figure 1, Røskoft 2003: 192–93). There is, however, no reason to think that Odin is pictured on this stone. Rather, the stone should be interpreted as purely Christian (Nordeide 2005a). The churches at Sakshaug and Mære, both built at places central to two of the eight medieval counties in Trøndelag, are situated in the same neighbourhood. The excavation of the church at Mære with the discovery of the golden foil figures has already been mentioned above, but it should also be mentioned that the stone cross from Rol later acquired a shape with a striking resemblance to a Thor's hammer, either due to its disintegration or to a conscious reshaping of the design.

This rather small area from Trondheim in the south to Hustad in the north represents part of the core of the key Viking Age settlement in Trøndelag, and this area probably played a fundamental role in the introduction of Christianity to this part of Norway. The town of Trondheim represented the Christian base from the end of the tenth century, and an early Christian cross at Hustad and stone cross at Rol may indicate that this area could have been closely associated; however, such stones are difficult to date (see 'Free-Standing Cross Slabs and Stone Crosses (High Crosses)' in Chapter 5). Additionally, the archaeological evidence reveals that some struggles and setbacks may have been involved in the Christianization process at Hove and Mære (where the old cult places may have burnt down or otherwise come to an abrupt end), at Rol (where the stone cross was possibly reshaped into a Thor's hammer), and at Hustad (where the cross slab may have been pulled over). The story about the battle at Stiklestad has not been confirmed by archaeological investigations, but if true, it means that this was the location for brutal resistance to King Olaf's missionary activities.

The combination of written and archaeological sources does indeed point to the likelihood that Trondheim was established as a Christian town towards the end of the tenth century, perhaps against the non-Christian backdrop of the surrounding area. Archaeological sources support the information provided by the saga narratives regarding the nature of early Christian activities in Trondheim, the struggles and setbacks for Christianity in the surrounding area, and the battles that

¹⁸ See 'Free-Standing Cross Slabs and Stone Crosses (High Crosses)' in Chapter 5.

accompanied the introduction of Christianity to Trøndelag, culminating with the battle of Stiklestad in Nord-Trøndelag where King Olaf Haraldsson was killed. The sagas also indicate that the two Christian kings, Olaf Trygvason and Olaf Haraldsson, played key roles in the foundation of the town. If we are to believe these written accounts, then it is likely that these kings would have bestowed favours more readily upon those willing to be baptized rather than non-Christians.

Nord-Møre, Romsdal, and Borgund

Nord-Møre with Tingvoll, and Romsdal with Rauma



Map 5. The region Nord-Møre, Romsdal, and Borgund at Sunnmøre.

The first example I would like to highlight from this region concerns Nord-Møre. Løken in Hof, located at the centre of the Sunndalen valley, was an important cult place in the Iron Age. The name was originally Leikvin; composed of *leik* ('games') and *vin* ('field', 'meadow'), and consequently has been interpreted as a place to gather for sports and perhaps cultic activities as well (Rygh 1897–1936, XIII: 394, Olsen 1978 [1926]: 164–96). At this site around two hundred tumuli and a large

number of cooking pits have been found.¹⁹ There was also an irregular ditch and a square pit about 1 m wide with vertical, straight sides and packed with stones. The pit has been compared to the ten postholes at Hove in Åsen, and interpreted as supporting a post/figure (Narmo 1996).

The cooking pits are concentrated around an open space 50 m wide. Radiocarbon dating of the pits date four samples to the first six centuries AD and one sample to the Bronze Age, but the around two hundred tumuli recorded at Leikvin have been dated to the period from the second/third to the tenth centuries AD (Narmo 1996). This place was certainly a place of continuous cult activity in the area during the same period as the one at Hove in Åsen. The character of the site is also similar although there were more burials at Leikvin. It is probably no coincidence that a church was constructed nearby in the medieval period, and that the parish and the rectory was called Hof (Rygh 1897–1936, XIII).

While Leikvin is located in the Sunndalen valley, a similar cult site was located centrally in the neighbouring valley of Romsdalen. More than one hundred tumuli from the Iron Age have been identified at Horgheim in Rauma, at the narrow place between the River Rauma and the steep mountains, which rise 1600–1800 metres high (Farbregd 1971). At Horgheim the remains of two buildings were recorded in the central area of the cemetery, which in all likelihood could be interpreted as cult buildings. The biggest tumulus of the cemetery is located in the same area. On both sides of the axis made up by the buildings and the large tumulus we find an equal number of tumuli, the smaller tumuli organized in rows. It is possible that the site might throw some light on the place-name element *borg*, but unfortunately it has not been excavated thus far.

Judging by its name, Tingvoll may also have been a central place, although it is difficult to identify the period during which it was active. The name *Tingvoll* means a field where a Thing was held (Rygh 1897–1936, XIII: 370), and the Thing is known to have gathered here as late as 1520 (Hyldebakk 1963: 388). However, the earliest period during which it functioned is not known, although it is first mentioned as *dingwelli* in 1333 (DN IV, no. 179). The special stone church at Tingvoll was supposedly constructed in the second half of the twelfth century, and among the special features at this church are a well-preserved sundial on the outside of the south wall, a balcony/pulpit in the uppermost part of the outside east wall, and a passage within the walls at around first-floor level that make it possible to walk inside the wall all the way around the church. If the Thing place was functioning during the early Middle Ages, the balcony could possibly have

¹⁹ Pits filled with charcoal and with heated stones.

been associated with the Thing assembly as a way to communicate with many people outside the church. A stone with a runic inscription makes it clear that Gunnar built this church:

Eg bed for Guds skuld dykk lærde menn som varveitslar (står føre) denne staden og alle som kan tyde bøna mi: minnst sjela mi i heilage bøner! Men eg heitte Gunnar, og eg gjorde dette huset. Lev vel! (Lamvik 1977)

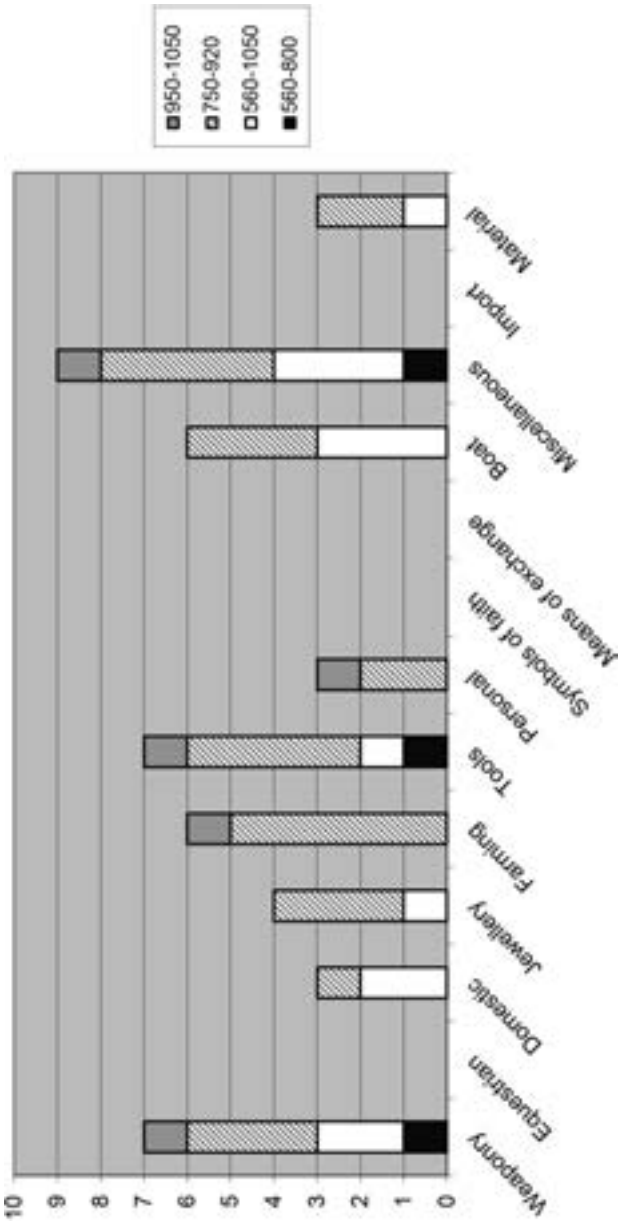
(I pray to God you learned men who take care of this place and everybody who can read my prayer: remember my soul in holy prayers! But my name was Gunnar, and I made this house. Live well!)

We have selected twelve graves from the late Iron Age at Tingvoll for special consideration. Only one grave is dated to the Merovingian period and one to the late Viking period. The graves were, however, more equipped than the graves in the Trøndelag area, with an average of 6.7 types of objects per grave, and quite often several objects of each type. For instance, four arrows were found in one grave and twenty-seven glass beads in another. In contrast, in most cases in Snåsa, Rissa, and Frosta the items occurred only as single objects of each type.

Weapons dominate in seven graves, in two the majority of goods are jewels and costume jewellery, and three give no specific clues regarding gender (Graph 8). The ratio between supposedly male and female graves is thus roughly three to one, which is similar to Frosta, the other municipality with a Thing site. The grave goods do not include equestrian equipment, items that might function as a means of exchange, imports, or any symbols of belief. Three graves, however, do contain material such as silver, copper alloy, glass, and garnet, the last of these being a special stone which may have been local and was probably used for jewellery. All the graves dated to the Viking Age contain one or two utensils for husbandry or agriculture, and all but one from the Viking period have one or more other tools. Personal equipment was also very common during the Viking period, and it is worth noting that roughly 50 per cent of the graves from the late Iron Age contained a boat.

The male kit consisted of one to four weapons, typically one or two utensils for husbandry and agriculture, and additional tools such as knives, whetstones, firestones, and firesteels. They could also have an awl, a thinning hammer, a personal utensil such as a comb, a belt with fittings, and maybe a casket. On one or two occasions a boat was also found.

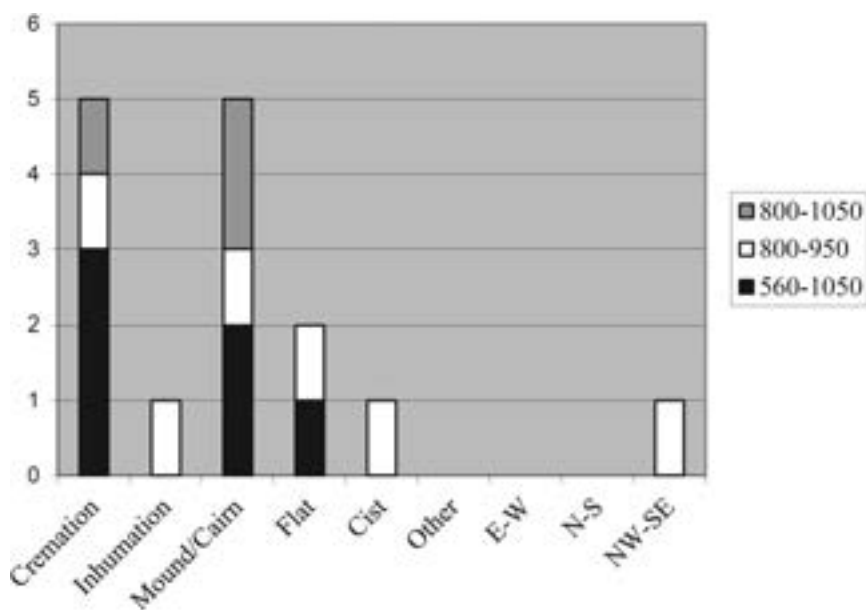
There are three graves with no obvious indications of their gender. However, all of these contained a boat, and two of them also had household equipment. Since household utensils are only present in female graves and weapons typically



Graph 8. Grave goods per period at Tingvoll.

signify male graves, then it would follow that the boat was a mandatory element in the female kit rather than in the male one.

Only one cremation was identified, while seven or eight are inhumation graves (Graph 9). The cremation grave is dated to *c.* 950–1050, and is one of the richest equipped graves from Tingvoll (*No.* 86). It is worth noting that the cremation is arranged in the same cairn as an earlier inhumation grave, dated to *c.* 800–900 (*No.* 87). This proves that during the Viking period the population changed their burial rituals from inhumations to cremations. The reuse of a barrow in this way has been interpreted as an indication of a genetic relationship between the first and second burial (Thäte 2007: 278–79), and thus the change of burial rite probably occurred in the same family group.



Graph 9. Recognized features at the funeral sites at Tingvoll.

One of the graves in Tingvoll lacks a visible marker above the ground, one has a mound, and the rest are all in cairns. One of the cairns contained a stone chamber as part of its construction. For two of the graves the alignment is known, and in both cases this was north–south, with the head to the north in at least one of the two cases.

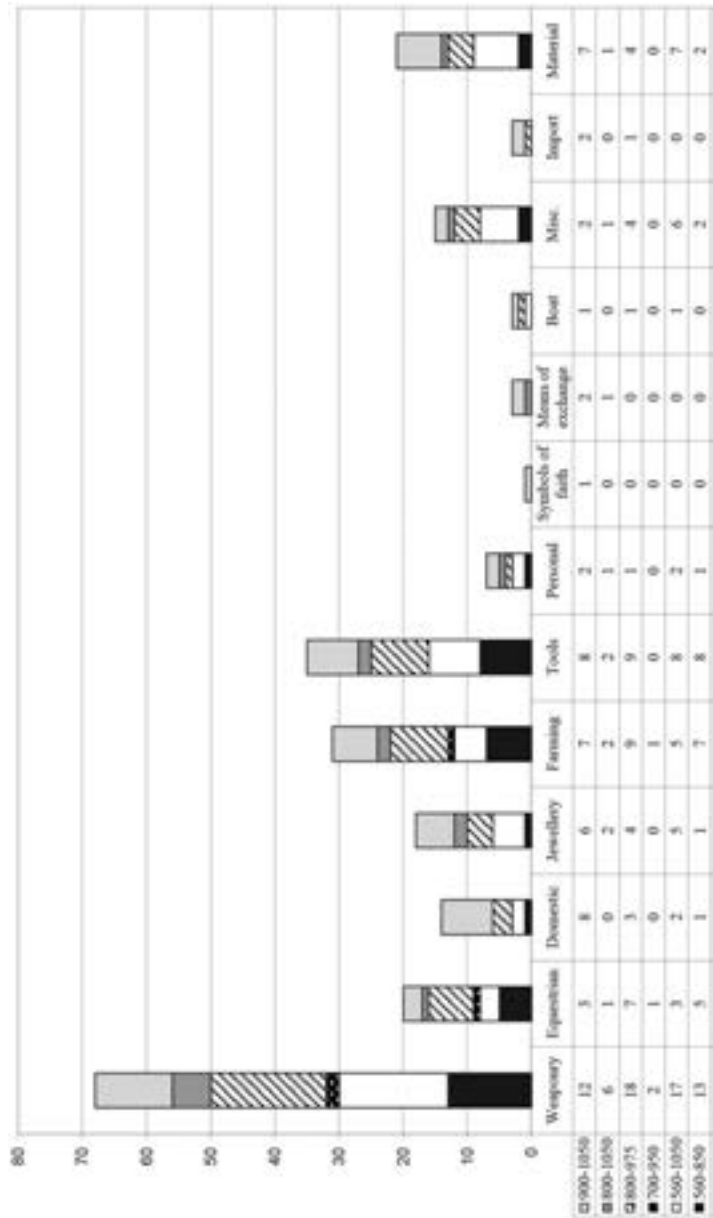
No tendencies towards Christian burial traditions were present in Tingvoll. The domination of inhumation graves is the only trend that might support the

idea of Christian influences, but inhumation was dominant throughout the entirety of the late Iron Age. The orientation of the body, the frequency and nature of grave goods, and the design of the grave forms contradict the notion of a Christian influence as long as Norse burial customs prevailed. As the graves that can be firmly dated to the Viking Age are the richest graves, this material could instead suggest the opposite trend: a revitalization of the Norse religion as part of a backlash against Christianity, or due to the fact that the presence of Christianity made them more aware and proud of their own customs. The example mentioned above of the burial rite changing at a single cairn site from inhumation to cremation during the Viking Age is an important piece of evidence in this respect. If this interpretation is correct, it was probably the Christian community at Veøy, not far from Tingvoll, that they were reacting to (see below). The Norse burial tradition is generally at its most vital towards the end of the Viking Age at Tingvoll, which at the latest is dated to the period *c.* 950–1050.

In contrast to the Tingvoll peninsula, the Romsdalen valley is situated between steep mountains. The municipality of Rauma is made up of both the valley and the river inlet, in addition to the area along the coast with its neighbouring valleys. This area is among those with the highest numbers of recorded finds from the late Iron Age from within the area managed by the museum in Trondheim. The municipality can thus be singled out as a place that must have been of some importance to late Iron Age society, but it deserves more attention in archaeological literature concerning this period than it has hitherto received. More emphasis is normally placed on the district in Nord-Trøndelag and the areas to the south, at Sunnmøre.

Eighty-five graves in Rauma from the late Iron Age are included in my analysis. The ratio of male to female graves is roughly 6:1. Among the analysed finds there is an average of 4.9 types of objects per grave. However, the average number of object types for the later part of the Viking Age is 7.3, which indicates an increase in the number of artefacts placed in graves towards the end of the Iron Age.

Female graves in Rauma are relatively few compared to male graves (12:67). No female grave has been dated to the Merovingian period. Of the twelve graves interpreted as female, all except one contained objects made of precious materials such as copper alloy, amber, silver, glass, and gold, and three of them contained imported objects from the British Isles, Germany, and the Arab regions (Graph 10). One of the most richly equipped graves included several insular Christian ritual objects: a reliquary, a hanging bowl, and what was probably a part of the staff of a bishop or abbot (Figures 8a, 8b, 8c, *No.* 5). The reliquary had been broken up and the relic removed (Marstrander 1963). The destruction of the



Graph 10. Grave goods per period in Rauma.



Figure 8a. Reliquary (l= 11.5 cm) (Photo: Per Fredriksen, Vitenskapsmuseet). Reproduced with permission of Vitenskapsmuseet.



Figure 8b. Hanging bowl (d= 35 cm) (Photo: Bruce Sampson, Vitenskapsmuseet). Reproduced with permission of Vitenskapsmuseet.



Figure 8c. Decoration from an abbot's or bishop's staff (d= 3.7 cm) from a tenth-century grave at Setnes (Marstrander 1963). Reproduced with permission of Vitenskapsmuseet.

reliquary, the disposal of the relic, and the deposition of the Christian cult objects in an obviously Norse grave demonstrate disrespect for the Christian, original meaning of the objects, removing any doubt that this is a Norse rather than a Christian grave.

The most common objects in female graves besides jewels and dress accessories were tools for spinning or weaving as well as cooking pots. The jewels could be quite numerous, particularly towards the end of the Viking period: in addition to buckles and pendants, two women had necklaces with twenty-one and forty-two glass beads respectively. These two women were also provided with imported objects and means of exchange, possibly suggesting that these people were traders as well as farmers and producers of textiles and costumes. On two occasions the dead woman also had a boat and was provided with horse bits and a sickle. Other possible inclusions were a knife, a comb, a box, scissors, and a whetstone or chisel. There are on average 5.2 types of objects per female grave. Tools for smithy and carpentry activities have never been found and are obviously never part of the female kit. These objects are never combined with jewellery.

Our ability to establish a male kit for the graves in this region is far greater than for the female kit: sixty-seven graves are interpreted as male, with an average of five different types of artefacts per grave. Nineteen men have a horse bit among their grave goods and twenty-eight have one or two tools for husbandry or agriculture (a sickle, celt, or scythe). During the Merovingian period, men were normally buried with two weapons, the combination of a sword and axe being the most common. Men could also receive a horse bit, a harvesting utensil, and a knife or a whetstone. Surprisingly, there was a loom weight in one of the graves which has been interpreted as a male grave. During the Viking period the number of weapons in graves increased, and although some graves from this time only contained one weapon each, men were often provided with different weapons in addition to a shield as armoury, such as a sword, spear, axe, or several arrows. More than one-third of the male graves dated to the Viking period contained a horse bit, and close to half of the graves included one or two harvesting or other agricultural tools. Nearly 50 per cent also contained other tools and these could be quite numerous, often as many as six different types. In addition to the usual knife or whetstone, there might also be a hammer, tang, adze, and even a mould. These deceased men were probably smiths, boat builders, or carpenters, as well as being farmers.

Items that were not part of the male kit, however, and were rarely included in the weapon-dominated graves in Rauma were boats, household equipment (except for a few pots), and trading equipment. Only once has a balance been

found, and this could also have been a goldsmith's tool. No imported materials have ever been observed in the male graves, and precious metal or expensive resources are rare.

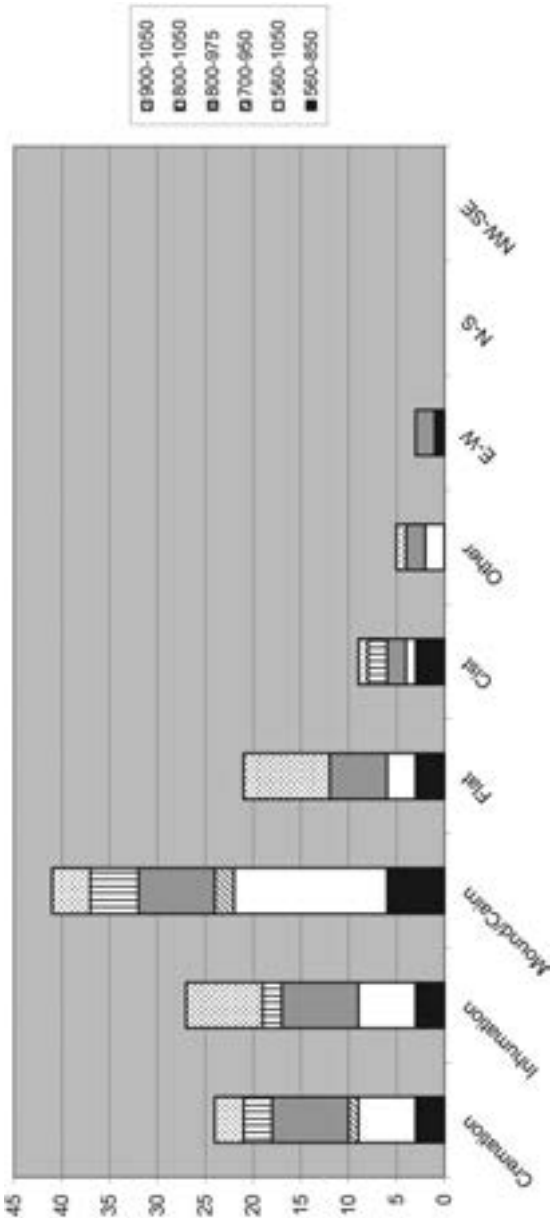
It is striking that from all the possible pieces of horse equipment, only horse bits have been identified in graves, and these are found in equal number in male and female graves. A spur was found at Devoll in Grytten, but not in a well-defined grave context, and therefore the object is not included in this analysis. Yet if it was originally part of the goods in a grave — and this is most likely the case — then this makes the grave the only horseman's grave in this region, just as in the case of the unique grave with riding equipment at Frosta (as referred to above).

With respect to grave goods that relate to harvesting and agriculture, only sickles have been found in female graves, while male graves contain all kinds of harvesting tools, in addition to celts.

The burial tradition in Rauma was more or less divided equally between cremations and inhumations, with an increased proportion of cremations in the last part of the Viking Age (Graph 11). There are also roughly the same number of cairns and barrows which appear above ground-surface. About the same number of graves have no monuments at all, but the relative proportion of these increased during the Viking period compared to the number of graves in a mound or cairn. Quite often stone chambers or cists have been found either as part of cairns or mounds, or else in the form of flat graves. In Rauma there are also a number of other kinds of grave forms including those with odd characteristics, such as free-standing stones (*bauta*), stone cobbling, triangular barrows, and groups of three barrows and three cairns making triangular patterns. The grave orientation is only known on three occasions, and all are east–west oriented.

The general trends as described are representative for Rauma as a totality. Differences in burial customs are not equally distributed throughout the region, however, for the individual types tend to cluster in various parts of the municipality.²⁰ If the material is studied in greater detail, many local differences can be observed within the municipality. While the traditions may have been quite consistent through time in the various local areas, such as in a small village, there are major differences between the villages. For instance, while cremation might be completely dominant at one place, inhumation burials may account for almost 100 per cent of graves at another location. The same variation is true in the case of grave forms; therefore after noticing the large differences, I have split this area up into seven parts to elucidate the geographical contrasts (Figure 9).

²⁰ For more details, see 'Snåsa, Frosta, and Rissa' above in this chapter.



Graph 11. Late Iron Age burial rituals in Rauma.

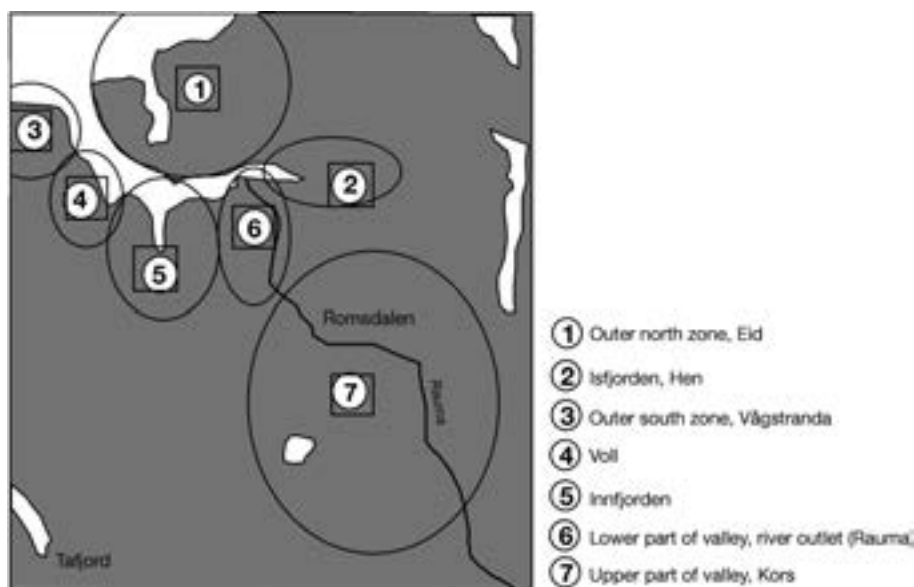
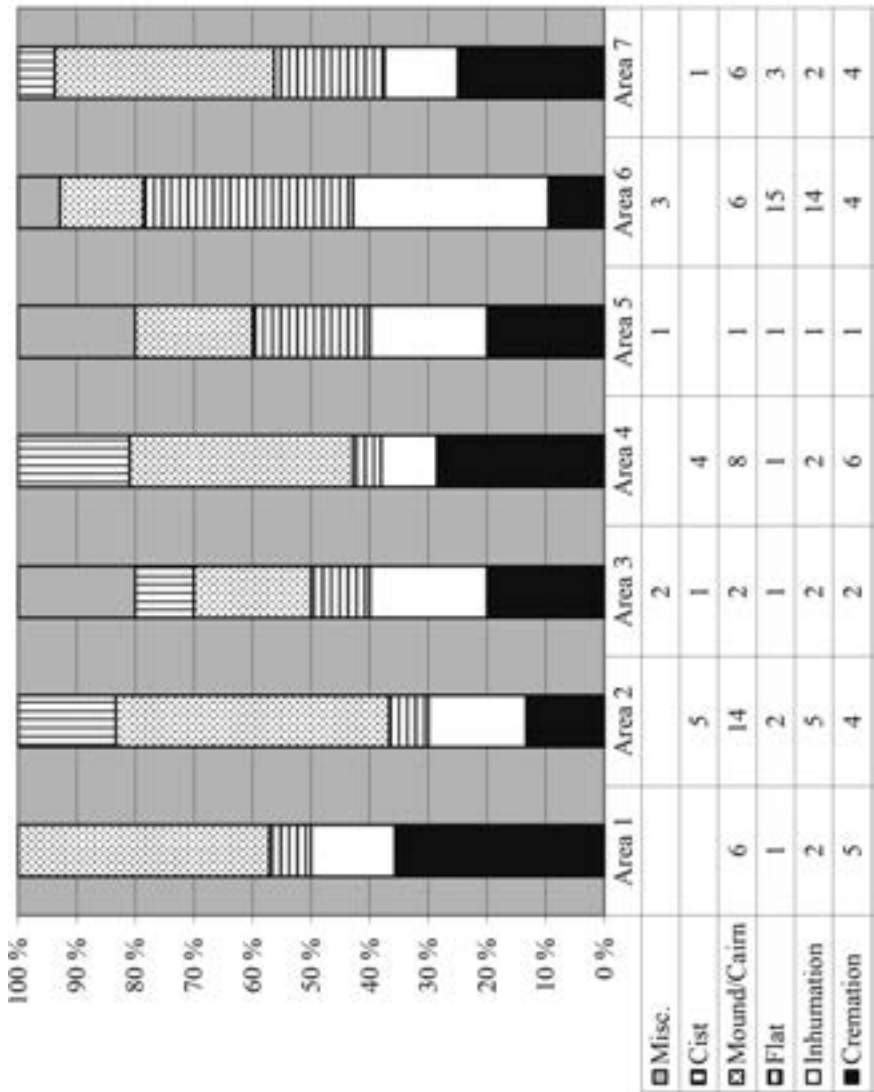


Figure 9. Rauma split into seven different geographical units. Drawing: Gørill Skaale Johansen.

The differences are clearly significant for various geographical areas, which probably also reflect the differing social groups or families (Graph 12). For instance, by the outlet of the Rauma River inhumation graves dominate (area 6); cremation graves are in the majority further east in the valley and in other areas by the coast (areas 1, 4, and 7); and areas 2, 3, and 5 exhibit roughly the same frequency for both types of graves. By the richly equipped grave at the centrally placed Mjelva, Grytten (area 6), the bonfire from the cremation rite was arranged at the burial place, and all the artefacts were severely affected by the heat. At a large cemetery at Høgreiten, Vågstrand (area 3) the cremation burial was organized in stone-lined chambers. The length of these chambers, which contained only charcoal and burnt bones, was rarely more than 1 *alen* (c. 63 cm), and the artefacts were placed outside the chamber. In area 4 there were quite a few cists, but these could not be the result of Christian influence, because in this area during the Merovingian period inhumated bodies were already being buried in cists. Cists occur with both cremations and inhumations, and in flat graves as well as in tumuli in area 4. Similar grave differences have been observed between farms in Stjørdal in Trøndelag (Herstad 2007: 53).

If we were looking only at the Romsdalen valley, areas 6 and 7, one could easily argue that the evidence confirms the old theories about Christianization:



Graph 12. Burial rite characteristics in the various parts of Rauma.

Christian influence came from the west, and gradually spread to the inland regions, as, for instance, is demonstrated by the domination of inhumation flat graves by the river outlet and cremations in mounds or cairns further up the valley. In this case, the presence of Christianity could be explained as having spread from Veøy, where a contemporary Christian group of people lived (see below). However, other aspects in area 6 do not confirm this impression. Flat graves are a tradition from the Merovingian period, and there are no coffins or cists found in area 6 or 7. The graves from this area are also very rich in grave goods. One of these was a cremation and included the disrespectful treatment of the Christian reliquary. Furthermore, other areas along the coast, such as areas 1 and 4, are dominated by cremations.

Some finds from area 6 should be particularly mentioned. At least one or possibly a number of graves were found under an overhanging rock in the mountain above the farm buildings at Ness (*Nø.* 28). The site has not been professionally excavated, and the exact number of graves has not been established. Several swords spanning a long time period (from the ninth to the eleventh centuries) could indicate the existence of more than one grave. The finds are dated generally to the Viking Age, but as parts of the find are quite late (from the eleventh century), one might wonder if these burials were performed in secret, in a place kept out of sight in order to keep the ritual isolated or secret from other groups of people for one reason or another, or because there was some kind of conflict with local Christians. This could, for instance, be compared to the late Scandinavian graves from Cloghermore Cave in Ireland, where two distinct, non-Christian ethnic groups buried their dead during two separate time periods. Late in the eighth century, Irish burial rituals were performed there, while during the ninth and tenth centuries Scandinavians were buried at the site (Connolly and Coyne 2005: 163). However, information about the circumstances surrounding the find at Ness is very inadequately recorded, and it is not possible to reach any firm conclusions. The latest Norse grave in Rauma beside this one is dated to 975/1000–50.

Ancient Christian Cult in the Region of Veøy, Kors, Villa, and Borgund

The Norse burial tradition was kept alive towards the end of the Viking Age both in Rauma and Tingvoll. No tendencies to adjust to Christian burial traditions are found in Tingvoll; rather the opposite is observed. A rich, female Norse boat-grave from the tenth century at Setnes close to the beach in Rauma is also interpreted as a reaction against the Christians (*Nø.* 5, Solli 1996: 203–04). Likewise,

the aforementioned late and possibly secret Norse graves at Ness near the coast in Rauma may also be indicative of a problematic relationship with the Christians in the area. If these suppositions are correct, they are indirect evidence of the presence of Christians in the region. Against this background it is not so surprising to find the earliest dated Christian graves thus far at Veøy. Several islands are located in the fjord immediately to the north-west of Rauma, and one of these is Veøy. The name may indicate that this was a holy island (*ve* means ‘holy’), but it is not known when, how, and by whom the island was considered sacred. In medieval sources the name is written as Vidhøy, and this name could possibly refer to a ‘forested island’ (Thuesen 1976: 18; see also, for instance, De Vries 1956–57, I: 48, and DN, X: no. 166).



Figure 10. Early Christian cemeteries at Veøy. Drawing: Brit Solli in Solli 1996: 130. Reproduced with the permission of Solli.

Veøy is mentioned for the first time as a small town or marketplace in the medieval period in Chapter 5 of Snorri's saga about King Magnus Erlingsson, at the time of King Håkon Sigurdsson Herebrei (*Håkon herðibreiðr Sigurðarson*) (1147–62). An extensive area containing multiple cultural layers is documented, and the only medieval stone church in the whole region of Romsdal is located here. This is identified as St Peter's, which is mentioned as the main church for Romsdal in 1488 (DN, III: no. 966; see also Solli 1996: 178–79, 204–06). A *Kross kirkiu* ('Cross church') is also mentioned at Veøy (DN, I: no. 285, 1343). The

stone church was constructed in around 1200, but according to Brit Solli it may have had a wooden predecessor (Solli 1996: 244–46). The Christian graves mentioned are found not far from St Peter's, but they are older than the stone church. Two stone enclosures have been detected, and both the character and the chronology are extremely interesting: Enclosure 1 had at least three gates — to the north, south, and west — and there may have been a fourth gate to the east (Figure 10) (Solli 1996: 169–70). The south gate in Enclosure 1 was identical with the north gate in Enclosure 2. Both enclosures had a hard packed rectangular area close to the centre of the enclosure, with two rows of stone interpreted as possible wall foundations. On this particular spot there were no graves, and Solli has suggested that this site contains the remains of a small, wooden church.

The Veøy skeletons were unfortunately in poor condition with almost no collagen left, and nothing could be said about body position, age, and gender. Only one skeleton could be identified as an adult male. The graves were all east–west oriented, lacking grave goods, and at the correct depth according to Christian customs: according to the law for eastern Norway there was to be no less than 1 *alen* of soil above the coffin (Olafson 1914b: 32). These graves were undoubtedly Christian. A wooden coffin was found in only one of the graves, and this was at the centre of the enclosure, close to the south of the possible church remains.



Figure 11. Cemetery no. 2, from the west. Photo: S. W. Nordeide.

Table 6. Radiocarbon dates from the two enclosures at Veøy (after Solli 1996).

Samples related to the construction of the enclosure are shaded.

The BP-dates are recalibrated 2009 by OxCal v4.1.1 Bronk Ramsey (2009); r:5 IntCal04 atmospheric curve (Reimer and others 2004).

Site	Context	Dated material	Lab. No.	Date BP	68.20%		95.40%	
Enclosure 1 Trench 16	Inside wall	Betula	R_Date T-10413	885±95	1040	1219	985	1283
Enclosure 1 Trench 16	In wall	Betula	R_Date T-10414	870±65	1046	1225	1032	1262
Enclosure 1 Trench 16	In wall	betula, pinus	R_Date Beta-56481	890±80	1043	1216	1015	1273
Enclosure 1 Trench 16	Outside wall	ula, betula, pinus	R_Date Beta-56490	900±80	1042	1210	997	1268
Enclosure 2 Trench 19	Under wall	betula, myrica	R_Date Beta-56486	950±70	1022	1159	904	1229
Enclosure 1 Trench 16	Grave 1	Pinus	R_Date T-10412	1115±80	784	1016	689	1116
Enclosure 1 Trench 16	Grave 1	Pinus	R_Date Beta-56480	1060±60	896	1024	782	1152
Enclosure 1 Trench 16	Grave 1		R_Date T-10412/Beta-56480	1080±49	898	1014	783	1032
Enclosure 1 Trench 16	Grave 2	betula or sagulus bark	R_Date Beta-56479	1180±70	772	965	685	987
Enclosure 1 Trench 16	Grave 2	bone splinter	R_Date T-10411	1110±150	709	1039	655	1210
Enclosure 1 Trench 17	Grave 1	Pinus	R_Date Beta-56482	910 ±50BP	1040	1172	1025	1217
Enclosure 1 Trench 17	Grave 2	Pinus	R_Date Beta-56483	1090±60	894	1013	778	1033
Enclosure 1 Trench 17	Grave 2	Pinus	R_Date T-10415	1100±40	895	987	828	1021
Enclosure 1 Trench 17	Grave 3	Pinus	R_Date Beta-56484	1130±60	784	988	730	1020
Enclosure 1 Trench 17	Grave 3	Pinus	R_Date T-10416	1100±40	895	987	828	1021
Enclosure 2 Trench 19	Grave 1?	betula, pinus, myrica	R_Date T-10418	985±100BP	905	1170	827	1261
Enclosure 2 Trench 19	Grave 2	possibly pinus	R_Date Beta-56485	1160±50	780	961	716	990

was consistently dated to the period around 1040–1220. A similar date was established for the only sample taken from Enclosure 2, suggesting that the two enclosures are probably contemporary, even if the sample from Enclosure 2 predates the construction and is slightly earlier than the construction itself. The graves, however, are earlier. The earliest dates for graves from both enclosures are from the same period (Enclosure 1: 772–953, Enclosure 2: 789–954), and the latest are also about the same (Enclosure 1: 1030–1183, Enclosure 2: 970–1169). From this it appears that there might originally have been a single cemetery that was later separated into two parts with the construction of the two stone enclosures.

The earliest dates for the majority of samples from the graves are from the eighth to the tenth centuries. So many early results cannot be explained as mere coincidence; some of these graves could actually be dated to as early as the ninth or early tenth centuries. This is earlier than any other Christian graveyard found in Norway. Even if the enclosure constructions are slightly later, these are also extraordinary: their early dates and construction methods differ from any other early Christian burial place in Norway. Fragments of stone walls or fences from less comprehensive constructions (for example, border markers or buildings made of materials such as wood) have been observed in medieval cemeteries in Norway as well, but not erections as significant as those at Veøy.

The date of the construction of the enclosures at Veøy fits well with the earliest Christian legislation in Norway. This includes the regulation of the churchyard (in Old Norse *kyrkjugarðr*), encompassing both the fence and the enclosed area. There should have been a fence around the church within twelve months after the church was built, and this should have been taken care of as a common duty of the congregation; according to the Eidsivating Codification each man had his part to take care of. A Christian law from the reign of King Sverrir adds that the fence could also be of stone, which probably means that it was most often made of wood (Bøe 1963). There is no regulation in the laws about the gateways, and it is the church area that is the focus of the legislation, not the churchyard. There is nothing in the laws that could explain the double enclosures either. This confirms that the enclosures at Veøy are special both as a construction and in terms of their relationship to the laws.

The remarkable age of the cemetery proves that there was a very early Christian community at Veøy, either during various stages of the Viking Age or throughout the whole period. The question is whether the date of the cemetery is in fact too early to be compatible with Solli's theory, as being associated with the missionary kings whose activity is described in the later sagas. There is probably

an alternative explanation: Veøy's distinction as an outstanding, rather isolated phenomenon during the process of the Christianization of Norway suggests the remains of an early, single Christian community, such as a monastery. The remote location would have fit the purpose for part of a missionary strategy as well as for a foreign monastery.

There are other ancient Christian cult places in this region, too, but the chronology of these is unfortunately not clear. For instance, in Romsdalen, an old Christian churchyard at the Kors (English: *Cross*) chapel exists at Flatmark farm in Rauma, but the building has disappeared. The exact date of this old Christian cult place is not known, due to the lack of excavations. The name Kors could most likely be explained by one of three alternatives: to signify a road crossing, as a dedication to the holy Cross, or testifying to the existence of a stone cross. The first alternative is not likely in this particular case, as Kors chapel was located in a valley between mountains rising to around 1700–1800 metres high. Concerning the second alternative, the church was called Kors in the post-Reformation period in the document *Reformatsen*, and it was also called Kors chapel in the 1770s, when a chapel was still standing. Writing at the start of the twentieth century, Gerhard Schøning suggested that the building was more than 100 years old (Schøning 1910–26 (orig. 1773–75), I: 151–52), and although the church today has been moved to a place nearby, it is still called Kors. In the medieval period, however, the church was called *Flota*, *Flata*, or *Flotha kirkia*.²² The name *Flota/Flata* may come from the same root as the modern name Flatmark. In light of this information, it has been suggested that the church was dedicated to the holy Cross (Rygh 1897–1936, XIII: 234). It would be strange, however, if the dedication turned up as the name of the church for the first time in the post-Reformation period, when dedications were generally less important. This leaves us with the last alternative. In general, Birkeli considered such names in western Norway to represent places where an old cross was likely to have existed, but no stone cross is known to have stood at this particular site. Birkeli thus thought that a cross erected in the post-Reformation period might provide the background for the name (Birkeli 1973: 80, 83–84). When I first read Birkeli's theory I considered it likely that his arguments were broadly correct, and so I was happy to discover in June 2009 that two stone crosses of medieval type are still standing at the cemetery.

An old Christian graveyard at Villa in Tresfjord, west of Rauma, should be mentioned too. A flat field with a slope to the west and south, 8–10 m high, is

²² See, for instance, DN, I, no. 990, 9 April 1497.

called Kirkebakken (Figure 12). A rectangular area measuring 11 m x 5–6 m was excavated in 1932 (Figure 13), where sixteen graves were found buried in three rows, rather close to each other, 1.2 m beneath the surface. All the graves were inhumations, parts of the skeletons were preserved in thirteen of the graves, and these were east–west oriented with their heads to the west. A stone slab covered some of the graves, and two slabs were positioned behind the head in one of the graves. One grave contained a possible celt from the late Iron Age/early medieval period, but this was the only object except for iron nails and wooden coffin remains. Charcoal was added to some of the graves. There was no sign of a church, and it is not known if the field was called Kirkebakken because of a former church on the field, if the finding of skeletons resulted in the naming of the place, or if there were any other circumstances that might explain the name (Petersen 1959: 48–51).

There is no reason to believe the graves at Villa were anything other than Christian. The late Iron Age graves are mostly cremations in this area; some tumuli existed nearby. The absence of a church may indicate that the Christian cemetery is from the time between the Viking Age and the establishment and building of churches in the district, but none of the graves have yet been dated to provide further proof for this argument.

Borgund was an important church centre in Sunnmøre during the twelfth century, just as Veøy was in Romsdal. The place was mentioned for the first time in written sources in *Ágrip* from around 1190 (Larsen 2008). Excavations were conducted in 1953–81, although the post-excavation work at Borgund has unfortunately never been finished. Only minor articles about the urban settlement have been published by the excavator, Asbjørn Herteig, and after the first excavation seasons he found that shoes, other small finds, and bog stratigraphy indicated that the beginning of the urban settlement was at least as early as the middle of the eleventh century (Herteig 1957: 462–64). However, recently, a more updated article about the archaeological site with new radiocarbon dates indicates that it may have started earlier, in the tenth or early eleventh century (Larsen 2008).

Four stone churches at Sunnmøre were located at Borgund, identified as St Peter's, St Margaret's, Christ Church, and '*Matteskirken*' (St Matheus'/Mathias' Church), all of which may have been constructed during the twelfth century (Kloster 1957). Ole Egil Eide assumes that the stone churches at Herøy, Kinn, Giske, and Borgund could all have been built by the same organization of builders and masons (Eide 1975). Numerous Christian graves have been excavated in Borgund, one including the earliest coin found in a Christian grave, an Anglo-Saxon penny struck in around 1003/09 (Skaare 1976: 160–61). In a second grave a



Figure 12. The cemetery at Villa, overlooking the fjord and the central valley on the other side. Photo: S. W. Nordeide.

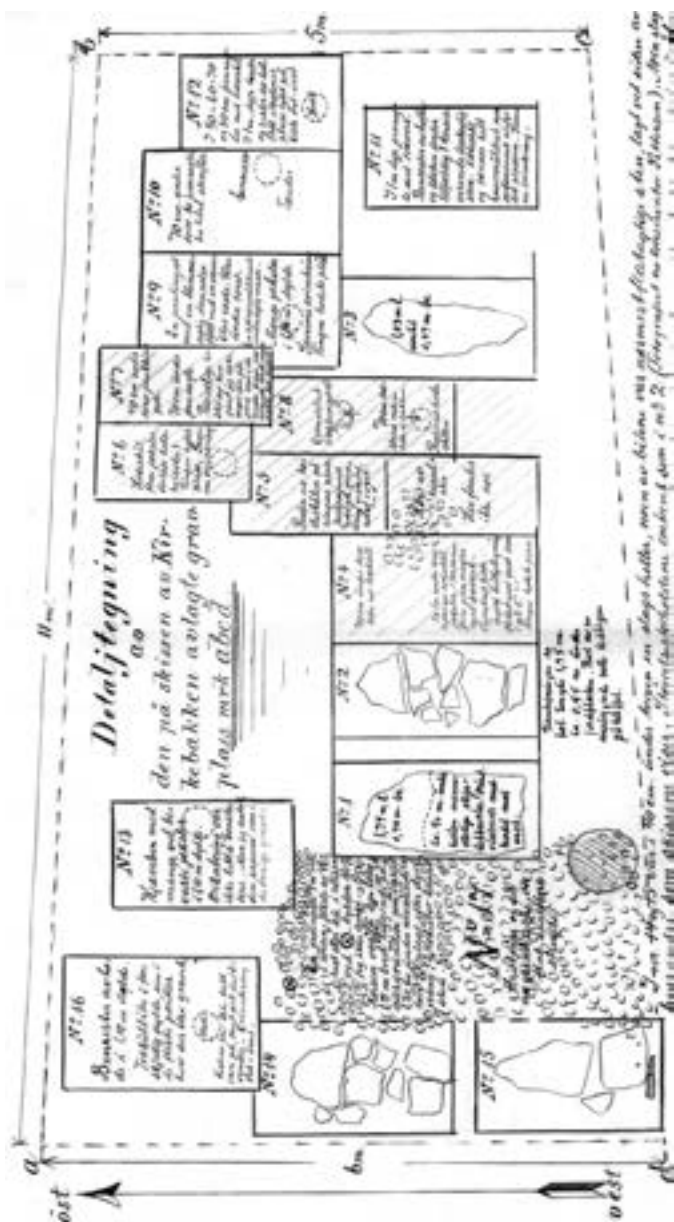


Figure 13. Christian cemetery at Kirkebakken, Villa in Tresford. Drawing: O. L. Hoem 1932.

horseshoe-shaped silver buckle was found, dated to the Viking Age up to the eleventh century.²³ This provides the earliest possible date for these graves, which are located at a cemetery where no church has yet been revealed (Larsen 2008).

The Christianization of Møre og Romsdal

The complex structure of cult in this region contributes to an impression of the region as an area of special importance. Manifold cult practices are clearly concentrated in individual areas or villages, and local variations in cult activities must have been valued very highly. Religious cult must have been of particular importance to an individual's identity. It is particularly unfortunate that the material from this region suffers from a lack of precise dates and descriptions as a result of the incomplete nature of many of the older investigations. There may have been a complex process of development with setbacks in various parts of the region, which have not been possible to discover because of too poor a chronology and an absence of more detailed descriptions. Nevertheless, it is possible to detect some religious tensions or enthusiasms in this landscape at the beginning of the second millennium within contemporary Norse and Christian settlements.

In the narrow valley of Romsdalen, secluded by the 1800-metre-high mountains, many people must have been related to each other by blood or by marriage. They could not move through the valley without meeting the other inhabitants of the valley, which, in spite of its numerous monuments, could not have been very densely populated. As a consequence, it is most likely that people regularly participated in collective religious rituals different from those in their own village. This was probably the case in other parts of the region as well. The difference between a cremation and an inhumation, for instance, may have been experienced as a dramatic change, but it was obviously accepted. Christianity may have been welcomed as another religious variation in this cultural setting around Rauma. Even so, the first Christians still settled at a safe distance from the Norse community, on an island of their own. It seems that the inhabitants of Tingvoll viewed the situation differently: they seem to have practised a more uniform cult than in Rauma with all graves taking the form of inhumations — half of these including a boat — except for one tumulus cremation. It would appear that people from the municipality of Tingvoll did not appreciate the presence of the Christian community. Accordingly, they changed their burial customs from inhumation to

²³ Catalogue no. BRN1/6389. Personal communication from Arne Larsen (22 February 2010).

cremation at the end of the Viking Age, perhaps as a kind of protest. Some possible reactions are also observed near the mouth of the Rauma River. Other examples of Christian cult in the region are not as early as at Veøy, and cannot be assumed to be contemporary with the Norse cult. The graves in Borgund are early, however, and the cemeteries at Villa and Kors are still of an unknown age.

The location, character, and date of the cemeteries at Veøy distinguish them as special compared to other early Christian cemeteries. Christian activity at Veøy is contemporary with cult activity by the Norse population on the mainland. The name, if it does indeed mean 'holy', could then be of Viking Age origin. There are no non-Christian cemeteries that could denote the place as particularly sacred during the Iron Age — particularly not when compared to Rauma — but an old monastery or a similar institution at Veøy in the Viking period may have given its name to this island. The Augustinian monastery at Elgeseter in Trondheim similarly gave its name to Elgeseter in the medieval period (*Elge* derives from *helga*, meaning 'holy'). The name may have described a place for a religious community, as defined by the people on shore.

The imported goods suggest contacts with distant areas, with people travelling to distant areas, or perhaps, I would add, with foreigners from the British Isles settling at Veøy. A possible foreign Christian community at Veøy could perhaps explain the concentration of imports in the district: several insular objects from these British or Irish settlers were found in a Norse cultic context from the Viking Age in Romsdal, and several only by the mouth of the Rauma River, to the east of Veøy.

It is possible to suggest at least four different models that would explain how insular imports found their way to Rauma:

1. Merchants brought commodities for trade/exchange
2. Exogamic groups exchanged spouses, providing them with dowry
3. Scandinavian people raided insular areas and returned with booty
4. Clergy/missionaries travelled to establish the Church in non-Christian areas.

Nevertheless, these four groups would have brought different items: the first group would have been concerned with bringing large quantities of easily transportable and convertible commodities; the second would have brought objects important for identity and daily life; the third would have returned with costly items suited to increasing their own prestige at home; while the fourth would have needed ritual objects enabling them to provide for Christian rituals. These items

provided by each group may indeed have overlapped to a certain extent, but it is hard to believe that the selection of items represented particularly in the Setnes grave could be the result of the first three categories. Although they were constructed with fine decorative features and from costly materials, they comprise a group of items uniquely suitable for use by the clergy. If it really was part of an abbot's staff that was found, this would support the idea of a monastery at Veøy. The reliquary also indicates travelling monks, rather than being the result of a Viking raid of insular churches:

The very small size of these reliquaries is undoubtedly a result of their particular use. They were not, as a rule, kept in churches or chapels; rather they were the personal property of monks on long or short journeys. The monk carried his reliquary on a cord round his neck, in his hand or in his luggage, all according to what suited the occasion best. (Blindheim 1986: 3)

The chronology is not sufficiently nuanced to know the events in great detail, but it is possible to envisage the Christian activity at Veøy falling into two categories. In the first phase, a British monastery was established by the end of the ninth/early tenth centuries. Quite a few incidents of Irish monks or eremites going to distant islands are mentioned in written sources, such as the descriptions of Dicuili from AD 825 (Tierney and Bieler 1967: 75–77, Redknap 1996). It is not impossible that some of these monks might also have settled on an island along the Norwegian shoreline, close to what they would have considered to be the edge of the world. In Ireland several religious communities were established at similar places, and even if Veøy was a rather central place in the Norwegian landscape among seafaring people, it was also an island that, to some extent, could support a separate community living apart from the rest of society. The monastery may have been accepted for a while, but later the Christians may have been driven away with their ritual objects and other items confiscated by the local people and distributed into the surrounding areas. Secondly, and after a period of Norse aggression and the cessation of early Christian activity, it might have been possible to settle a Christian congregation again at the beginning of the eleventh century, when the stone enclosures would have been constructed.

The cemetery at Veøy is the oldest Christian cemetery in Norway. The special stone enclosures, representing a second phase of the cemetery, are also quite early. It is not unlikely that these features were the result of people arriving from abroad, or else due to encounters with such people. Although I am not familiar with double stone enclosures, at Jylland and Fyn in Denmark a stone wall normally enclosed the churchyards just as we find at Veøy, and there was normally more than one entrance, often one in each direction to the east, west, north, and south.

However, the age of such walls in Denmark is uncertain (Stoklund 1963), and if they are later than or contemporary with the enclosures at Veøy, they may have shared the same influences. Furthermore, as mentioned previously under ‘The Arrival of Christianity in North-west and Central Europe’ in Chapter 3, enclosed cemeteries are found earlier in the British Isles, in England from 700 until the eleventh century and in Ireland even earlier, as a non-Christian and early Christian tradition among the Celts (Petts 2002, Redknap 1996). Because there are other indications pointing to the British Isles, I would suggest that the first Christian community in Norway was established at Veøy, with the group including people originating from the British Isles. After a while, maybe after a break in the activity, the cult was practised again, maybe maintaining its link to the British Isles.

Considering the region’s character and its high number of heritage monuments of late Iron Age culture, one may wonder why Romsdal has not received more attention from archaeologists. Yet the situation was the same in the medieval period: two of the most important sagas from the early Middle Ages by Odd and Snorri hardly mention Romsdal (Odd 1977, Snorri 1980). Odd does not mention Romsdal at all, while Snorri mentions it fourteen times, normally together with other regions as a place to travel through, or else when someone is provided with



Map 6. Herøy at Sunnmøre and the coast of Sogn og Fjordane.

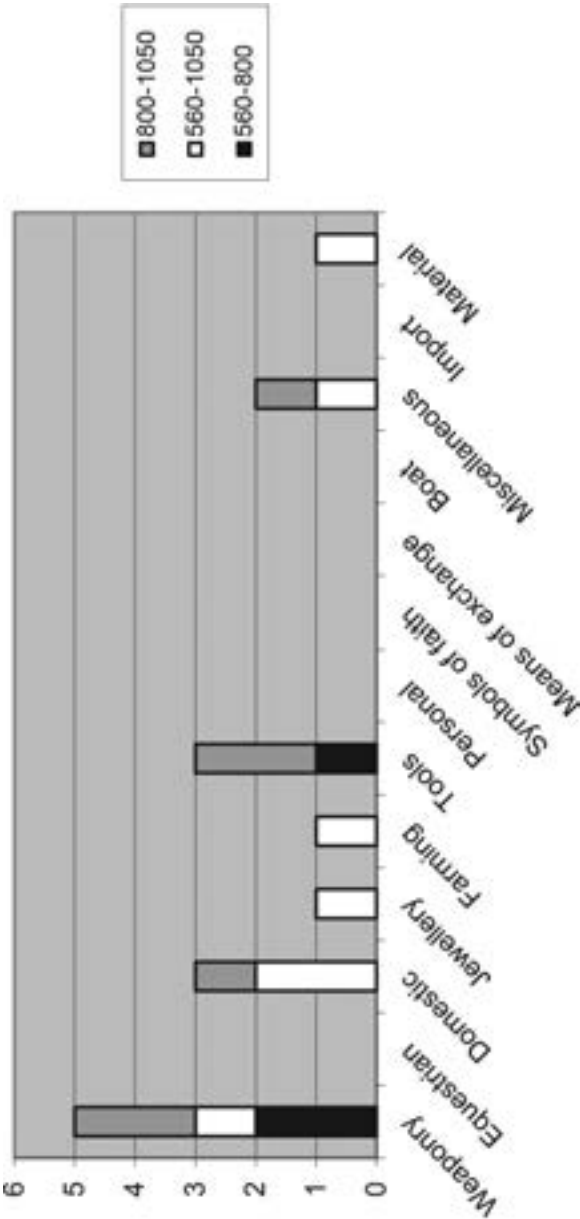
the administrative responsibility for the region on behalf of the king. An exception occurs when King Håkon Sigurdsson Herebrei is killed at an island just outside the coast of Rauma and is buried in Romsdalen. However, his brother, King Sverrir soon moved the body from Romsdalen to be buried in the wall of the cathedral in Trondheim (*Heimskringla*, The Saga of Magnus Erlingsson, chap. 7). As the story makes evident, Romsdal was not regarded worthy as a burial place for royalty, although this lack of royal interest may have enabled the local population to enjoy relatively high levels of freedom, without royal interference.

The Western Coast: Iron Age Bog Sacrifices at Selje, Herøy, and Gulen

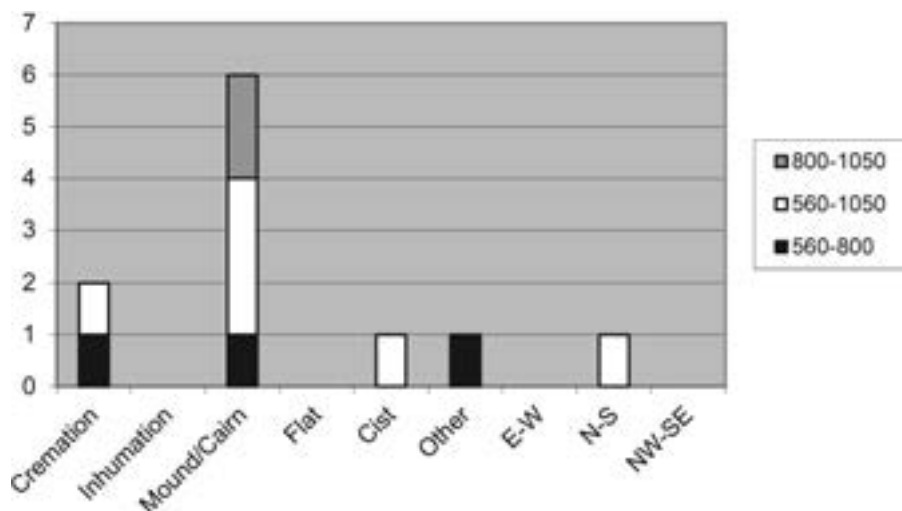
Herøy at Sunnmøre and Selje in Nordfjord are located on either side of the Stadlandet peninsula, which is regarded as the most dangerous place to pass by boat along the western coast of Norway. The name *Dragseidet*, for instance, means simply a relatively low and narrow part of land at Stadlandet, over which one could pull a boat from one fjord to the other, to avoid waterfalls or other dangerous parts (Rygh 1897–1936, I: 47–48). This particular portage, however, is steep and relatively high, which illustrates the importance of avoiding this particular part of the sea. The bays on either side of the cape must therefore have been important places for anchorage while waiting for the wind to drop. Because the Norse graves in Selje and Herøy are similar and are geographically close, and because each area has a low number of finds, I will present them together as one category in the graphs 14 and 15.

Only four graves from the late Iron Age were found in Herøy, with an average of 3.5 types of artefacts per grave. All the detected graves were male and had one to four weapons as grave goods, with little else recorded. Two of the graves also had a file, and a third had a sickle and what was catalogued as a ‘frying stick’ (*No. 150*). Such sticks have since been interpreted as ritual staffs (see Ingstad 1995, Price 2002).

One of the graves was a cremation, one was an uncertain inhumation, and no information exists for the other two. Two graves were constructed in a cairn and two in a mound, one of which had a cist aligned from north–south.



Graph 14. Grave goods from Herøy and Selje.



Graph 15. Characteristics of the burial rite and grave forms in the municipalities Herøy and Selje.

Other interesting finds regarding cult were found at Herøy in addition to the graves. While no boats were found in the graves here, boats have had a ritual status in other ceremonies, for boats, pointed wooden sticks, and other artefacts have been sacrificed in bogs. One example is the find of two concentric circles of wooden, pointed sticks of around 30 cm in length, which were stuck into the marsh in Herøy. The diameters of the circles were 40 cm and 175 cm, and they were erected in a layer of wood from deciduous trees, 40 cm below the surface. The tops of the sticks had rotted away, and the height of the construction is not known. This was found at a place called Leikanger. This name is composed of the elements *vangr* ('grass field' or perhaps 'meadow') and *leik* ('games', pointing to the old place for common games, but also maybe cultic activity) (Rygh 1897–1936, XIII: 48).²⁴

The most famous among these finds are, however, the boats from Kvalsund. The parts of the boat were set down in a big hollow dug down into the bog and covered up to the top of the bog. By the south end was a layer of nettles covering

²⁴ Catalogue no. B9384 in Bergen Museum.

one square metre. Some observations indicate that the site may have been filled with water while still open, creating a little lake (Shetelig and Johannessen 1929: 34–56).²⁵ The nettles were radiocarbon dated to AD 690 $\pm$ 70 (Myhre 1980, Christensen 1984), and Per Fett has interpreted the find as a ship offering (Fett 1951: Funnkartet no. 6).

The site at Kvalsund was clearly carefully organized, constructed, and planned over some time. The preparations started in spring and were finished during late summer or autumn. It is possible that annual rites were practised here, linked to the sowing of seed at the spring solstice, and the autumn harvest (Shetelig and Johannessen 1929: 27–33). The role of the nettles at Kvalsund is unknown, and the overall interpretation of these extremely interesting finds will be discussed below as well ('Boat Graves and Boat Rituals' in Chapter 5). Even if the site at Kvalsund is not a grave, there is no doubt that the finds reflect cultic activity at that place (Shetelig and Johannessen 1929: 52–53).

The combination of a boat and a bog, pointed wooden sticks and a bog, or, as in the boat from Kvalsund, a combination of all three, seems to be a special feature in this coastal district (Shetelig and Johannessen 1929: 34–56). With the exception of the Kvalsund finds, the dates of most of the finds are not known, and this creates a problem. On the basis of the similarity of character with the Kvalsund find, however, there is reason to believe that even more of these finds should be dated to the late Iron Age.

There are only four graves from the late Iron Age among our sample in Selje as well, with an average of 3.8 types of artefacts in each grave. So far Selje presents circumstances almost identical to those at Herøy. In addition, a probable sacrifice in a bog occurred, and, as at Herøy, twelve glass beads and two Irish fittings of gilded copper alloy with glass were found in the marsh. Due to the finds at Herøy nearby, I would interpret these as sacrifices.

There were two male graves with two weapons each, and one of them had a whetstone. A female cremation accounts for the richest grave (*No. 151*), and along with a buckle and twenty beads, the grave contained tools for textile production (three loom weights and a spindle whorl) and a vessel. One Viking Age grave had a rare and strange composition in comparison with other graves with grave goods: eleven loom weights, a spindle whorl, and a rotary quern. One of the loom weights was decorated with an inscribed cross (*No. 152*). It could not be determined whether or not this was a Christian cross. The composition of the artefacts assembled in this grave was more similar to occupation finds than to grave goods, but

²⁵ For further details, see 'Boat Graves and Boat Rituals' in Chapter 5.

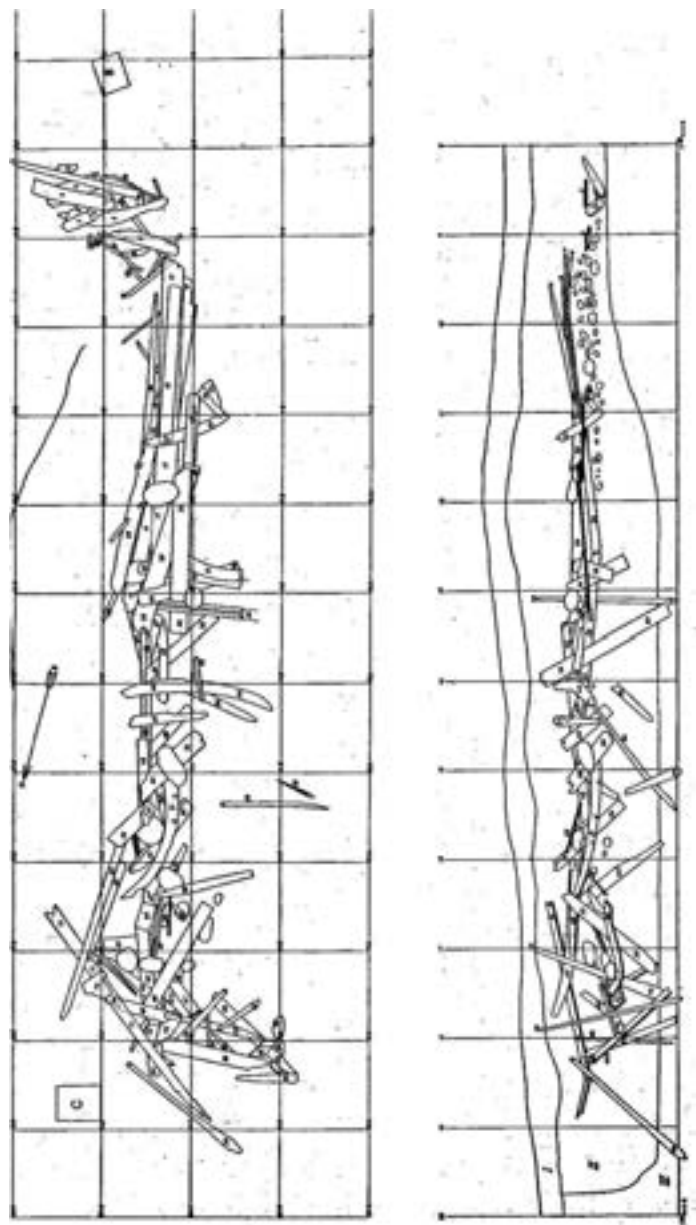


Figure 14. The Kvalsund ship. Plan (top) and section (Shetelig and Johannessen 1929: 28). Courtesy Bergen Museum.

they were still recorded as grave finds. This grave is more likely to be female rather than male, even though no jewels were present. Nevertheless, because there is very little information about the find, it is difficult to make such judgements.

In terms of the grave form, two of the graves in Selje were in a cairn, and two were probably flat graves. The Merovingian grave was a flat grave, but it had been placed between two big rocks (*No. 154*).

Together with the archaeological material from the late Iron Age at Herøy, the archaeological finds reveal a coastal district with few and rather poorly equipped graves, but a district that had a special relationship to the marshland, probably in association with some cultic activity. Of the eight graves in total, two are cremations and for the rest nothing is known for certain. Only one or two of the eight graves are believed to be female. The male graves contained mainly weapons. The low number of finds does not give any basis for further speculation about chronological development, etc. The latest date of a Norse grave for both municipalities is the late Iron Age in general, or 800–950 (Rygh type 520, 518, and 498).

Gulen, although coastal, has a slightly more sheltered location, and is centrally situated at the end of the long fjord Sognefjorden. This is the place of origin for the medieval Gulating Codification, although the date of the Thing is not known. The first time Gulating is mentioned in written sources is by the Icelander Ari the Wise in the 1120s, who refers to the Thing as having existed in the 930s, but it has been debated whether the Thing was founded by King Harald Fairhair (*Haraldr inn hárfagri*), or during the time after his death, in 931/932 (Helle 2001: 23–30). Archaeological finds cannot infallibly date the Thing to the Viking Age (see below).

In Gulen we selected thirteen grave units with a total of fifteen graves, with an average of 4.2 types of artefacts per grave. Due to a lack of chronological evidence for the earlier parts of the late Iron Age, there is not much to be said about chronological changes throughout the period. The orientation is not known for any of the graves, and there is no evident pattern for the different types of grave forms or body treatments: barrows, cairns, and flat graves existed side by side, as did cremations and inhumations.

What is also strikingly different in Gulen compared to Herøy and Selje is that on several occasions more than one grave was found in a barrow, and sometimes the barrow contained an inner stone cairn, but never a stone cist. A specific example is the several burial mounds at Haugland. Two of them were located at Kyrkjebakken (English: ‘the church hill’). Both barrows were large, but additional

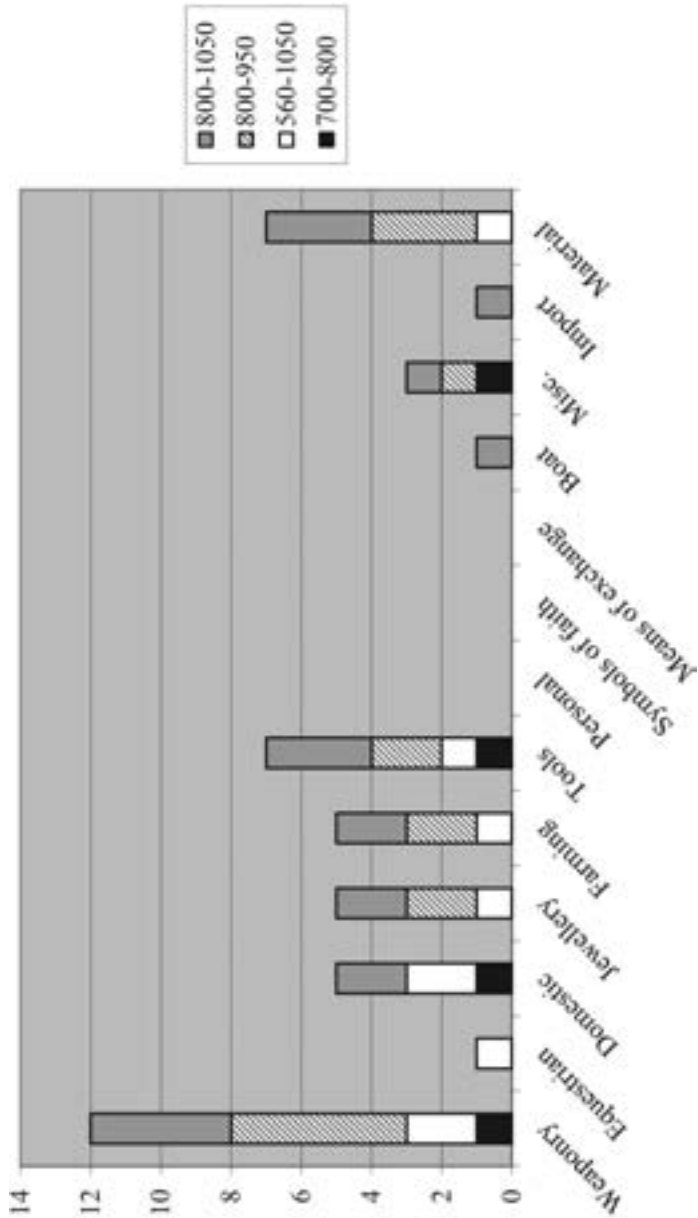
data was only recorded from one of them (*No. 165*), and the information that was given was not very clear. In the medieval period a chapel was located immediately to the south of the barrow which we have analysed. The outer form was described as both 'circular' and 'oval rectangular', but its outer edge was marked by stones. During excavations in around 1810 several areas of stone packing were found inside, and extensive layers of charcoal and ash. Some of the stone packings were described as oval rectangular, but most of them were of a triangular shape. The stones in the stone packings were big, but not bigger than what could be lifted by a man. In the barrow two swords, a spear, two axes, horse teeth, bones, and many pieces of green glass were found.²⁶ The fire affected the swords, but they were not deliberately destroyed. This barrow probably contained several graves, and the circumstances of the find are very interesting, but the character of the documentation makes it hard to give a more precise description of the finds.

The female kit cannot, based on only one grave, be defined in Gulen. Two of the graves are of uncertain gender, and the male kit is rather simple, normally consisting of a combination of two of the following weapon types: a sword, axe, or spear (Graph 16). These weapons were most likely to be combined with some simple tools.

Because Gulen has been a Thing place located by the coast one would think that boats, as with other means of transportation, would have been significant in many aspects of daily life, but this is not evident from the late Iron Age graves. It is a surprise to find only one grave with a boat in this region, and no equestrian items were found other than the horse teeth in one grave.

No personal equipment except dress accessories were among the grave goods, and no means of exchange. However, a tool used for craft, agriculture, or harvesting may have been included with the dead. Only one imported item was found (*No. 172*), an Irish fitting refashioned as a buckle, which together with the absence of transportation indicate a lack of contact with the community's wider surroundings. However, in spite of the scarcity of female graves, the frequency of prestigious resources like precious metals, and similar, is high: roughly 50 per cent of the graves contained some sort of copper alloy, silver, gold (gilded bronze), glass, or lead (ingot). If Gulen was a Thing place already in the Viking period, these finds could reflect assemblies during which men felt the need to demonstrate their status through prestigious objects.

²⁶ Catalogue no. B3327 in Bergen Museum,



Graph 16. Grave goods at various times in Gulen.

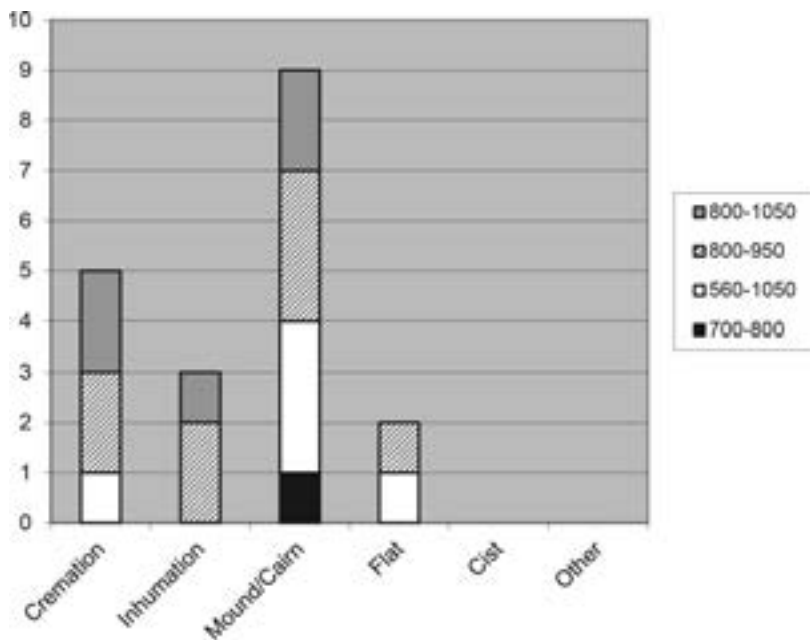
A strangely composed Viking Age cremation flat grave should be mentioned, in which two arrows were found along with a spindle whorl, linen-smoother, a knife, a hammer, six whetstones, four fire-striking flints, one lead ingot, a nail, a rivet, and a quantity of slag (*No. 174*). Neither weapons (except for the two arrows), nor jewellery were present to suggest gender, but tools for textile production (typical for female graves) and a smith's items (more typical for male graves) were found. The high number of diverse types of objects is also rare.

Cremations were dominant in Gulen, but inhumations occurred as well (Graph 17). There is no data on the alignment of the graves, but both flat graves and barrows existed throughout the late Iron Age, although barrows dominated. There was only one cairn. The latest date for a Norse grave in this area is to the Viking Age in general. Beyond this, the most precise, latest date is 850–950 (taken from Jan Petersen's axe type E, Rygh type 395).

Some mysterious bog finds are recorded here as well: thirteen Viking Age glass beads were found 2 m deep in the bog at Byrknes, Bjørknesøy. On the same island, at Revurholmen, twenty pointed pine sticks²⁷ were found 1.5 m deep in the bog, but unfortunately they could not be dated. The sticks were set down in a fan-like arrangement, with all the pointed ends stuck together. The site is situated only 4–5 m above the present sea level, which could indicate a late date, but there is essentially no difference between the sea level during the Iron Age and today. Considering the difference in the high and low tide of around 1 m, and the depth of the find in the bog, we can assume that this find was placed not far from the sea level. Yet the depth of the find in the bog and the similarity of its character to the finds from Selje and Herøy would indicate that a late Iron Age date would be the most likely. An interpretation of the find as an offering may also be relevant for the find of an axe dated to the ninth century. The axe was found wedged down between two stones close to the sea at Mjømna in Gulen, and it is difficult to find any other explanation for this extraordinary find.

The legendary version of the Christianization process in Norway dates the arrival of Christianity in this region as very early. In the medieval period the island Selja became a sanctuary and one of the first seats for a bishop in Norway. Selja is associated with an old legend about seven holy men who were asleep in a cave. This legend was later partly replaced by a legend about the Irish Christian princess Sunneva (*Sunnifa*) who was forced to marry a non-Christian Viking. According

²⁷ Catalogue no. B10221 in Bergen Museum. The beads are no. B7234.



Graph 17. Burial rite and grave forms in Gulen.

to various documentary sources she escaped this fate by fleeing with some of her people in a boat, and landed as a refugee at a cave at Selja. The local people blamed the incomers for killing some of their domestic animals, and wanted to kill Sunneva and her people. When the fleeing group realized this they prayed to God that the evil men should not kill them. The cave then collapsed, killing everyone, and they received the bliss of heaven. Subsequently, Christians found the holy bodies of Sunneva and her brother, Alban; they were enshrined, and Sunneva was later brought to Bergen. Alban, however, was buried in the church at Selja, and the church is dedicated to him (for more information on these tales see Rindal 1997: 267–328).

If the legends were true, we would expect to find early Christian activity at Selja from the time of the Viking Age. Yet turning from the myths to reality, the legend is not confirmed. We know that a Benedictine monastery was established at Selja in the beginning of the twelfth century, with a church dedicated to the Romano-British saint Alban. We also know that Sunneva later became the patron saint of Bergen. Excavations have established that the occupation layers and bones

in the cave are dated to the early Iron Age, not the medieval era (Hommedal 1997). An early Iron Age occupation of such caves is common for many caves in Norway, and bones are usually preserved in the occupation layers of such sites.

According to Snorri, Bergen was founded by King Olaf kyrri (1066–93) (*Heimskringla*, Olaf kyrri's Saga, chap. 2). The bishops' seats were probably also established during his reign in around 1070, but it has been argued by Knut Helle that the bishop's seat had already been moved from Selja to Bergen by Olaf's time.

He provided the bishop with a permanent residence in Bergen, and Sunneva's shrine was moved to Bergen in 1170. It has been argued that the first stage of the legend at Selja was motivated by the need to establish a good relationship with the important saint Sunneva in order to bring her shrine thereafter to Bergen and add weight to the argument that the 'real' bishop's seat should be located in Bergen (Helle 1997). This could explain why the bishop's seat was first located at Selja, which is situated by the northern border of the bishopric which covers the whole western and southern part of Norway, including Agder, despite the fact that Bergen has a more central location in the bishopric. During the establishment of the Nidaros province in 1152/3, this would be why Bergen was one of the bishop's seats mentioned in the foundation document, while Selja was not mentioned at all (Nordeide 2003: 94–96).

The Christianization of the Western Coast

The archaeological finds in this region reveal a coastal district with rather few and poor graves, but with a special relationship to marshland. Boats and other objects seem to have been sacrificed to the bogs, and maybe also to the rock face, probably in association with some cultic activity.²⁸

Archaeological finds cannot prove that a Thing place already existed in Gulen during the Viking Age. Nor can the indication of early Christian activity at Selja in documentary sources be confirmed in the archaeological sources; rather it is rejected. There is no indication of very early Christian activity in this region, but the latest date of a Norse grave in Selje and Gulen is not particularly late: the latest Norse cult is dated to the Viking Age in general, or more specifically to 850–950,

²⁸ For more about boat rituals, see 'The Grave Forms' in Chapter 5.

and there is a considerable lacuna between the latest Norse graves and the earliest Christian churches, when they do eventually appear.

Inner Parts of Western Norway: Jølster and Kaupanger

Only one municipality is selected from this area to examine non-Christian cult: Jølster in Sunnfjord, Sogn og Fjordane. Jølster is located far from the coast, with moderately high mountains surrounding a big lake. Nine of the ten graves from the late Iron Age in Jølster are dated to the Viking Age, and only one is dated to the Merovingian period. It is not possible to date many of the graves more accurately, neither is it possible to try to trace any reliable pattern of chronological development on this empirical basis. The graves are relatively 'rich' compared to the coastal district, however, with an average of 6.9 types of artefacts per grave.

Male graves strongly dominate this area. There is only one female grave, one double grave with both a male and female, and one grave of uncertain gender. In addition to the double grave, seven graves could be interpreted as male. These finds did not present any opportunities for defining a female kit. However, the female grave was extremely rich and was an inhumation grave, oriented east–west in a mound (No. 164). It is also the only boat grave in Jølster, which follows the custom observed in other municipalities, where boats were often reserved for rich female graves. The woman had among her grave goods many tools for textile preparation and production: a weaving sword, ten loom weights (one of them with an inscribed cross), four spindle whorls, a heckle for the preparation of flax,



Map 7. Inner parts of Sogn og Fjordane.

and a whalebone plate for smoothing textiles. The whalebone plate is normally reckoned to be of northern provenance. The dead woman was also given thirteen gaming pieces, a vessel, two buckles, a silver necklace, a sickle, a whetstone, tools for making fire, a box, fittings, a horse bit, an axe, and possibly an awl (Graph 18).

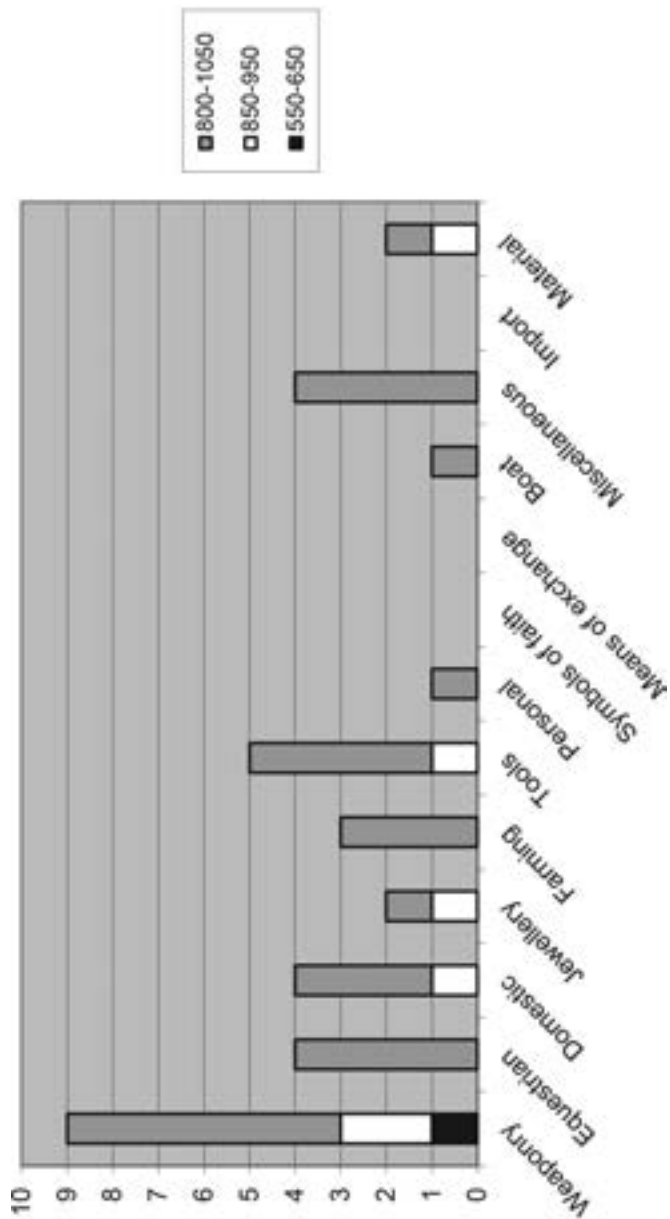
Even though it was an east–west-oriented inhumation grave, there is no reason to assume that Christianity influenced this burial, for the mound and the rich grave goods count strongly against such a theory. The grave was situated on a terrace by the lake and oriented east–west like the lake; consequently it seems to have been the local topography that decided the orientation.

The male kit consisted of one to five weapons in addition to some kind of tool, a horse bit, a vessel, or a tool for either harvesting or other agricultural activities. On one occasion a man was also given a tool for making metal thread. Weapons were obviously the most important grave goods, as the other finds are few and rather simple.

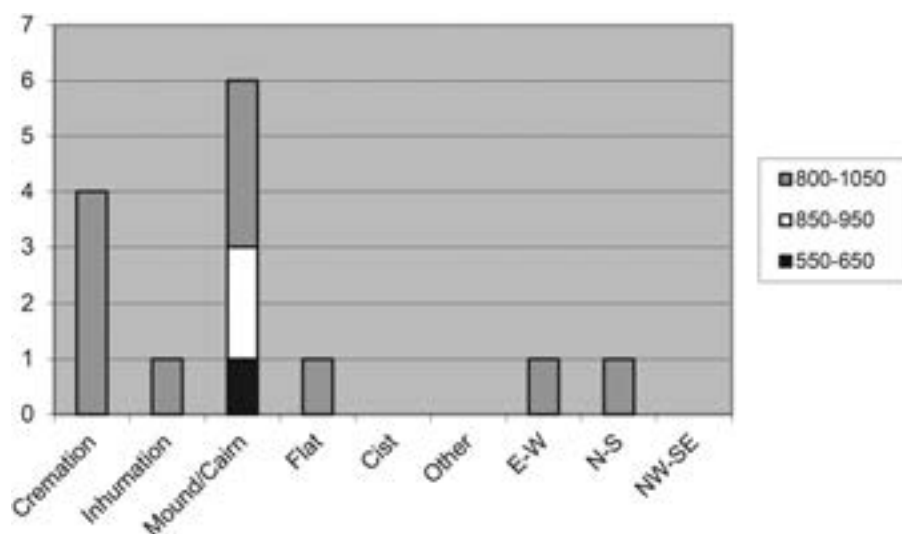
In contrast to Gulen, however, there were no imported artefacts in Jølster, and only one silver item and two with copper alloy were found. These were found both in the female grave and the double grave associated with the female. If there had been more female graves there probably would have been more precious metals. The lack of imports supports the idea that the inner parts of the country were more isolated than the coastal areas in the late Iron Age. The scant representation of precious metal and other costly materials stands in contrast to finds from the early Iron Age in this district where, for instance, a rich grave with imports has been found.²⁹ This could indicate that Jølster was more isolated during the late Iron Age than in earlier times, although the low number of finds makes any further attempts to interpret this purely speculative.

Two graves were inhumations and four to seven were cremations (three being uncertain), which makes cremation the dominant form of burial rite in this area (Graph 19). Most of the graves were in a burial mound or a cairn, one was buried in a cist in a barrow, and one was laid on a stone platform in a cairn. This latter grave (*No. 161*) was from the Merovingian period and in it a thin layer of charcoal was found under the platform, while a spearhead was found with no traces of burning on top of the platform. The spearhead was found long ago and only re-excavated by a student. Since no human bones were found, it is not possible to determine how the cult was actually practised, nor whether this grave should be interpreted as a cremation.

²⁹ Catalogue nos B4258 and B6656 in Bergen Museum.



Graph 18. Different types of grave goods in the various periods in Jølster.



Graph 19. Burial rite and grave forms in Jølster.

Only one or two flat graves were found in this area. In most cases the context of the find was too inaccurately described to establish whether or not it was a cremation, and in which order the artefacts were found. In some districts one suspects that vessels had been used as sepulchral urns, so that the finding of a vessel could indicate a cremation when other information is missing. This is certainly not the case here, for both of the definite inhumation graves had a vessel. The cremation grave at Naustbakken, Helgheim (*No. 157*) is also worth noting. The grave consisted of a pit filled with ash and grave goods, with items including a sword, an axe, a shield, a spear and six arrows, in addition to a knife and a file. This rich cremation from the Viking Age was close to the site of the later Christian church, and the name Helgheim is evidence that this had been a holy place and a cult place for a long time (Rygh 1897–1936, XII: 309). The latest date for a Norse grave here is the Viking Age in general, or 850–975.

The medieval church in this district is supposed to have been a stave church located at Ålhus, at the same place as the present church from the eighteenth century, but which was demolished in 1795 (Larsen 1999). Not far from the present church, Baron Audun Hugelksson (1240?–1302) built his private stone castle on the shores of the lake. This castle is built on a former, most likely Christian,

cemetery and while the graves have not been properly excavated, parts from six skeletons were found while a farmer excavated along the walls of the castle in 1934. These finds were re-excavated by Gerhard Fischer that same year (Fischer 1934, Larsen 1999, Sellevold 1999). The farmer's excavations stopped due to the discovery of skeletal remains at several places, but Fischer was unfortunately only interested in the castle remains, and the age of the castle in particular. Therefore, he did not investigate the possible graves further (Fischer 1934: 3). However, according to his report, the skeletal remains were found in three places, all in disorder. There were probably more bones from at least two of the skeletons, but these were not excavated.

The skeletons were lying immediately under the foundation of the castle, and Fischer was convinced that they were earlier than the castle. Though the identification of the stone house as Audun Hugleiksson's castle was not absolutely certain, local traditions and the absence of alternatives, together with the evaluation of bricks and architectural remains, supported this interpretation. The castle was, on this basis, dated to the second part of the thirteenth century, and the skeletons must be earlier than this. Beyond this, we know that the remains were from inhumations, but we know nothing about the grave, orientation, objects, coffins, and other features. However, two of the skeletons were radiocarbon dated: 1) a male, *c.* forty-five to fifty years old: cal. AD 1005–1155; and 2) a male, *c.* twenty to twenty-five years old: cal. AD 1020–1160 (Larsen 1999). These results confirm Fischer's theory about the relationship between the skeletons and the castle.

The skeletons have been analysed by Berit Sellevold (Sellevold 1999). She found parts of six individuals, none of them complete skeletons, with the bones badly preserved. Five of them are definitely men between twenty and sixty years old, and it is not possible to determine the sex of another one, but it was a juvenile between fourteen and eighteen years old. The height of the bodies could be estimated for two of the individuals as 186 cm and 176 cm, both above-average height for men from either the Viking Age or the medieval period; 186 cm in particular being unusually tall. There were no traces of any diseases or injuries. Only one body had the teeth preserved, and these showed no sign of cavities. The skeletons give the impression that they were a group of men from a well-off background, but the question remains, were they buried by Christians or as Christians, and why were they buried there?

There are no traces of any monuments above the ground to indicate if this was a Christian cemetery or not. Some information from the landowner indicates that the skeletons probably were disturbed during the construction of the castle; the

bones were collected and reburied during the construction of the foundations. There is no tradition of an earlier church in the castle area. The skeletons are located less than 1 m above the surface of the lake, and there must have been a risk of flooding. It is known that a flood in 1743 caused people to travel all the way to the church by boat (Larsen 1999), and on this occasion the water was at a higher level than the graves. The water level in Jølstravatnet Lake has not changed since these events took place, but even if there were a risk of flooding, the plot was clearly considered to be a worthy location for a castle. The castle may have benefited from its lakeside location in terms of defensive strategies and communication, as it was situated with the lake to the south and a moat surrounding its other sides, but the location must also have been acceptable as a residential area.

From the Norse graves in Jølster, we know that males dominated the excavated graves in the Viking period as well, but these were usually cremations with at least one weapon as grave goods. Any grave goods, grave constructions, and barrows could have been removed by the construction work associated with the castle, or they may have gone unnoticed by the excavator, but if there were any cremations they should have been possible to detect. The large number and exclusive nature of the inhumations and the associated radiocarbon dates indicate that these graves were Christian. Furthermore, considering their age and sex, Arne Larsen thought it possible that they all committed crimes. It is true that in terms of sex and age the bodies belonged to the group that most often commits criminal acts. The bodies may have been criminals who, according to the Gulating Codification, were supposed to be buried at the waterfront, 'where the water meets the green grass' (Larsen 1999). Although Sellevold could not find traces of any injuries, Larsen thinks the material is too fragmentary to determine whether they had been killed or not. However, the apparently healthy bodies indicate wealth, or at least that they were not slaves. An alternative interpretation put forward by Larsen is that they were important men who had been killed in a struggle for power. If they lost the battle, they would have been regarded as traitors by the victorious party and killed and buried. According to the law, these types of men ought to have been buried as criminals as well.

Larsen's conclusion seems reasonable. The fact that this is the same plot on which one of the very few Norwegian private castles was later built supports the idea that there could have been a struggle for power at this particular place, for there were probably powerful landowners living there. Another possibility is that there was a Christian cemetery without a church in the period from the beginning

of the eleventh to the mid-twelfth centuries, or that the first church may have been located further south than previously expected.

In Sogn, the church at Urnes is one of the most famous stave churches in Norway. This is partly because of its age, but mostly due to the beautiful carvings that have given its name to the 'Urnes style' of Viking Age decorative art. As was shown in Table 3, the present church was constructed at the earliest by the late summer of 1131, and the earliest coin found under the floor is Danish, minted in 1035/42 (Table 2). A couple of older dendrochronological samples indicate older constructions, but these are in a secondary context and lack outer year-rings; consequently they could have come from elsewhere.

There are no large medieval towns in Sogn, but there are some important central places and a *kaupang* (marketplace), the name of which is preserved in the modern place name *Kaupanger*. One excavation of interest here concerns a church that was excavated in 1964. The present stave church was built by the end of the twelfth century, but two predecessors of the present church were revealed by the excavation, each new church a little larger than the previous one. Both of the previous churches were built on posts inserted into the ground. Some shallow pits were uncovered that are the possible remains of graves, earlier than the church remains (Bjerknes and Lidén 1975). Unfortunately, the excavation focused only on architectural questions, and the graves and skeletons have not been analysed.

According to the excavators, the earliest church was pulled down. A new post-church was constructed, and this one was destroyed by fire. Two Norwegian coins were found below the fire layer: the destruction layer for the second church. These coins predate the destruction of the second church, proving that the second church burned down after 1130–50, at which point the present church was then built. The lifespan of each of the two earliest churches is not known, but the second one in particular may have been short-lived due to the fire. The time of building for the earliest church can only be speculatively dated to sometime during the eleventh century (Bjerknes and Lidén 1975).

The Christianization of Eastern Sogn og Fjordane

The archaeological data concerning non-Christian cult activity is too sparse to support any decisive date for when the Norse cult stopped in this region. Due to the scarcity of graves from the Merovingian period in Jølster, it is impossible to evaluate any gradual change in the burial customs here through time.

Regarding Christian cult activity in this region, the entirely male cemetery at the castle site at Ålhus is worthy of note, even if it is not particularly early. The same could be said about the church sites at Urnes and Kaupanger: the first church at the site may be early, but probably not significantly so, and the quality of the records is not good enough to offer any particular date.

Agder: A Barter Region and 'the Last Pagan'?

There are many lakes and shallow bays in Farsund, located in Vest-Agder, but although the region has a coastline that faces out directly onto other parts of southern Scandinavia and the British Isles, the area also includes more isolated inland areas. One such inland area was the valley of Setesdalen, and although originally this valley was probably neither part of the medieval *fylke* of Egdefylkene nor the Gulating law district, it was later subordinated to Gulating. In 1274 two male representatives from Setr (now Valle in Setesdal) met at the Thing in Gulen, indicating Setesdal was subordinate to Gulating at this point in time (Jansen and Rynning 1994: 68–71).

Eleven graves in Farsund have been dated to the late Iron Age, and of these, three were dated specifically to the Merovingian period and five to the Viking period. Norse graves were relatively poor in this municipality. There are on average 6.2 types of objects per grave, but this statistic is skewed by two double graves containing eighteen and nineteen artefact types respectively; without these two burials the average would be considerably lower. The two double graves were far richer than any of the others from this municipality. They are located on either side of Nesheimsvatnet Lake at the farms of Skeime, Østhassel and Østre Vatne. Both were double cremations each containing a male and a female, and boats were also found buried at both sites. The grave at Østre Vatne was from the Merovingian period (*No. 185*), and was a secondary grave in a mound alongside a grave from the early Iron Age. The other one from Østhasselneset was from the Viking Age (*No. 183*).

The Viking Age double grave at Østhasselneset was contained in a 2.5 m high barrow some 25 m in diameter. Major Ernst Sprockhoff from the *Deutsche Wehrmacht* carried out excavations in 1942, and traces were found of a rectangular burnt layer with rounded corners measuring 2.3 m x 1.8 m. The grave was oriented north-east–south-west, with the female in the southwestern half and the male in the north-eastern half with his head to the south-east. The shape of the burnt layer could indicate that there was some sort of superstructure over the



Map 8. Agder.

grave that caused the particular shape, and although no wood was preserved, one could guess that this had been a chamber grave. The grave included many objects of a particularly costly nature. Among other items they found a decorated bronze vessel with details traced in gold and silver. This was the only grave that included any silver and gold in Farsund. The male in the Viking Age grave was probably provided with some smith's tools, while in the grave from the Merovingian period there were some carpenter's tools.

These two rich double graves must have meant something special to the community. In both cases it would have been interesting to know more about the grave's inhabitants, how they died, if they both died at the same time, and if this was what made the situation special. It is possible that one of the persons was very special, and that the other was sacrificed. Unfortunately, in the cases of both graves we can determine neither the cause of death nor the relationship between the man and the woman.

Except for the double graves, I have not been able to identify any obvious female graves in Farsund, and the other male graves were not very well equipped: on average they contained only one or two weapons. In addition to the two

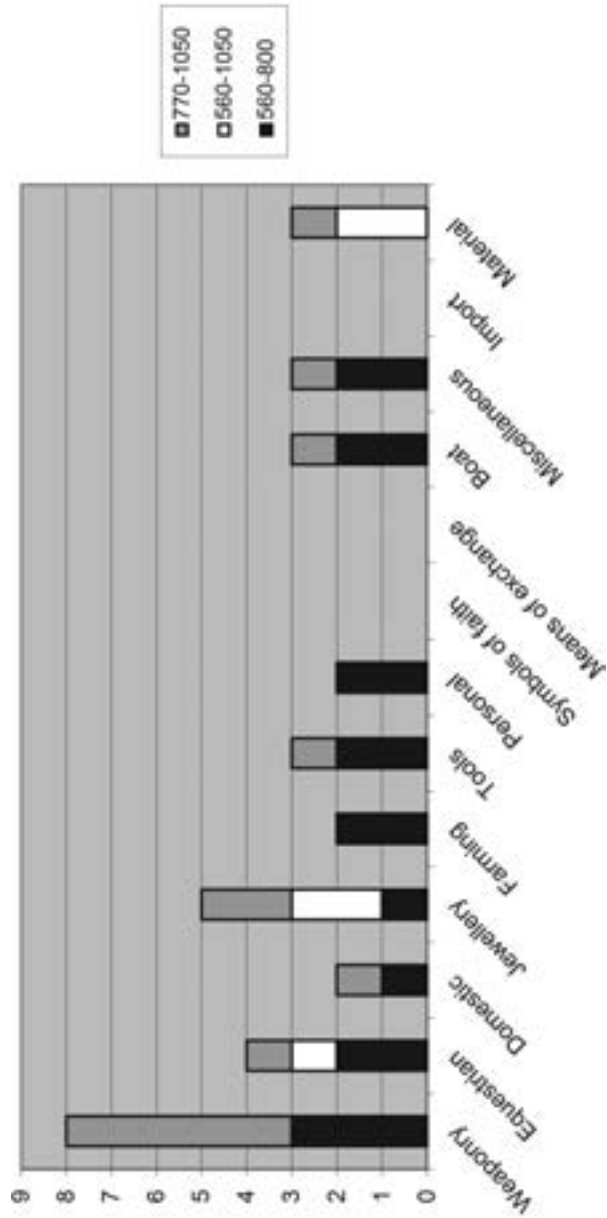
double graves only one included a boat, one had a horse bit, one was given an agricultural tool, and one received other kinds of tools (Graph 20).

Two cremations and two inhumations were identified as being from the late Iron Age (Graph 21). Only the cremation mentioned above was known to be from the Merovingian period, while two inhumation graves and one cremation were from the Viking Age. These numbers are, however, too low to come to any conclusions about chronological changes regarding the treatment of the body.

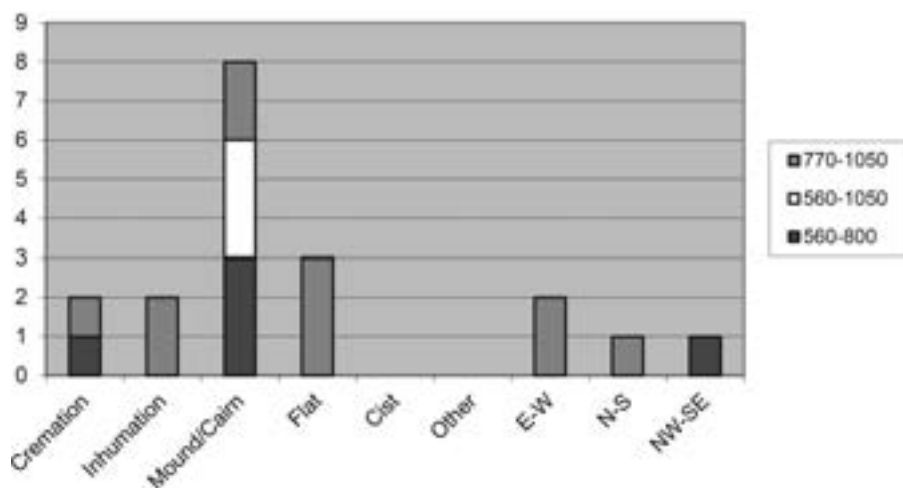
Flat graves are observed as occurring more frequently during the Viking Age than before, however. For instance, all three of the flat graves in Farsund were dated to the Viking Age, while the three graves from the Merovingian period were covered by a mound. An east–west-oriented inhumation with few grave goods was found in a barrow, dated to around 900–1000 (*No. 188*).

One of the inhumation graves was found at Nedre Skeime (*No. 189*). Some pieces of charcoal were found in the grave, which probably had been added during the burial rite. There might have been a sword among the grave goods, for although nothing was found in the grave itself, part of a sword was found in an area outside the grave that probably had been disturbed. The grave seems to have been flat and east–west oriented, which would make it the only inhumation in a flat grave found so far in Farsund. Since the sword could be interpreted as part of the costume, this grave could have been influenced by Christianity or might even have been Christian, even though it was found outside the Christian cemetery. The grave was radiocarbon dated, returning a calibrated date of AD 770–980 (Beta - 194450) (Ystgaard 2005: 10).

It is possible that there were early Christian influences in Farsund, indicated by the fact that all of the three flat graves were dated to the Viking Age, while all the graves from the Merovingian period were covered by a mound. Moreover, in addition to the east–west-oriented grave mentioned above, another probable inhumation grave from the Viking period was east–west oriented, but was buried in a mound dated to the tenth century (*No. 188*). This latter grave was found during the Second World War by a farmer in 1941, but only a few grave goods were recovered. After the first discoveries were made the digging was stopped, although only half a metre of earth had been disturbed, and no more objects or records were sent to the museum. The museum did not excavate the site any further, probably due to the war, and instead allowed the farmers to resume their normal work. There might have been more artefacts in this grave, but we will probably never know for certain.



Graph 20. Categories of grave goods per period in Farsund.



Graph 21. Traces of burial rite and grave forms recorded in Farsund.

Norse burial traditions undoubtedly continued to flourish in this area, regardless of possible Christian influences. The north–south-oriented double grave was dated to as late as 870–950, and was a cremation with plenty of grave goods, covered by a mound. The low number of graves and the generally few and meagre grave goods makes it impossible to ascertain whether there was any Christian influence in the region or whether the aforementioned examples should rather be seen as characteristic of the typical burial traditions practised in this district during the Viking Age. Nor is it possible to say anything definite about whether there was a chronological change in burial customs due to Christian influences. The latest possible time period that a Norse grave can be dated to in this region is the Viking Age in general, and the latest grave that can be dated more specifically is an inhumation grave in a mound, which has been dated to the tenth century.

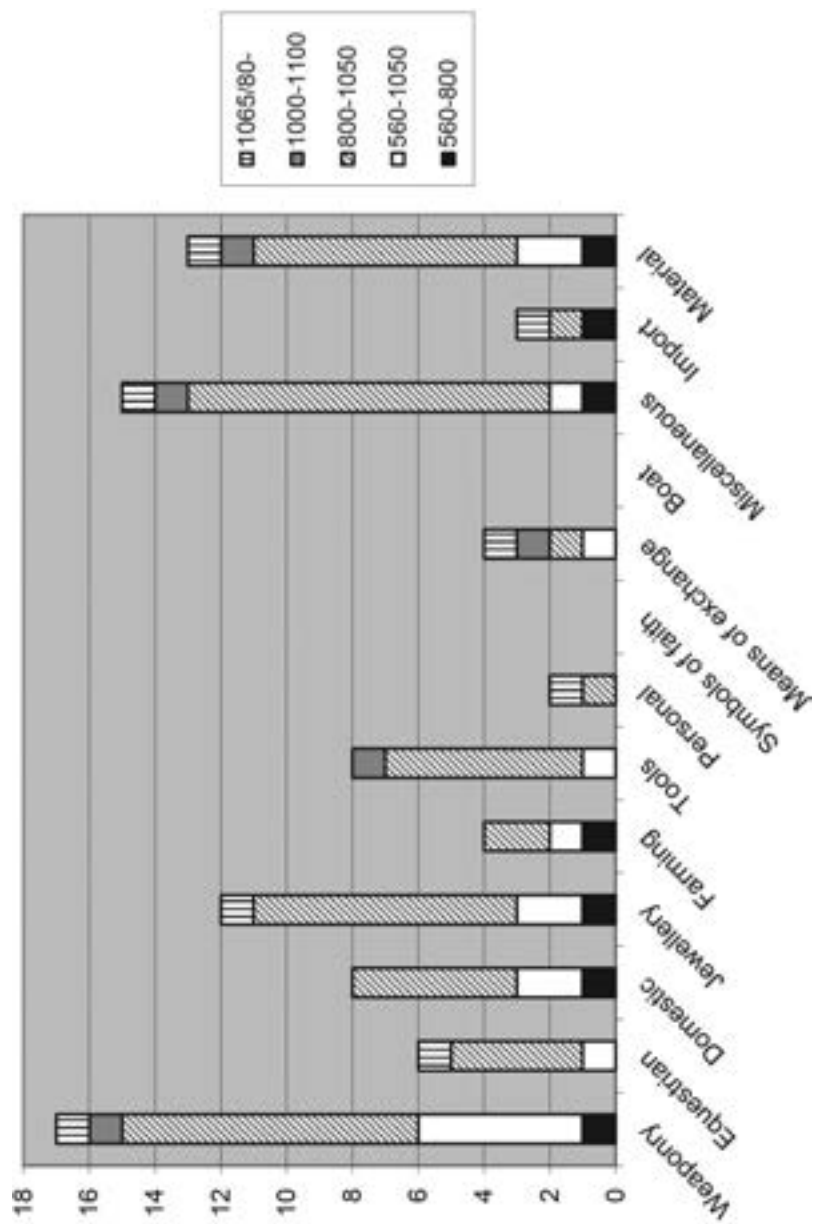
Thirty-four grave finds in Valle have been included in the current analysis, but four of these are potentially questionable because of their rather unusual grave forms, three positioned close to or under a large stone and one located in scree, which is more usual for hoards and Saami graves than for Norse graves. However, the artefacts are rather more typical for Norse graves. Some of them were also found together with ash or else the objects were marked by fire, and some were

found in a constructed pit marked by stones along the edge. The circumstances and composition of the finds indicate that they are the remnants of graves rather than depots.

There were sixteen graves with grave goods that were dominated by weapons, eight were dominated by personal adornments/dress accessories, and two contained both weapons and personal adornments. The last two were presumably double graves with both a man and a woman, although for several other graves gender could not be determined. There was an average of 4.6 types of grave goods per grave.

No boats were found in the graves in Valle, but all other categories of grave goods were represented. Valle's location far from the sea could explain why there were no boats in the graves, but why some equestrian gear was found instead. The fact that there were many graves containing means of exchange and imported objects show that this community had considerable contact with other areas, whether direct or indirect. This is surprising, considering the fact that Valle is located in the Setesdalen valley, in recent times reckoned to be one of the most remote and isolated areas in Norway.

Each of the six female graves includes the usual combination of buckles and beads, but glass beads were particularly popular in Valle, with one hundred beads in one grave and forty in another (Graph 22). The two double graves containing both a male and a female also included many glass beads (seventeen in one and many more in the other). An arm-ring was also present. All of these graves contained some prestigious materials as well. Half of the female graves contained tools for producing thread and textiles, and two graves contained a sickle and trading utensils or imported objects, signifying that these were quite standard female grave objects as well. Fire-striking utensils were found on one occasion, but no equestrian equipment was found in any of the female graves. Some objects displaying fine craftsmanship were found, for instance a box of bronze and pewter that was characterized as Saxon art (Brown 1915). Items such as this have been interpreted as sewing kits, for in other female graves similar cylindrical containers have been found with needles and the remnants of textiles inside them.



Graph 22. Types of grave goods per period in Valle.

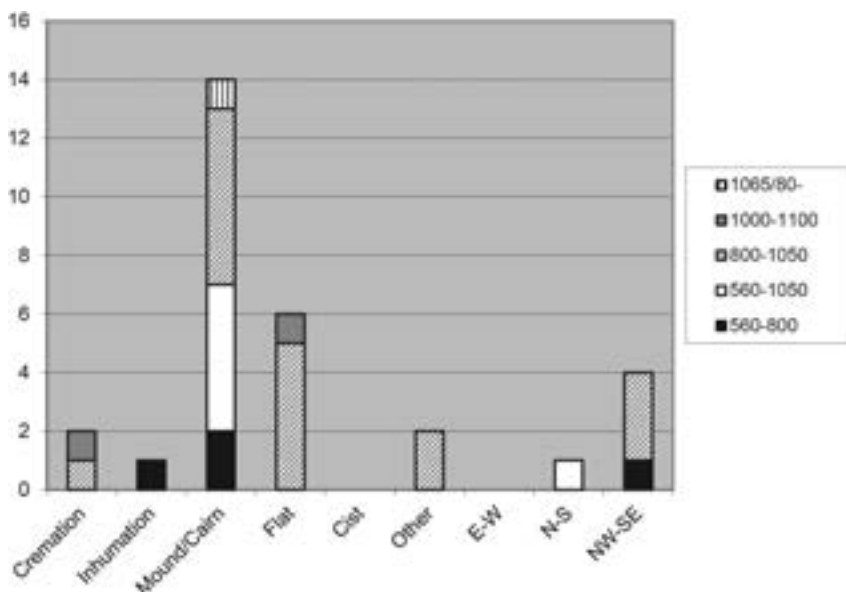
One of the richest graves from Valle was a female grave containing, among other items, five coins and twenty-one weights, as well as personal belongings such as several fittings, a comb, a set of toilet implements, and an axe (*No.* 233). Judging from some of these items, it seems that this woman was probably involved in trading and/or bartering, but it is surprising that she was also provided with an axe. The date is surprising as well, for one of the coins was struck as late as 1065/80, meaning that the burial took place at the earliest during this period, or some time afterwards.

The male kit for the graves in Valle contained between one and three weapons, and on two occasions more than three kinds of weapon. As well as weapons, there were frequently one or two simple tools such as knives, whetstones, fire-striking utensils, or scissors, and more rarely equestrian gear and tools for harvesting or agriculture. Only two of the sixteen male graves had prestigious materials, and three had trading equipment. These prestigious objects seem to have belonged more often to women, just as equestrian gear more often belonged to the men, while harvesting tools and trading equipment were shared by both sexes.

All five of the graves with a known alignment were aligned north-east–south-west, except for one that was aligned north–south (Graph 23). Only two inhumations were discovered; one dated to 560–800 and the other to the late Iron Age in general (560–1050). From the Viking Age onwards only cremations were identified, but among these, six cases were uncertain. This means that inhumations are only documented with certainty for the earliest part of the late Iron Age, and only cremations for the latest part, although for most of the graves we do not know. This of course limits our understanding of how the corpse was treated typically during the late Iron Age in Valle.

The barrow was the predominant form among the graves: only one cairn was found, and seven graves were flat. The four special graves beside or under stones have already been mentioned in previous paragraphs, but are worthy of particular mention again. These graves can be very simple, found in the ash-layer with no evidence of any construction (as in the case of *No.* 221), or they may be encircled with a ring of stones (for example, *No.* 226).

We cannot say anything more definite about the chronological development of the changes in burial customs than that they are definitely not Christian-influenced; indeed, quite the opposite. However, we do know that the latest Norse grave found in this area is dated to 1065/80 or even later.

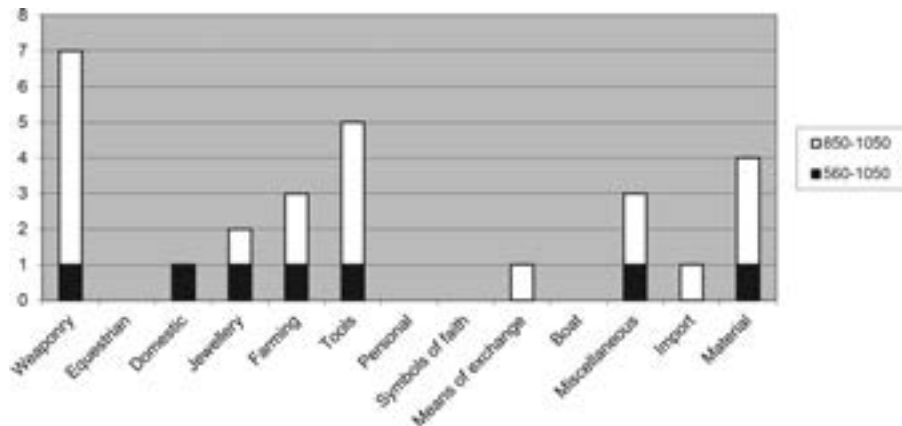


Graph 23. Traced elements of burial rituals and grave forms in Valle.

Ten graves from the late Iron Age were analysed from Birkenes, but one of these graves is uncertain: a spear found 1 m deep under the flat surface, dated to 900–50. When this uncertain grave is excluded, there are on average 4.6 types of objects per grave, but many of these graves were greatly disturbed before being professionally excavated. Only one grave was female, and six or seven were male. There were no graves with equestrian gear, symbols of belief, or personal equipment, and no boats. Only one grave had a household utensil: a steatite vessel. Weapons, tools, scythes, and celts dominated the grave goods; also found were some means of barter and exchange (Graph 24).

From the female grave only one oval brooch was found. For two of the graves the sex of the individual could not be determined. However, several of the male graves had many grave goods, the richest of which was an inhumation grave in a north–south aligned trapezoid stone cist, described as being six feet long (*c.* 183 cm) and dated to the Viking Age (*No. 198*). The only elements of the skeleton which were preserved were parts of the cranium, and only the grave goods and the length of the coffin indicate the sex, as a female cist would normally have been shorter. The grave goods were dominated by weapons and a smith's tools: a sword, an axe, many arrowheads, two pairs of tongs of different sizes, an anvil, a hammer,

a chisel, a wire-drawer, a celt, a mould for silver ingots, a whetstone, two scythes, a ringed pin, a spiral ring of bronze, and a fragment of a bronze staff.



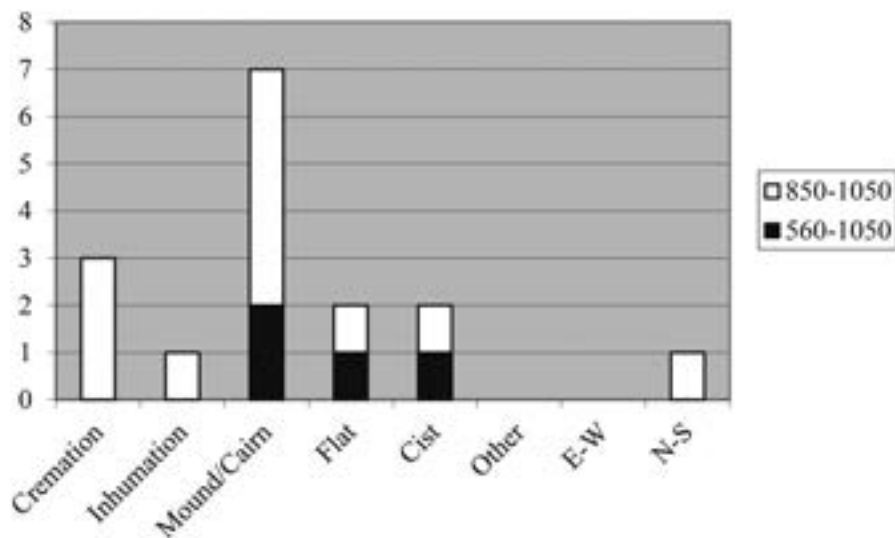
Graph 24. Categories of grave goods found from various periods in Birkenes.

The number of grave goods here may have been affected by later disturbances, as is the case almost anywhere in areas with a high percentage of arable land. For instance, a weight and two Anglo-Saxon coins came from a cremation grave in a barrow that was thoroughly disturbed by the construction of a potato cellar (*Nø. 196*).³⁰ Nevertheless, the fact that seven out of ten of the graves had a barrow or a cairn in addition to special stone constructions shows a high degree of concern for the burial ritual (Graph 25).

No graves were dated to the earliest period, but five of the graves were dated to after 900. One of these is the cremation mentioned above, buried after 991/97 with Anglo-Saxon pennies struck during this period (Skaare 1976: 144). One of the coins was found in a folded piece of leather, probably some kind of purse,

³⁰ In Norway a 'potato cellar' is located outdoors as a separate, rounded construction of earth and stone, covered with turf. The function of a potato cellar is to preserve potatoes and vegetables over the winter. Grave mounds have been a particularly popular foundation upon which to construct these cellars, causing many of them to be destroyed.

which shows that the coin was kept as a treasure or trading item rather than a pendant. Apart from the inhumation grave mentioned above, only cremations were detected, and due to the lack of older graves, no chronological developments could be traced.

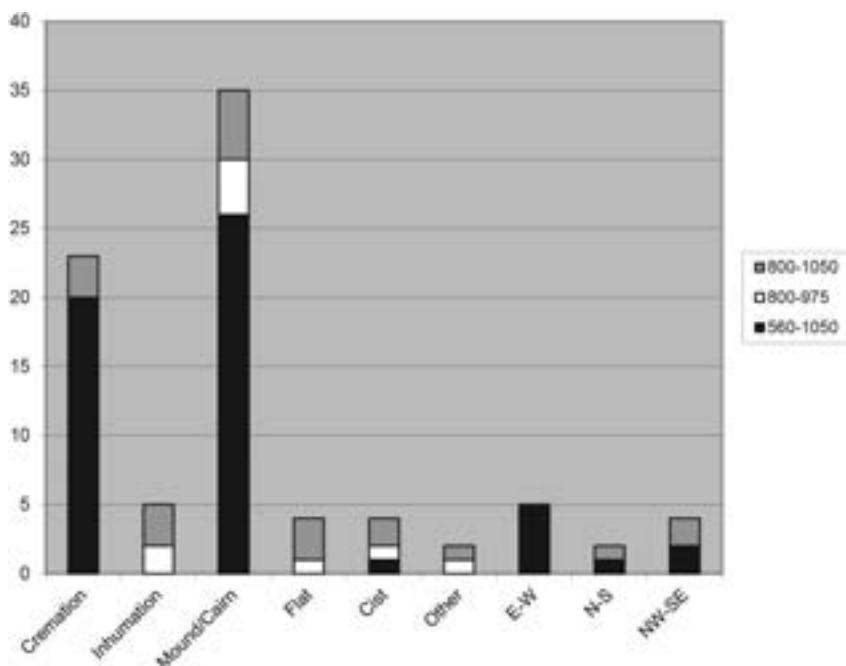


Graph 25. Burial rituals and grave forms in Birkenes.

The alignment of the grave is only known for the north–south aligned grave mentioned above (Graph 25); in this instance the body’s head was to the south. There are no traces of Christian influences on the burial customs. The late cremations and constructions of barrows with a number of grave goods indicate that the Norse burial customs continued to be practised fully at least into the eleventh century.

We have analysed forty-seven grave finds from Grimstad. There is an average of 5.2 types of objects per grave, and even though this is a relatively high number of grave goods, the gender for almost half of the graves could not be determined. Only one grave can be reliably dated to the Merovingian period, while twenty-seven have a much wider possible range, spanning the whole of the late Iron Age period. Similarly, nineteen graves come from the Viking Age or early medieval period. The possibility of tracing chronological developments through the late Iron Age within this district is limited due to the lack of graves from the early

period. I have generally trusted the chronology provided by the museum records for these graves, even if it is not always easy to see how they arrived at these dates based on the information provided. Part of the reason for the poor information is that a lot of burial mounds were ‘excavated’ during the nineteenth century and not much more was recorded about them other than a descriptive sentence. In addition, not many objects were found in the first place.



Graph 26. Traces of burial rites and grave forms in Grimstad at various times.

Cremations are very prevalent in this district (Graph 26), and the ratio of inhumations to cremations is 1:6. If we consider only graves dated to the Viking Age, however, the number of cremations almost equals the number of inhumations; in fact there are slightly more inhumations than cremations. Stone cists or stone chambers could indicate inhumation graves, and these are more numerous in the group of graves dated to the Viking period than for those dated to the late Iron Age in general, but these graves total only five in all. Two of the flat inhumation graves with cists may have been contemporary: a child in one grave and a man in another with quite a few grave goods were buried side by side (*No. 290, No. 291*). There was one more, probably contemporary, cist the size of a child, but nothing of interest was found in it. The man's grave is dated by a coin

buried at the earliest between 983 and 1002. He has been called 'the last pagan in Agder' (Rolfen 1981: 112), but the fact that the cists were covered by a stone slab has been interpreted as the result of Christian influence (Rolfen 1981).

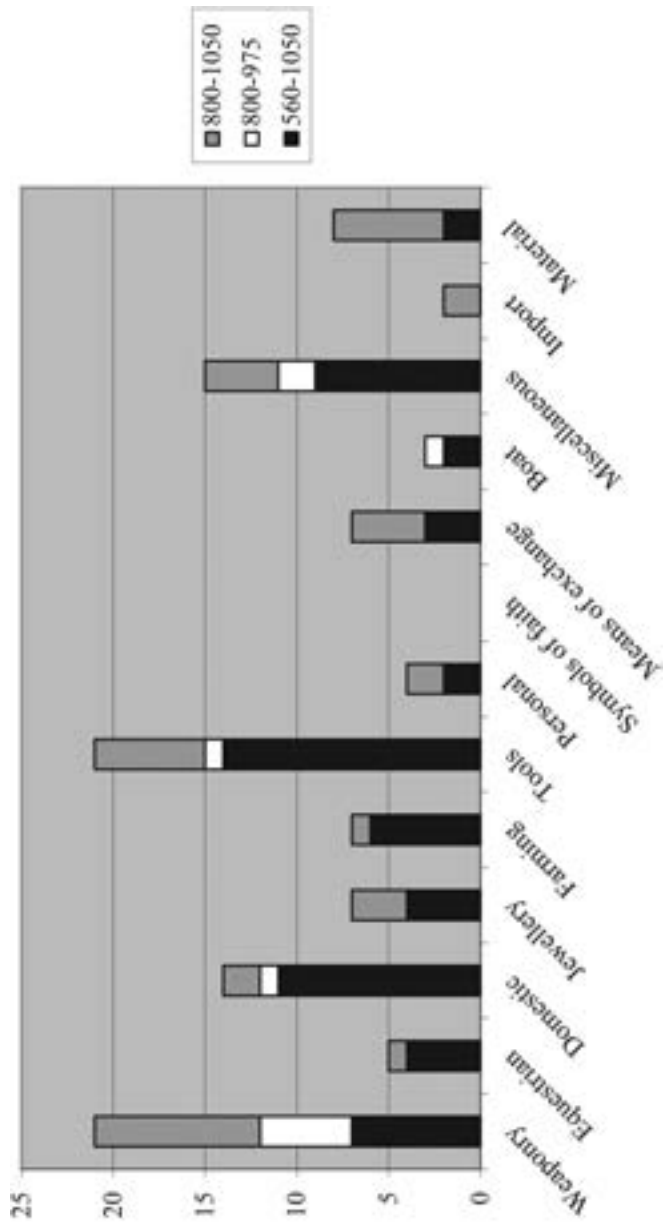
The types of monuments above ground are completely dominated by the barrow grave form: barrows covered thirty-eight of the forty-seven graves. This may partly be explained by the numerous excavations of barrows in particular in this area, and consequently the mounds may be over-represented here even more than in other areas. Nicolay Nicolaysen concentrated on excavating barrows during the nineteenth century, and he managed to cover around 1400 during his lifetime. Areas 'fortunate' enough to have been visited by this excavator have normally had more barrows excavated than others, and Grimstad is one of these places. However, it looks as though this cannot be the only explanation for the predominance of barrows among grave forms of the region.

Some graves were covered by a stone packing instead of a mound, one of them consisting of white quartz stones. Two graves were covered by a huge stone, and one was found in conjunction with a stone cist. The mounds could also be combined with internal stone constructions, for instance a square construction of large stones. At Moland in Landvik there are finds from a barrow called 'The Thing mound' (*No.* 265).

A lot of the barrows are surrounded by a ditch with perpendicular bridges crossing the ditch on either side. For the oblong mounds the bridge was on each of the long sides. Barrows surrounded by ditches and bridges are absent from the material dated definitively to the Viking period, which could indicate that this is an earlier phenomena.

The grave goods are rather special compared to other districts (Graph 27). There is a striking presence of parts of horse skeletons (four, all dated to the late Iron Age), and there is very little equestrian equipment (only one piece). Some utensils were found for trading or bartering. A few of these items were found in Birkenes and Rauma as well, but besides Grimstad, they were found in significant numbers only in Valle. Household utensils were dominated by vessels made of soapstone or pottery. In addition to the vessels a drinking horn was found, some tools for the production of textiles, and a scoop. With a few exceptions, the vessels were found mostly in combination with cremations, and may have been sepulchral urns.

Male graves were very much in the majority, with a male-to-female ratio of about 5:1, and only one grave was interpreted as a mixed grave with both sexes represented. The sex and age of two stone-cist inhumation graves from c. 900 were based on skeletal analyses; one was found to be an infant buried with no grave



Graph 27. Various types of grave goods from different periods in Grimstad.

goods, and the other was a man buried at the same time in the same location, placed beneath a huge stone. The man had an axe, a knife, a fire-striking flint stone, a comb, a balance with six weights, and a coin; the weights and coin were all contained in a purse together with a plum stone.

Due to the low number of female graves, there is no reliable evidence with which to determine a female kit. The four female graves were generally poorly equipped: two were provided with a whetstone, two had a weaving sword or a spindle whorl, and one had a soapstone vessel. In addition to the usual buckles and glass beads, large bones were found in one grave and were identified as belonging to a horse. The combination of glass beads, arm-rings, and a ringed pin as grave goods has been interpreted as elements of a typical female burial. Textile tools were found in two female and two un-gendered graves. The two un-gendered graves were found in long barrows; long barrows usually tend to contain female graves, in contrast to male graves, which are often found in round mounds (see 'Gender' in Chapter 2).

The male kit for this region can be described more precisely than the female kit. It consisted of one to four weapons (including a shield), and the most frequent grave goods besides weapons were tools (found in eight graves), knives, and whetstones. On three occasions smithy tools were found. The man might have also been given a harvesting tool or means of exchange (both found in four graves), or possibly a boat. In addition to these items it is worth mentioning that a drinkinghorn and a ringed pin were found in a male grave. Thus it would appear that trading or bartering was a male activity in Grimstad, in contrast to Valle, where it seemed to be more of a female activity. However, one of the Viking Age male graves from Vik containing means of exchange may have signified a goldsmith rather than a trader, as the coins were found alongside two weights and a mould. The weight was as important to a goldsmith as it was for trade and barter. There is also a chronological difference observed in Grimstad regarding these objects: the weapons, tools, and trading utensils, as well as imported objects and more prestigious materials seem to occur more frequently and in greater numbers in the Viking Age than in the previous period, while other kinds of objects become less frequent.

Two interesting graves from Grimstad deserve a more detailed description. In a cremation grave in barrow no. 65 at Fjære (*No. 277*), only one object was found: a plain and simple lead cross. The grave was aligned south-west–north-east and was dated to the late Iron Age. The lack of grave goods could indicate Christian influence, but the cremation and the mound count against such an interpretation. Moreover, the lead cross has been seen as a later intrusion, perceived as part

of a Christian ritual from the early Christian era. One interpretation of the lead crosses found in non-Christian graves is that they were mortuary crosses, added to the old grave by Christian priests for the purpose of exorcism. Eighteen of these crosses, with or without inscriptions, have been found in Norway, but elsewhere in Scandinavia they have only been found at Gotland and in Lödöse (Sørheim 2004). They are also frequently found in England. The theory that the crosses were added later seems to fit the wider picture, for records show that the lead cross in barrow no. 65 was found around 0.6 m from the bottom of the grave, suggesting that it was probably not in the grave from the beginning.

Barrow no. 52 (*Nø. 289*) at Vik, Fjære, was a particularly rich cremation grave. In addition to a sword, axe, and arrowheads, also found were a sickle, a forge-stone, a mould, a whetstone, an anvil, a hammer, a pair of tongs, a file, and four weights (two of which had an English coin inserted in them struck between 808–40). The grave was aligned north–south.

When analysing the graves in Grimstad as a whole, it appears that the burial cult grew more heterogeneous towards the end of the Iron Age. There are far greater differences between the graves dated to the Viking Age than between the other graves. It is also evident that the weapons, tools, and means of exchange, as well as imported objects and more prestigious materials occur more frequently and in greater numbers in the Viking Age than in the previous period, while other kinds of objects become rarer. While all the graves dated to the late Iron Age in general and to the Merovingian period in particular are cremations, and almost all of the graves were in barrows, the graves dated firmly to only the Viking Age may have been inhumation graves from the Merovingian period constructed in a variety of ways. However, once again, the low number of graves compared to graves from other periods must be kept in mind.

Some specific hoards should be mentioned in more detail. One hoard dated to the late Iron Age was found at Skiftenes, Landvik and consisted of two arm-rings of silver wrapped in birchbark with a total weight of 255 g. The most famous hoard from Grimstad is, however, from Slemmedal, dated to 915/20. This hoard contained a total of 291.1 g gold and 2115.6 g silver (see, for instance, Blindheim 1982, Skaare 1982). Some of the items included in this find were: six necklaces, fifteen arm-rings, finger-rings, coins, some runic inscriptions, insular and French imports, and a cross pendant. The inscriptions included what are probably two female names: ‘ðurfriðr’ (Turid) and ‘ðura’ (Tora), and a male (nick-)name, ‘sluði’ (*Slóði*; possibly meaning ‘wastrel’ or ‘good-for-nothing’) (Liestøl 1982). The pendant appears to be worn through use.

It is not possible to identify obvious Christian influences in Grimstad, in spite of the Christian lead cross mentioned above. There is clearly a great deal of variation in the Viking Age graves; this may reflect social tensions or a vivid, creative formation process concerning cult and belief systems. The latest date for a non-Christian grave in Grimstad is 950–1025.

Regarding the entire region, inhumation burial practices are only documented with certainty in the earliest part of the late Iron Age in Valle, and cremations only occur in the later part of that period. The opposite is the case in Grimstad, where inhumations are only known among graves dated to the Viking Age. Considering only graves in Grimstad dated to the Viking Age, the number of cremations nearly equals the number of inhumations (there are a few more inhumations than cremations). Only one grave in Grimstad is dated decisively to the Merovingian period, but because all the graves dated to the late Iron Age in general are cremations as well, there appears to have been a change in favour of inhumation graves during the Viking period. In Grimstad cists appear only in the Viking Age, which could be the result of Christian influence as well, but they are as likely to occur in a barrow as in a flat grave.

The grave forms in this region vary greatly and are often extremely elaborate: in Valle, for instance, several graves were found close to, or under, a big stone. Seven out of ten graves in Birkenes had a barrow or a cairn in addition to special stone constructions. In Grimstad it has been observed that many of the barrows were surrounded by a ditch with bridges crossing the ditch perpendicular to each other on either side.

Probably the earliest evidence for Christian cult in Agder³¹ is an inscription on a stone at Oddernes which says on one side:

Etter Tore Nerids sønn er denne steinen

(After the son of Tore Nerid is this stone [raised])

The other side of the stone reads:

Eyvind gjorde denne kirken, gudsønn til Olav den hellige, på sin odel (Låg 1999: 158–60)

(Eyvind made this church, godson of Olav the holy [i.e. St Olaf the king], at his allodium)

³¹ Also of note is a cemetery in a later church at Liknes in Kvinesdal, Vest-Agder. The place was a burial ground from the early Iron Age, when a very rich grave was found placed in a mound. The site was illegally excavated before any archaeologist arrived on the site and some features could later only be observed in profile by archaeologists. Some graves were observed, and a charcoal layer, which from the profile looks earlier than the graves, was radiocarbon dated to cal. 980–1060 (1000–1030) (Brendalsmo and Stylegar 2001: 28–37). Further excavations are necessary to investigate the relationship between prehistoric and later Christian activity at this interesting site.

As St Olaf is mentioned, this stone must have been erected after Olaf's canonization in 1031, but the church may have been constructed before the inscription was made. The builder, if he were Olaf's godson, must have been born when Olaf was an adult and still alive. If King Olaf was born in 995, the builder Eyvind was probably born between 1010 and 1030 (since he was the king's godson, so we assume he was newborn while the King was an adult). So if we can assume that he built the church after he reached adulthood, this would have been around 1025–45 at the earliest. The church at Oddernes was probably built around the middle of the eleventh century, and was thus contemporary with the vital Norse community documented in the late eleventh century in Valle in Setesdal.

A different runic inscription from Galteland says, *En er Gud* ('There is one (?) God'), and the inscription ends with a cross. This stone is placed in the centre of a circle of eight or more stones. This is dated to around 1020, and is interpreted as being Christian (Låg 1999: 182–84), but this interpretation is not certain.

The Christianization of Agder

Agder is more closely located to Denmark and the continent, so scholars have presumed that the Christianization of the region began at an early date (Rolfsen 1981). However, this depends, among other things, on opportunities for interactions between foreign Christians and the people of Agder, and the nature of these encounters.

Yet, in this region in the medieval period towns did not exist and in this respect, Agder differs from most of southern Norway. A town or *kaupang* is an obvious stepping stone to the outer world, a forum providing possibilities for encounters with foreigners. Due to the particularly large number of balances, coins, and other such items found in Fjære, it has been suggested that this may have been a place of trade, with contacts with the continent and the British Isles (Rolfsen 1981). However, many means of exchange and imports are frequently found in Valle and occur in Birkenes as well. The remote location did not prevent the people in Valle from having contact with other people or their material culture. A high number of graves with means of exchange (coins and weights, often with several types of each and several species of each type), some imported objects (both from the British Isles and from Denmark), and objects made from prestigious, often imported, materials (amber, glass, rock crystal, copper alloy, silver, gold, and lead) indicate a community with considerable — whether direct or indirect — contact with other areas, even distant overseas districts. Valle was therefore a place with plenty of resources, receiving external influences from other

regions of Norway and further afield. This might indicate that during the late Iron Age or early medieval period, some of the roles that in other parts of Norway were fulfilled by the townspeople, the king, and the church were taken on by local landowners in Agder. In Agder, graves and equipment such as the items mentioned above are recorded at least until the end of the eleventh century. This does not automatically mean that Christianity was established late in the region; as in Rauma, Christianity might have been able to thrive in close proximity to the Norse religion. However, the social structure may have been slightly different in Agder than in other regions, and thus the Norse religion was kept alive longer.

It is not certain at what period Norse cult activity ended in this region. In the nineteenth century, older people in Valle still spoke about ancient ceremonies that were practised as late as the eighteenth century, such as the continuing practice of sacrificing a cock at the burial mounds in the hope of gaining the favour of the gods who were believed to live in the barrows (Blom 1896: 137). These testimonies demonstrate that some kind of non-Christian cult still existed during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (Jansen and Rynning 1994: 65–68), and in this sense, non-Christian cult activity remained active throughout the medieval period. Even if these late rituals are not confirmed archaeologically, some of the latest Norse graves are found in this region: in Birkenes five of the graves are dated to sometime after 900. One of these is a rich cremation grave with Anglo-Saxon pennies minted in 991/97, which gives the earliest possible date for the grave (Skaare 1976: 144). The latest Norse grave in Valle can be dated by two coins found in the burial, one minted in Valle in 1065/80 and one produced in 983/1002 in Grimstad. Consequently, the burial must have taken place either during the time period indicated by the coins or at a later date.

The great variety of burial customs that have been recorded in Agder during the Viking Age may reflect social stresses, or a vivid, creative process of formation concerning systems of cult and belief. Barter and contact with foreign elements increased during the late Iron Age, and one might assume that cultural ideas (including religious impulses) would have followed, but it is not known to what degree this was the case. For instance, the Slemmedal hoard from Grimstad, dated to 915/20, contained among other items a cross pendant. It is, however, difficult to decide if the pendant was worn as a Christian symbol in Grimstad. Even if it was originally a Christian symbol, this kind of pendant has also been found elsewhere together with a Thor's hammer in a Norse context (Blindheim 1982). Because of its location in a hoard, it could have been collected as a source of silver, or else as a purely decorative item. On the other hand, the existence of foreign

objects and ideas during the Viking Age could have led to a greater awareness of people's own values, or even to more conflicts. If any trend is visible in Valle, it is definitely not a Christian-influenced one; rather, the development moves in the opposite direction and the burial customs became increasingly different from Christian burial customs over time. This may be a local development that occurred naturally, or it may be an indirect negative reaction to new ideas — most likely those that came from the Christian mission.

Although the sources are meagre, overall there are some indirect and uncertain indications of the presence of Christianity in this region from the Viking Age. It seems that in Valle the people consciously turned against Christianity, while some graves in Grimstad and Farsund indicate sympathy with elements of the Christian cult. A rune-stone attests to a Christian church that was probably built around the middle of the eleventh century at Oddernes, and this is the first reliable source attesting to a Christian cult in the area.

'Viken', the Oslofjord Region, an Early Urbanized Region

The town of Kaupang was situated in the region of Viken, which is the only early Viking Age town known in Norway. This region is also the location of quite a few of the early medieval towns in Norway from a later period. Some of the rich inhumation ship graves at Tune, Oseberg, and Gokstad were also found here, all surrounding the same fjord — Oslofjorden — in a region called *Viken* in medieval documentary sources. In addition to the selected areas, the towns and some recent interesting excavation sites near the towns at Faret and Gulli will be described in the following paragraphs.

Western Parts of Viken (Skien, Bø, Kaupang, Tønsberg, and Rollag)

One of the selected areas, Bø, is an inland area, but with easy access to the coast, being surrounded by lakes and rivers. From Bø seventeen Norse graves were selected as being sufficiently well-documented to be included in this investigation. None of the graves were dated to the Merovingian period, but nine were dated generally to the late Iron Age. Three were dated to the early Viking Age, two were from the late Viking Age and one was dated to the Viking Age in general. Unfortunately, such a set does not comprise a sufficient basis for studying the chronological development of burials in the district.



Map 9. 'Viken', the Oslofjord region.

On average there are only 3.6 types of objects per grave, but one Viking Age grave at Erikstein contained many more than the rest: twenty-one types of objects (*No. 211*). This is (at least) a double grave with both a male and a female, but there is, however, a problem with this find. A remark in the catalogue indicates that finds from somewhere else may have been combined with the Erikstein find, so that it may consist, therefore, of items from a barrow that contained several graves.

Finds indicating a female grave are few, the most obvious being a trefoil brooch, a key, and a loom weight. Only one female grave could be identified positively, while by contrast nine male graves were found. In addition to these, there were six graves that did not provide enough evidence for gender identification. The fact that only one female grave was found is reminiscent of the situation in Agder. The male graves contained one or two weapons, sometimes in combination with a few other objects (Graph 28). The richer graves were from the Viking Age; in addition to the one already mentioned from this period (*No. 211*), another from Øvrebø contained three different weapons including twelve arrowheads and three axes, and with two or three equestrian objects (*No. 212*). It also contained the head of the skeleton of a two-year-old horse. It is remarkable

that there was a complete lack of trading utensils or boat parts, in contrast to both Valle and Grimstad where a considerable number of trade utensils were discovered. Personal equipment included just two locks and one of them was found in conjunction with a key. The latest date of a Norse grave here is 900–1040. However, finds from two barrows could possibly be from a later period, for in the archives they are classified as being from more recent times, one being potentially medieval and the other being post-medieval — that is, from the period after the Norwegian Reformation in 1536 — although the dates of both finds are uncertain.³²

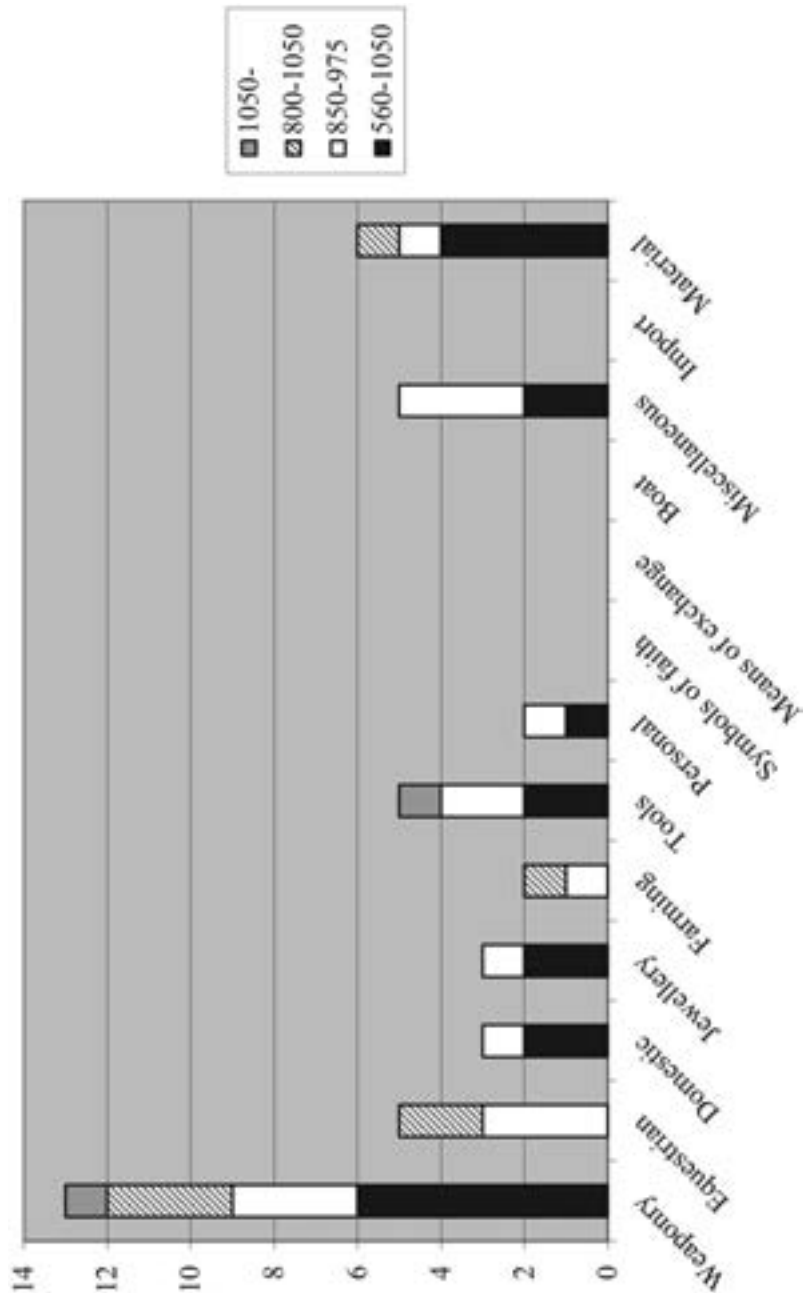
Barrows outnumber other grave forms in western Viken by a large majority, the latter being represented only by two flat graves and a cairn. There is nothing particularly notable about the grave form, such as stone constructions, and the grave form itself does not appear to be very sophisticated in contrast to, for instance, those found in Rauma and Grimstad.

Not much can be said about the treatment of bodies from the grave material in Bø (Graph 29). Two cremations have been identified, and two that might be inhumations. A grave from Askilt, however, was recorded as containing a sepulchral urn with ash, but also a cranium and other parts of a human skeleton (*No.* 203). This would seem, then, to be a mixture of a cremation and an inhumation.

The medieval church at Bø was excavated in 1985. The stone church (Phase 3) was constructed in the period *c.* 1180–1250 and thirty-three medieval graves have been identified as being linked to this church. Traces of an older post church were found, built near the end of the eleventh century (Phase 2) with staves dug into the ground, and there was an even older graveyard dated to the eleventh century with graves oriented like the post church (Phase 1). Due to later intrusions and construction work inside the churches, there was only an area of around 13 m² where the culture layers were intact from the time of the wooden church, and only 8 m² from the time of the earliest graveyard (Skre 1987: 59–65).³³ The

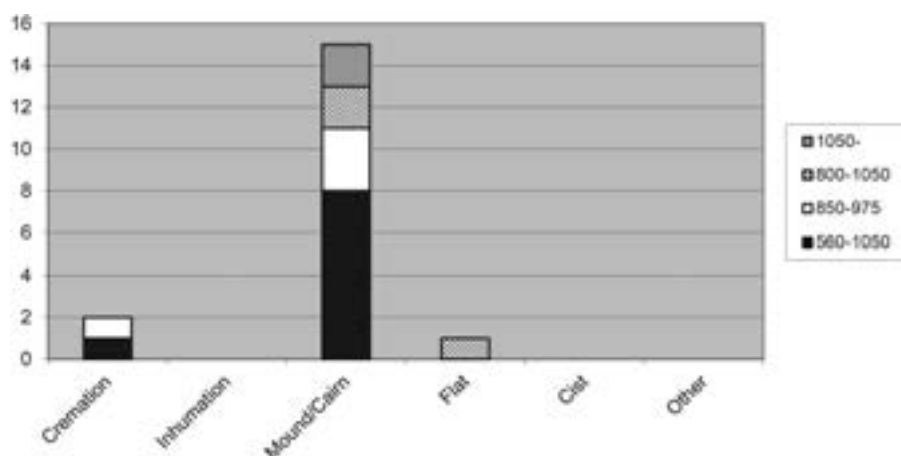
³² Catalogue nos C8137, C10109.

³³ There is some discrepancy in the excavation report between information on stratigraphic relations and the suggested phases. Three layers are interpreted as construction layers for the construction of the stave church: layers 78, 79, and 82. If this is right, graves stratigraphically earlier than these layers would have to be graves earlier than any church has been traced (Phase 1). The following is based on the information on stratigraphic relationships rather than the phases suggested in the report. As a result, a few differences occur between these suggested phases and the phases in the report written by Skre (1987).



Graph 28. Types of grave goods per period in Bø.

results from the radiocarbon samples from the site (Table 7) suggest a sequence of dates for the various phases of the site, although the post church happens to have roughly the same date as the stone church. This suggests that the building of the stone church was started almost immediately after the wooden church was constructed, and that the wooden church was only built as a temporary structure. The oldest graves associated with the site are relatively early.



Graph 29. Traces of burial rite and grave forms in Bø.

The earliest graves from Phase 1 may have been buried during the first half of the eleventh century or even earlier, which would probably make them contemporaneous with the church at Faret in Skien (see below). There was an early Christian congregation at Bø with a graveyard of its own, but a church has not yet been traced. Instead, worshippers may have visited the church at Faret, travelling by boat to the other end of Lake Norsjø.

Some specific aspects of the graves should be addressed in more detail. The skeletons were badly preserved, and consequently few observations could be made concerning the sex and position of the bodies. This was at the very least due to a high proportion of babies among the graves: of the sixty-one total individuals in medieval graves, only twelve were adults, forty-two were under the age of two — mostly categorized as ‘babies’ or even ‘newborns’ — plus six older children. Of the

adults there were eight women and one man. A skull fragment from a man was also discovered as a secondary find in a grave from Phase 2, but the original context of this object is unknown. The thirty-three medieval graves in the nave of the stone church were concentrated in the north-west part, located on a line running along its south side. Among these were a woman of around sixty years old and a man of around fifty years old. All the remaining individuals buried were children, mostly babies. From Phase 1 and 2 only the graves of women and children were traced, but because of the poor preservation conditions not too much weight should be placed upon this sex ratio. The dominance of children in the graves from Phase 2 onwards is, however, striking.

Coins were found as grave goods in six graves from Phase 3 only, the same time period during which the stone church was built. All the identified coins were struck between 1220 and 1260, indicating that the tradition of placing coins in the graves was very brief. Apart from coins, the dead were only provided with hazel wands, and these were placed outside the coffin. Hazel wands were found in three graves in both Phase 1 and Phase 3, with only one wand in each grave.

Table 7. Calibrated (MASCA) radiocarbon dates from the site of the church at Bø (Skre 1987: 62–63).

Phase/part of site	Lab. ref.	Date AD (MASCA)	Dated object	Context
Stone church (Phase 3):	T-6407	1140 ± 70	Juniper	Inside the stone wall
Post church (Phase 2):	T-6410	1155 ± 75	Pine	Post remains
Post church (Phase 2):	T-6702	1120 ± 90	Hazel wand	Grave 59
Phase 1 or 2:	T-6409	1135 ± 75	Birchbark	Grave 82
Phase 1:	T-6459	1060 ± 80	Skeleton, age 50	Grave 78
Phase 1:	T-6701	1090 ± 90	Birchbark	Grave 68
Phase 1:	T-6408	1015 ± 65	Birchbark	Grave 67

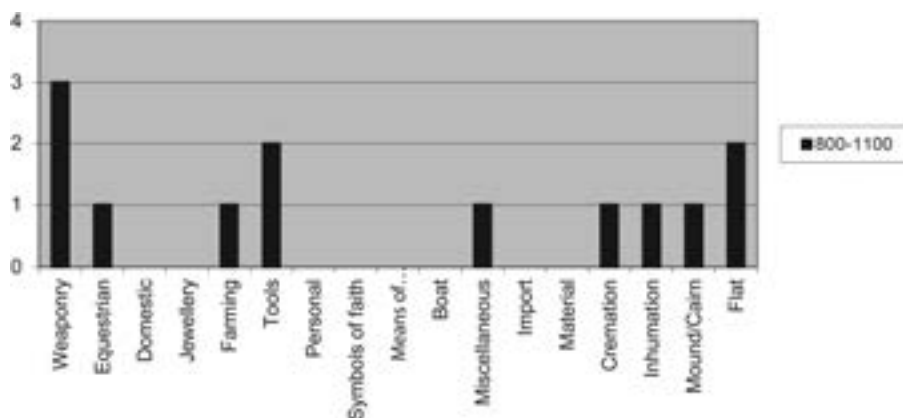
All the hazel wands and coins were placed in the graves of babies or small children, except for one coin placed in the grave of the fifty-year-old man. Just as at Mære, most of the dead were buried in wooden coffins made of planks, but there were also coffins consisting of only a plank top and/or bottom, and in one instance (in Phase 3) the top and bottom were held apart by thin stakes, also as at Mære. Three of the bodies were buried in a hollowed trunk, all from the time of

the stone church. In addition, two more possible trunks have been traced, one from Phase 1 and one from Phase 2, in which the bodies were all babies. Two bodies were wrapped in birchbark, one baby and one child aged between seven and ten years old. The child was buried during Phase 1 or 2 of the site. The baby was found in Grave 51, which can be dated by the fact that it is stratigraphically earlier than a grave containing a coin from 1220–26 (Grave 44); consequently the baby would have to have been buried before 1220–26.³⁴ Three graves had layers of birchbark on the bottom and/or the top of the grave, two of which are Phase 1 graves and the third of which is from Phase 1 or 2. The use of birchbark seems therefore to be an earlier phenomenon in Bø. It has been argued that the tradition of using birchbark to line the graves or to wrap the bodies is an exclusively Saami tradition (Zachrisson et al. 1997). This is, however, based on material from Vivalen in Härjedalen, which was a province of Norway in the medieval period. This would imply that the birchbark wrapped bodies in Bø in Telemark were Saami. But birchbark was employed for many purposes, even among Norse people in the Viking Age/early medieval period, and further research is needed before a conclusion can be reached on this matter (Nordeide and Gulliksen 2007). However, it is not impossible that Saami families lived in Bø and became Christians, nor is it impossible that Saami individuals married into Norse families.

Body position could rarely be decided for these graves, due to bad preservation conditions and the presence of few adults. All the bodies seem to lie on their backs and are east–west oriented, looking either to the north or to the south. The arm positions are known for two female graves in Phase 1 and two in Phase 2. None of these bodies were buried with their arms by their sides, which is interesting since this does not support the general supposition that this was the default burial position during the earliest phase of Christianity in Scandinavia.

The burial customs in Bø show some similarities with other Christian cemeteries, but also some variations. One example of similarity is the custom of laying down hazel wands in the graves, but there is also a variation in this practice at Bø in that the wands are consistently placed outside the coffin, and in that the tradition is employed for small children. Features frequently interpreted as early turned out to be not so early, such as the hollowed trunk coffins and hazel wands, and

³⁴ The report says at one place that Grave 44 is laying partly over Grave 51; ‘ergo Grave 44 is older than Grave 51’ (Skre 1987: 83). This should surely be interpreted as meaning that Grave 44 is later than Grave 51, which is supported by stratigraphic information at several other places in the report.



Graph 30. Types of grave goods, grave forms, and burial rites found in Rollag.

what were presumed to be 'early' arm positions were not found in the early graves. However, the low number of graves of this kind should be kept in mind.

Rollag has a more remote location to Bø and lies in the valley of Numedal. Only three graves were found from the late Iron Age — all from the Viking Age and all interpreted as male. There is an average of five object types per grave, and weapons dominate the grave goods; in fact one grave contained only weapons. In addition, fire-striking equipment, an agricultural tool, a knife, and a harpoon were included, but nothing else.

One grave was a cremation in a cairn, and the two others were flat graves, of which at least one was an inhumation grave. One of the flat graves was arranged in a natural hollow in the rock, 20 cm deep and close to a rocky wall (*No. 251*). In addition to the graves, one or two axes were found that had been deliberately placed in a crack in a rocky wall. This is a very similar situation to the find from Mjømna in Gulen, where a Viking Age axe was placed into a crack in a rocky wall. Whether this was for storage or part of a sacrifice is not known.

Of a quite different character is a great hoard deposited at some point after 991, based on the age of the coins present. The silver objects consisted of, among other items, necklaces and arm rings, and one object decorated with a filigree

technique has been interpreted as a Thor's hammer. Staecker has, however, re-interpreted this as a Christian cross (Staecker 1999: 97) and is probably correct in his views, although we cannot be absolutely certain. There were various other objects with similar decorations using filigree techniques: for example, one silver bowl has a wall-knot decoration.

The latest Norse grave here is dated to 900–1040 (*No. 250*), or to the Viking Age in general. Several high stone crosses nearby in Rollag and Feiring should also be mentioned, some following the style of the crosses in western Norway (Flesberg type, Amundsen 1999: 17–19; see also Birkeli 1973: 127–30), and others ringed in a style similar to those found in eastern Norway. They may indicate an early Christian cult, but the exact date of this activity is not known (see 'Free-Standing Cross Slabs and Stone Crosses (High Crosses)' in Chapter 5, and Nordeide 2010).

Tønsberg is the only early medieval town in Norway with a significant Viking Age cemetery. It is described as a town in the sagas during the reign of King Harald Fairhair (*c.* 848–933), but archaeological records cannot confirm this. There is a considerable gap in the archaeological sources between the Viking Age graves and the urban settlement. The oldest traces of urban settlement were found at Storgaten 47, where the earliest urban phase is dated to around 1100, although there may have been earlier agrarian cultivation in the area (Eriksson 1990: 132).³⁵ The pronounced rock formation in the centre of the town, Slot-ts fjellet, provided an excellent opportunity for defence, and in the medieval period one of Norway's largest and finest castles was gradually built on the top of this plateau.

Besides Slottsfjellet, two huge barrows at Haugar dominate the centre of the town, the name of which is reflected in the name of the Thing at that site: Haugating. One barrow is round and close to 40 m in diameter and 2.5 to 4 m high, while the other is oblong, 38 m x 30 m and around 5 m high. They are both cremations (Gansum 1995a: 50–53). The round barrow has been radiocarbon dated to cal. AD 775–895, AD 780–965, and AD 810–990 (Gansum 1995a: 37–47). The oblong barrow has not been dated.

A group of Viking Age graves were found at a cemetery south of Haugar during excavations of the living quarters of the later St Olaf's monastery south of Haugar. Several of the graves were probably flat graves, three of them were dug partially

³⁵ The end of the eleventh century is still regarded as the earliest possible date of the urban settlement (Gro Edvardsen and Jan Erik G. Eriksson, personal communication, 2006).

into the ground and two contained boats (Nordmann 1989: 11–17; Gansum 1995a: 50–53).

Although the graves may have been covered originally with soil or stones, the top layers were disturbed at a later point and any superstructure may have been removed. If it were stones that covered the graves, they may have been taken away for use as building material for the later monastery; the Premonstratensian monastery of St Olaf is mentioned in later written sources as having existed in the 1190s (Nordeide 1983: 136–37). Only one of the graves — a boat grave — was a cremation, but in spite of this, it was not possible to determine the sex for any of the skeletons. One of the graves contained two or three individuals: at least one adult and a teenager, and these graves are rich in grave goods. Due to the very special composition of grave goods, particularly with regard to the sex of the dead people, the graves will be described in more detail.

The two boat graves were aligned north-west–south-east, which is parallel to the seashore. The cremation, K73, contained two, maybe three, bodies, consisting of at least one adult and one teenager. The deceased were buried in their clothes, with two ring brooches and a glass bead. Three horseshoe nails among the finds could indicate the presence of a horse among the grave goods. Osteological analyses confirm that one large and one smaller animal were found in the grave (Sælebakke, in Nordmann 1989, App. 3).

The inhumation boat grave, K117, contained one person between the ages of forty and sixty years old. Judging from the grave goods, the person was female. The body was probably buried sitting in the middle of the boat, with the grave goods lying at her feet. The grave goods and dress accessories were a possible knife, two bronze buckles, two combs, one sickle, two more knives, leather with nails (of copper alloy?), an iron kettle, and a small dog. There was also a wooden box, measuring approximately 70 cm x 35 cm and containing tools: parts of bellows, one anvil, a pair of tongs, a small hammer, a wire-drawer, at least one knife, a bit, an adze, two whetstones, a probable sinker, two fishing hooks, and one more sinker. If the gender assignation is correct, it is noteworthy that this woman was also given tools of a smith as well as fishing equipment as grave goods. This is extraordinary for a female, but the presence of the buckles and absence of weapons supports the idea that this was in fact a female.

Grave K98 was aligned in the same way as the boat graves, with the head of the body in the north-west end. The skeleton, probably an adult between twenty and forty years old, was half lying half sitting in a trapezoid-shaped grave that probably had been covered by a chamber of raised wooden planks with some kind of roof. The grave goods were a shield, a whetstone, a knife, 30 cm x 2 cm of leather

remnants placed across the body's chest, two ringed pins, a sword, a horse's head, a possible sickle, nails, and a bit. The alignment of K156 was, however, north–south. The skeleton, which was probably an adult, was lying on its back with its head to the north. A small dog was found by its feet. The grave goods consisted of a shield, a sword, a knife, at least seven arrowheads, and a wheel-like iron figure on a 32 cm long stick that may have been a boat decoration. Also found were a sickle, a fire steel, a flint, some punk, a spear, and a soapstone vessel. As for grave K98, there was no proper coffin, only planks providing some cover. Grave K181 was covered by three layers of stones, but the skeleton was too badly preserved for its sex to be determined. It should be noted that this grave also contained a small animal (a fox or dog), besides a spear, axe, comb, steatite vessel, and a ring brooch.

The dog and/or horse finds in these graves are striking. The two boat graves contained typical female items such as jewels and dress fasteners, and they lacked weapons. However, one of them also had a varied collection of tools. The flat graves seem to have been male. Grave K98 is radiocarbon dated to cal. AD 790–970 (shield) and AD 680–890 (skin rug) (Nordmann 1989, App. 6).³⁶

In addition to these graves, a Viking Age grave with a sword was found in a cairn east of Tønsberg, and three or four more Viking Age swords were found in the town. This could indicate that the excavated graves comprise only a portion of the Viking Age graves in Tønsberg (Nordmann 1989: 24–25). The graves show that Tønsberg had been an important cult place in the late Iron Age, but it seems that the cemetery may have been abandoned during the early Viking period, maybe as early as during the ninth or early tenth century.

No particularly early Christian artefacts are recorded, and none earlier than the supposed age of the urban settlement, dated to around 1100 or the end of the eleventh century. However, Christian graves are among the earliest evidence for new activity in Tønsberg. The graves were found as part of a cemetery which is dated earlier than the stone church of St Peter's, which had been erected by the middle of the twelfth century. There are no traces of a church earlier than the stone church. The twenty-four graves from this earliest phase at St Peter's are not oriented parallel with the walls of the later stone church. The most extreme alignment is in fact almost north–south. Three of the twenty-four graves had a hazel wand, but none of the later east–west oriented graves from the phase of the stone church did. Four of the twenty-four earliest graves were buried on a

³⁶ Catalogue nos T7962 and T7963A in Trondheim.

stretcher, fourteen had a coffin, three had nothing, and for the rest such features could not be determined (Brendalsmo 1989).

Table 8. Radiocarbon date of the earliest graves near St Peter's, Tønsberg (after Brendalsmo 1989: 25).

Context	Dated object	Lab. ref.	Age of body	Date AD (cal. , Stuiver and Pearson)
Grave HS 8	Hazel wand	T-6729	0–7	998–1160
Grave HS 54	Coffin K 54	T-6942		1161–1280
Grave HS 391	Coffin K 95	T-6943	18–44	1052–1260
Grave HS 411	Coffin K 102	T-6944	15–18	985–1158
Grave HS 411	Hazel wand	T-6945		1046–1227
Grave HS 411		T-6945/T-6944		1035–1158

The foundation date for this cemetery was previously assumed to be very early, around 900 or at some point during the tenth century (Brendalsmo 1989: 33), but the radiocarbon dates upon which this assumption is based indicate that the cemetery was probably established at the earliest during the eleventh century (Table 8). These graves share the characteristics of Christian graves, and are without doubt Christian themselves. Against this background it may be suggested that this was a cemetery for a Christian community in the area, perhaps preceding the town, which was eventually followed by a church and an urban settlement.

Kaupang is regarded as a plot-divided town that was founded around 800. Urban activity prevailed there until around 900 when it developed into an impermanent summer market that continued until *c.* 960/980, but questions remain about the character of the settlement after the mid-ninth century as no preserved settlement deposits from the later period exist (Pilø 2007: 178–79, Skre and Stylegar 2004). Kaupang is the only ninth-century town known in Norway, and it may also have only existed briefly. However, even if the urban phase was short, the place is surrounded by several big cemeteries, with numerous graves, perhaps as many as 1000 (Stylegar 2007). No church has been detected in the area, but whether there are any Christian graves among the non-Christians at Kaupang has been a subject for discussion. The chronology of the graves is not firmly established, and most can only be dated to the Viking Age in general, but among the more specifically dated graves, only two seem to be later than 950 (Stylegar 2007: 81).

The various cemeteries at Kaupang and Skiringssal present different rituals: while some graves contained mixed cremations and inhumations (Lamøya, Hagejordet), others had only inhumations (Bikjholberget) and still others had only cremations (Søndre and Nordre Kaupang) (Stylegar 2007). Many barrows were empty: for example, this was true for 43 per cent of the barrows at Nordre Kaupang. It has been suggested that the differences in graves also reflect differences in the social milieu (Skre 2007b). Some artefacts may reflect the presence of Christians, particularly in the case of a mould for a small cross (Skre and Stylegar 2004: 62). Yet at the same time, four of the thirteen Thor's hammer objects from Norway were found here, the latest one made after the middle of the tenth century (see 'Thor's Hammer: An Antipathetic Response to Christianity?' in Chapter 5, and Nordeide 2006).

The inhumation graves are of particular interest in the current context. While all the known cremations were found in tumuli, the inhumation graves were both in tumuli and flat graves. The inhumation graves are much more varied than the cremation graves (Stylegar 2007), and although no exclusive Christian cemetery seems to have existed, the graves and some artefacts in the occupation layers suggest that the population may have included Christians or Christian visitors, because some of the objects were found in graves of people thought to be foreigners (Skre and Stylegar 2004: 62). However, there is no grave that has been convincingly interpreted as Christian.

In contrast to Kaupang, the contemporary cemetery at Gulli was located in a highly cultivated, rural landscape, about 5 km north-west of Tønsberg. Recent excavations have revealed cooking pits from the early Iron Age, graves, and a possible cult building from the late Iron Age (predominantly Viking Age), but there are no traces of production and ordinary settlement activity. The graves lie in rows aligned along the edge of the plateau, on both sides of a road running down the middle of the cemetery. It appears that the graves and pits were constructed with reference to the alignment of the road, and because of this the road is assumed to be older than the graves (Gjerpe 2005). Thirty-six circular grave ditches and twenty graves, including eight with a boat, were excavated. As the area had been subjected to extensive cultivation, nothing of the possible superstructure was preserved. Three graves were chamber graves, eight were boat graves, and four had a 'horse platform'. A 'horse platform' is a higher, levelled area in a separate room at the south end of a long, narrow grave where a horse's head is placed (Gjerpe 2005: 131–32). Horse platforms have been observed in graves in Vestfold before, but they are of a different kind, with the skeleton of the whole animal placed across the grave (Stylegar 2005). This latter type we see in Vestfold

is more similar to the horse platform found in graves at Birka in Sweden, where the horse platform is found at the foot of twenty chamber graves; it is the same length as the width of the grave, always outside the chamber and at right angles to its longest dimensions. There was enough space for the whole horse on the Birka platforms (Gräslund 1980, 39–43), but at Gulli only the head of the horse was buried, together with equestrian gear. With one possible exception, all the excavated graves were inhumations. However, the form that the burial ritual took is unknown in the case of twenty-two graves where their presence is indicated by circular grave ditches alone but with no traces of the graves themselves. The earliest boat grave is dated to the eighth century, but it looks as though the construction of boat graves and chamber graves ended around 900, at the same time as people began to bury their dead in graves with a horse platform. The latest graves in the cemetery are from around 1000/50 (Gjerpe 2005: 136–37). The fact that both boats and horses were means of transportation could indicate that the real or mythical means of transportation shifted from being overwhelmingly sea based to being predominantly land based.

The regularity of the Gulli cemetery is striking: the circular grave ditches are organized in rows on either side of the road (Figure 15). Quite often, in at least eighteen of the thirty-five excavated ditches, there are one or two perpendicular bridges across the ditch, all in the same direction running north to south (Gjerpe 2005: 14). Another structure of particular interest is the building positioned to the east in the middle of the cemetery, which has been interpreted as a cult building by the excavator, Lars Erik Gjerpe. This building was horseshoe-shaped, seemingly open to the west and measuring 11.5 m x 7.5 m. It was oriented east–west and aligned both with the rows of graves and the natural topography of the surrounding landscape. The building construction consisted of four posts and a wall ditch on all sides except to the west. There was also an opening in the wall (possibly a door) immediately to the west of the middle of both the long walls, by the first pair of posts. These openings were organized and oriented in the same manner as the bridges across the circular grave ditches. The door arrangement is reminiscent of the similar organization of entrances to the hall at Uppåkra, which was abandoned around AD 1000 and has been interpreted as a cult building as well (Larsson 2006). Many burnt bones were found in the ditch to the south-west, which also contained bones with decoration dated to the later Viking Age. Radiocarbon analysis dated the building to the eighth to ninth centuries (Gjerpe 2005: 147–51). Just inside the doors there was a post, as if the post was blocking the doorway, perhaps as a result of the ritual closing of the house.

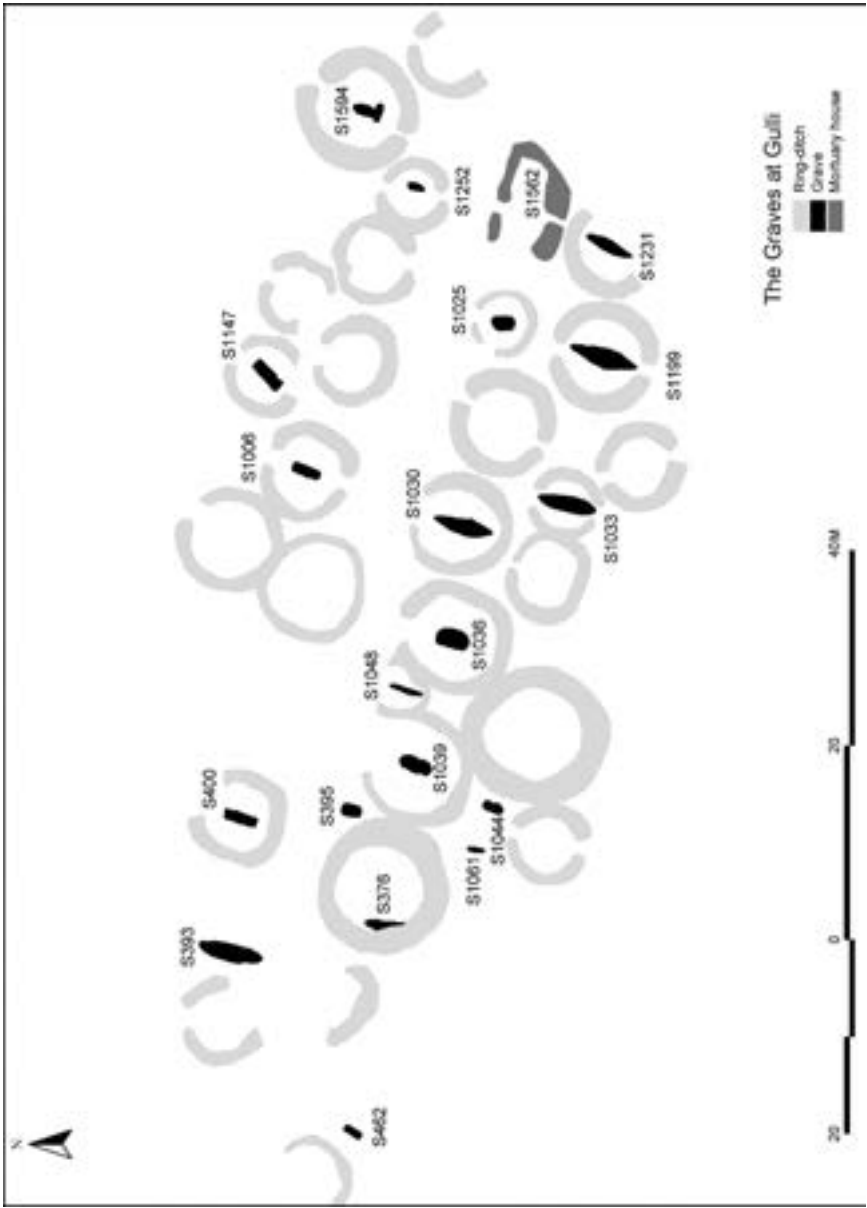


Figure 15. Cemetery and cult building at Gulli, Vestfold (Gjerpe 2005: 147). Illustration courtesy of Lars Erik Gjerpe.

Some possible early traces of Christianity in this region exist, particularly in (or at least close to) the town of Skien. Skien received urban privileges from the king in 1358, and is not included among the six *civitates* listed by Ordericus Vitalis in the 1130s. Even so, excavations in the centre of Skien have proved that this town may have roots dating back to the tenth century. The Benedictine nunnery of Gimsøy may have been founded early in the twelfth century at what later probably became the outskirts of the medieval town (Myrvoll 1992). The survey and excavations in the centre of the town carried out during 1977–79 revealed several phases of settlement. The three earliest phases, phases 8–10, were dated approximately to the second half of the tenth century, although Myrvoll remarks on the serious dating problems concerning these phases. These phases differed from the later ones in terms of their building techniques (using wattle in contrast to the later timber buildings), the thin deposit layers, and the impermanent nature of the settlement. The building structure was reorganized during each of these new early phases, which was also in contrast to the later phases. Some specialist craft activity is documented in these early phases, such as bronze casting and comb making. The earliest settlement is interpreted as a temporary settlement based on trade and the redistribution of products from inner Telemark, particularly hones from the well-known quarry at Eidsborg (Myrvoll 1992).

This early settlement in Skien had at least two characteristics that were very different from other towns of similar age in Norway: wattle buildings and a variable settlement structure indicating a different character from the average medieval town (see, for instance, Christophersen and Nordeide 1994, Schia 1991). The wattle technique might point to Danish influences, which could well be used as evidence to support theories about the Danish king's supremacy in the area (Schia 1991). However, the variable settlement pattern and the lack of organized properties could also indicate that the settlement was lacking 'supremacy', that is, someone with the authority to organize the settlement. It is worth noting that in this respect the site also differs from the nearby Viking Age town of Kaupang. If Kaupang was a temporary summer market, then this market may have moved within the region to Skien by the late Viking period.

The date and the character of Skien are interesting in relation to an ancient cemetery and wooden church at Faret. Excavations have not succeeded in locating the convent buildings of the Benedictine nunnery at Gimsøy, but it was supposedly located in the same area at Faret. The sequence at this site is reconstructed as follows, in chronological order (Reitan 2006):

- Approximately thirty cooking pits from the Roman period.
- At least two cremation graves with grave goods in shallow pits, containing burnt and completely crushed bones from two to four individuals, dated to the Viking period. These were part of a late Iron Age cemetery in the area.
- A Christian church and cemetery: a square cemetery was found measuring approximately 32 m x 32 m, enclosed by a ditch 0.65 m deep and 0.7–0.9 m wide. The cemetery was used until approximately 1400.
- An execution cemetery containing three graves, one of them dated to cal. AD 1420–1650. It is known that executions took place in this area from around 1650, but this activity might have started earlier.

The church site is particularly informative. The remains of a church were found — Faret I — constructed as an east–west oriented rectangular building of 4.8 m x 6.8 m, based on posts buried in the ground in stone-packed postholes.³⁷ A post has been radiocarbon dated to cal. AD 1010–40. Sill stones were placed directly onto natural soil outside the rectangle of the foundation posts, with corner posts buried in the ground. This has been interpreted by the excavator, Gaute Reitan, as a later, bigger church — Faret II — built around the old one with a common middle axis. Faret II measured 9.8 m x 7 m, but no material has been dated from this building. The assumption that Faret II is later than Faret I is based on differences in the foundations and on the fact that the distance between the walls represented by the inner post and the outer stone sill seems too small to be interpreted as a portico (Reitan 2006). The church was demolished at the latest during the late medieval/early post-medieval period, when the foundations were disturbed by later burials.

Forty graves were uncovered that had close connections with the church at Faret, in addition to around ten uncertain graves. These have been interpreted as Christian, but are dated as being contemporaneous with the Norse graves. The preservation conditions were poor, and no sex or age distribution at the cemetery could be determined. In addition to the graves mentioned above, a few graves are dated to the thirteenth to fourteenth centuries. No markings above the ground have been observed. Some nails were found indicating coffins, but neither preservation conditions nor excavation methods provide information about grave goods such as hazel wands (Reitan 2006). The graves were found as two well-defined rows of graves on both sides of the church foundations. Some of the earliest dateable graves are as follows:

³⁷ E–W, with a divergence of 4° (Reitan 2006).

- Stratigraphically under the church foundations of Faret I:
Grave 47: 0.7 m wide, 0.8 m deep, coffin-shaped, inhumation grave, E–W (?) oriented. Birch charcoal spread on the bottom, dated to cal. AD 890–990.
- Stratigraphically under the church foundations from Faret II:
Grave 46: E–W (?) oriented, part of thigh bone, legs probably to the east. ‘Coffin-shaped’ pit. Bone dated to cal. AD 885–980.
Grave 45: A ‘coffin-shaped’ pit, 1 m below stone cobbles on surface. No bones. Disturbed by Grave 46 and Faret II.

The information from the Viking Age graves and the (probably) contemporary earliest Christian graves is not very rich, and there is only weak evidence supporting the hypothesis that Faret I and II were two different buildings. The interpretation of the graves from the Viking Age as being Christian is based on the facts that they were inhumations and seem to be oriented east–west. However, one of the three graves did not contain any bones, and it is not certain that this was a grave at all. The alignment of the cremations is unknown. According to Reitan, the excavation methods, later intrusions, and preservation conditions prevent us from knowing whether there were any grave goods. The evidence from this region shows that Viking Age graves could vary in their alignment and could be either cremations or inhumations, and they may have been flat graves as well. In fact, it seems as though inhumations were as normal as cremations in this region. Additionally, the ditch marking the Christian cemetery is of a very late date, and the church foundations, just as with the ditch, would have been constructed on natural soil below the deposit layers. The earliest church is dated later than the earliest graves. In light of this information it is just as possible that the earliest graves were part of the late Iron Age cemetery as a Christian graveyard preceding the church.

However, there may have been some early Christian graves at Faret, and the earliest recorded church at this site is one of the earliest ever documented in Norway. The nunnery at Gimsøy nearby was one of the very few institutions beyond the royal and archbishop’s palaces where some minting took place. This important convent and the possibly early urbanization with a central, geographical location make Faret’s character particularly interesting, as a central place where early Christian cult activity can be observed.

The Eastern Part of Viken and Oslo

Bohuslän was part of Norway in the Middle Ages. This means that Østfold did not represent the southern border between Sweden and Norway in the medieval era, but only a part of the eastern border region next to Sweden. It has been argued that Bohuslän and Østfold should be regarded as one region during the Iron Age (Theliander 2005: 295–97). However, no particularly early Christian cult places in Østfold nor in Bohuslän are known, although quite a few were excavated in the neighbouring area of Västergötland (see the catalogue in Theliander 2005). Borg/Sarpsborg in Østfold is an early town, and according to the sagas King Olaf Haraldsson founded the town in 1016, and he built a church dedicated to St Mary there (*Heimskringla*, St Olaf's Saga, chap. 61). An artificial earthwork was constructed to the west of the medieval town as a defensive measure, and a coin minted by King Olaf Haraldsson (1015–30) was found underneath the earthen bank, which predates the earthwork. However, the area's geology is dominated by marine clay, and most of the medieval town was lost during a landslide in 1702. Consequently, very little archaeological material remains today. Although the coin supports the saga's identification of King Olaf as the founder of the town, the information about the early church unfortunately cannot be confirmed.

Turning to Oslo, an excavated area between the royal palace and the cathedral in the city has been interpreted as being the site of St Clement's church (Eide 1974, Fischer 1950: 86–94, App. 2). In 1973, Ole Egil Eide found what was considered at the time to be the oldest Christian graves in Norway: radiocarbon dates suggested that the cemetery could have begun well before 1000. It has recently been asserted that the later stone church was built during the period *c.* 1130/40s (Eide 2007).

The cemetery was analysed in three stratigraphic phases: Phase 3 graves were contemporary with or later than the stone church; Phase 2 graves were earlier than the stone church and were sealed by a construction layer for the building of the chancel of the stone church; Phase 1 was the earliest (Eide 1974). An old stone wall surrounding the churchyard was at an odd angle to the ruins of the stone church, and the earliest graves (Phase 1) were even older than this fence and were oriented in the same way. Phase 2 and Phase 3 graves were oriented in the same way as the stone church. None of the churches in Oslo lie directly east–west, but vary between 97° and 117°. The stone ruin of St Clement's was oriented 108.5°, while the graves of Phase 1 were oriented between 145° and 150° (Eide 1974:

App. 6).³⁸ A difference in orientation between a first and second church is not unusual; this is, for instance, observed at St Peder's in Viborg, Denmark, and St Peter's in Tønsberg (Brendalsmo 1989, Kristensen 1987). The plot of St Clement's is, however, located close to the steep slope by the River Alna, and the south-eastern stone wall of the churchyard follows the edge of this slope. As the orientations of early churches tend to be affected by local topography, this is a sufficient explanation for the oblique orientation of the Phase 1 graves in Oslo (Eide 1974: App.6). It turned out that the radiocarbon measurements from the 1970s contained many methodological weaknesses. The absolute chronology was not as reliable as it should be, and the radiocarbon dates from skeletons from this period have also been a general matter of discussion (see, for instance, Arcini 1992, Boldsen 1992, Cinthio 1992, Vretemark 1992; see also Kieffer-Olsen 2000, Sellevold 2001). In light of this, it was important to establish a more rigorous absolute chronology for the cemetery at St Clement's, and the earliest graves were re-sampled and remeasured in 2003–05 in order to re-date the establishment of the cemetery. As a result, the earliest possible date of the graves is now more likely set after 1000, probably during the first half of the eleventh century (Table 9; Nordeide and Gulliksen 2007). The earliest dated skeleton was a woman of between seventy-five and eighty-five years of age, and the time of death of this skeleton should be estimated as later than the suggested radiocarbon date since the main uptake of carbon occurs between birth and the end of puberty. The estimated date is representative only until adulthood, and consequently the measured content of ¹⁴C most probably reflects an earlier time of death than the real one (Nordeide and Gulliksen 2007, Geyh 2001). The death of this woman should rather be placed in the period *c.* 1010/20–1050/60. The earliest graves can be dated in all probability to some point during the reign of King Olaf Haraldsson.

Only graves related to Phase 1 and 2 are interesting in this connection, with 62 and 81 graves respectively.³⁹ In addition to the graves, many other human bones and remains of coffins were found between the graves in a secondary context. No

³⁸ Orientation calculated from a formula based on a 360° circle; if the axis of the church is exactly E-W, the azimuth (or measured angle) would be 90°.

³⁹ The description of the burials is based on Eide 1974, App. 4, and his records from the excavations. Anatomical analyses were performed by Professor Torgersen, Institute of Anatomy, University of Oslo.

Table 9. New and previous radiocarbon dates from the graves at St Clement's in Oslo. Previous results are shaded. From Nordeide and Gulliksen 2007: 14.

Grave no.	Material	Lab. ref.	¹⁴ C age (years BP)	Calibrated age AD (68.2%)	δ ¹³ C (‰)	Age at death
133	Pine stick	T-1156	890 ± 150	1010–1270		
136 b	Skeleton	T-1210	990 ± 70	980–1160		75–85
		TUa-5021	1010 ± 35		-21.7	
		TUa-5021K	1100 ± 40		-21.0	
		TUa-5021 mean	1046 ± 26	980–1020		
136	Coffin, pine	T-1325	1040 ± 110	880–1160		
137b	Skeleton	T-1326	1020 ± 100	890–1160		10–14
		TUa-5023	895 ± 35	1040–1090 1120–1210	-22.3	
145b	Skeleton	T-1327	930 ± 100	1020–1210		13–18
		TUa-5024	850 ± 35		-20.7	
		TUa-5024K	885 ± 40		-20.7	
		TUa-5024 mean	867 ± 26	1155–1215		
146b	Skeleton	T-1328	920 ± 90	1020–1210		?
45	Skeleton	TUa-5020	900 ± 35	1040–1190	-23.5	35–45
115	Skeleton	TUa-5022	(1275 ± 75)		(-17.0)	?
		TUa-5022K	995 ± 40	990–1050 1090–1120 1140–1150	-19.4	
74	Skeleton	TUa-5025	1015 ± 35	980–1040	-20.7	Adult
C23592	Coffin, spruce	TUa-5143	990 ± 30	990–1050 1090–1120 1140–1150	-21.8	

obvious church remains were recorded in connection with these graves, although several construction remains were revealed. The frequency and date of the graves indicate that the excavated graves were located outside, at an open cemetery. It was not usual to bury the dead inside the church before around 1100 (/1200) (Eide 1974: 73, Andrén 2000).

It has only been possible to verify the sex and age for a few of the skeletons, but these indicate that the graveyard functioned throughout as a cemetery for the regular population. For instance, it was not a pioneer monastic organization with only adult males, nor did the cemetery give priority to male ecclesiastical staff as was observed in Linköping (Table 10; Arcini and Tagesson 2005). Neither was it similar to cases in Ireland, where it has been suggested that the earliest Christian cemeteries served only the personnel of the churches and monasteries (Petts 2002). There is no obvious sex segregation in Phase 1 and Phase 2 at St Clement's.

Table 10. Number of skeletons for which it has been possible to analyse the sex and age from Phase 1 and 2 at St Clement's, according to Nordeide and Gulliksen 2007.

Phase	Male	Female	Children, age
1	3	5	7, 1–10 years old/uncertain age
2	13	8	17, 1–10 years old/uncertain age

The graves in Phase 1 lay with a maximum of five levels on top of each other. Phase 1 graves were 1 to 1.5 m deeper than the lowest part of the stone wall (Eide 1974: 47–49). While there was a north limit for the Phase 1 cemetery, graves from Phase 2 were found distributed throughout the site, which means that whatever the limits of the Phase 1 cemetery had been, this changed in Phase 2.

In spite of varying conditions for preservation, remains of a wooden coffin were traced in most of the graves. Many of these were very narrow with a maximum width of only 30–40 cm, slightly trapezoid and made of planks. Other similar coffins were wider, but for many coffins it was not possible to determine their size and shape. Some coffins lacked a top or bottom, or else the body was covered by or resting on bark instead. A few bodies were placed in a hollowed trunk.

Some parts of the burial traditions were specific to the Phase 1 graves and were not seen in later graves; there were considerable variations in terms of depth and oblique orientation. The coffins were sometimes bound with a withe (a tough, supple twig used for binding things together), and some of them contained a hazel wand, normally laid down at the body's left side, as in Grave 133 which contained

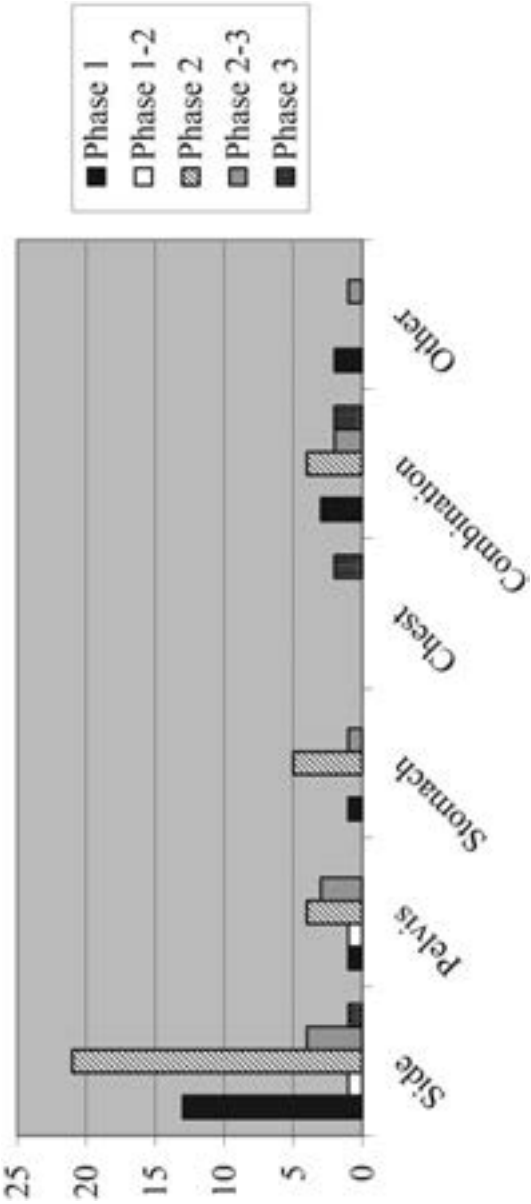
a pine stick. An old woman aged in her eighties had two crossed wands placed over her feet. Four graves contained coffins consisting of hollowed trunks. Even if hazel wands were found only in Phase 1 graves at this site, they were found in considerably later graves at other places in Norway, at Bø for instance (see above), and in graves from the later part of twelfth century in Trondheim (Andersson and Götberg 1986: 12–13, 17–19).

The position of the body was not always possible to verify. However, the most frequent arm position was with the arms along the side of the body. The arms were also placed on the stomach, pelvis, or in a combination of positions (Graph 31).

One special grave should be noted: in Grave 137, a male of around fourteen years old was buried in a crouched position, with a (too) small wooden box functioning as a coffin placed on top of him. The bottom of the coffin lay across his pelvis, and the rest covered his head and upper torso. The box was particularly well constructed with advanced joints, alluding to an obvious secondary function for the box. A body position such as this is very rare in Christian graves, and elsewhere in Scandinavia is only known at the beginning of the eleventh century (Kieffer-Olsen 2000). This case from Oslo may be dated to the eleventh century as well, or a little later (Grave 137, Table 9).

Some of the bodies were wrapped in birchbark, or at least bark was found either covering or under the body. The birchbark occurred in combination with a coffin or as a wrapping without a coffin. This is, however, not a chronological phenomenon, since it is, with one exception, found only in the northern site in the central part of the nave, both in Phases 1 and 2. Since this tradition is evident only in one particular part of the cemetery, but continued for some time, one assumption is that it was arranged for family plots at the cemetery, and that burial traditions could vary between different groups of people. The tendency to group people by social categories at the cemetery is also noted at various other places, such as at the Viking Age cemetery at Birka in Sweden and possibly at St Clement's churchyard in Helsingborg (Gräslund 1987, Holmberg 1990: 46, Ros 2001: 139).

It was previously believed that Oslo was founded around 1050 (Fischer 1950). After the discoveries at St Clement's in the 1970s it was suggested that the town was founded earlier, perhaps under the supremacy of the Danish King Harald Bluetooth (940–c. 985) (Schia 1989). Yet the earliest archaeological traces of a secular urban settlement are dated around the middle of the eleventh century (Schia 1991), which fits very well with the previously accepted date of establishment. Thus, it is not possible to use the cemetery to date the foundation of the



Graph 31. The position of the arms for those skeletons at St Clement's for which it was possible to determine on the basis of excavation and preservation (Nordeide and Gulliksen 2007).

of the town, nor is it possible to date the foundation of the town to the tenth century (Nordeide 2007, Nordeide and Gulliksen 2007).

The Christianization of Viken

Viken is a region with a very diverse range of Norse burial cult, if we bear in mind the chronological changes among the inhumation-dominated graves with a cult building at Gulli; the huge barrows with cremations and rich inhumations with boats and animals in Tønsberg; the rich double graves but otherwise unsophisticated graves in Bø; and the few male Viking Age graves, one of which was located by a rock wall, in Rollag. It appears that every village had its own cult traditions, which could be very different from those of its neighbours. In Kaupang, traditions were also specialized or compartmentalized, with different cult practices in the various cemeteries surrounding the town. The situation surrounding Norse cult activities in Viken is reminiscent of the one in Rauma, where each village specialized in having a cult of its own. Furthermore, as in Rauma, this is an area where we find Christian cult at a very early date. Christian cult activity is found first of all in the southern part of the region — in the lakeland area around Skien and Bø — but it seems that Christian cult was at least contemporaneous with the establishment of Tønsberg and Oslo as towns, or perhaps even earlier.

A vital and varied cult as well as early urbanization in this region during the Viking Age may reflect a dynamic, open-minded Norse community that seized the opportunity to form links with distant people in an urban arena. Christian people may have visited Kaupang, along with people from a variety of other religions. Arabic coins from Muslim people have been found in the town, as well as some artefacts that may be Christian. A Thor's hammer is, however, incised into one of the Arabic coins, which could be interpreted as a negative response to the Muslims. Urbanization may also have caused some stress in the region, and an increased awareness of the various religious expressions of cult may be seen as one side of this, as a response to people's need to express their own identity, in rivalry with other groups rather than through inspiration from the others.

When Christianity arrived, people adjusted to Christian norms by establishing cemeteries and churches at an early stage. Christians were supposed to be buried in Christian, consecrated burial grounds, and so in the early Christian period the establishment of Christian cemeteries was an important and urgent matter. Even before churches had been built, quite a few cemeteries were established in this region, and these are dated very early compared to other places in Norway. The

general form of church buildings and burial customs seems to be international, even if individual locations had unique characteristics of their own.

In Sweden, the first Christians were sometimes buried at old Iron Age cemeteries, a practice that continued for some time even after the first wooden churches had been built (see, for example, Artelius and Kristensson 2006). This is not obvious in Viken, although some of the graves in Kaupang and at Faret have been identified as being of this type. Based on the evidence from Bø, Faret, Tønsberg, and Oslo, it seems that there was a relatively large Christian community in the region during the eleventh century. On the basis of the observation of there being differing burial customs, particularly in Oslo, we can assume that the Christian community consisted of a socially heterogeneous group of people, but with a close-to-normal demographic composition. The cemetery at St Clement's was used by a Christian congregation, established before — or perhaps contemporary with — the emergence of the town. Additionally, the new tradition of gathering for Christian burial rituals may have contributed in itself to the further urbanization of the area. This may have been true for Skien and Tønsberg as well, but the congregation may have been dispersed over a larger area. For instance, the organization and structure of Christianity in Sweden and in Lund can be compared with the organization of the English Minsters, where a few priests in a central location had responsibility for a large district that they served on a visiting basis. Carelli has suggested that the earliest cemetery in Lund served large parts of Skåne (Carelli 2004, Ros 2001: 211–14). It is likely that the cemetery at St Clement's in Oslo had a similar function, and based on the present dating evidence, we can presume that it was established before Oslo became a town, or at the latest at the same time as the town's foundation.

A Region Rich in Iron in the Inland and Upper Valleys in Eastern Norway (Våler, Ullensaker, Vang, Sør-Fron, Ringeby, Lom)

Ullensaker is a rich agricultural inland district in Akershus, north of Oslo. The largest barrow in Norway from the Iron Age is found here: Raknehaugen, dated to around AD 500–50. The barrow is 15 m high and 95 m in diameter (Solberg 2000: 164–65). The area is also rich in Norse graves from the late Iron Age: its fifty graves make this one of the districts with the most graves in our analysis, but even more were found in Vang, where eighty-six graves have been identified. One of the other areas selected, Våler, is the opposite, and here no graves which are certainly from the late Iron Age have been found. These two municipalities of Vang and Våler represent the diversity in graves in this region, and they also show the

possible variations in the surrounding topography, from fully cultivated landscape to the poorer taiga, that is, the coniferous forest typical of northern latitudes.

In general, this region is characterized by assemblages of iron objects, especially in the case of late Iron Age finds from Vang where many arrow- or spearheads and axes have been found. Similarly, three finds from Ringebru and Sør-Fron included just two axes, one contained five arrowheads and another had harvesting and agricultural tools (see below). From Våler, one or two Viking Age axes have been found in a layer of dark soil, and around sixty iron ingots were found beneath a cairn. Additionally, in Lom a knife and an arrowhead were found in a crack in a rock side on the mountain of Sålæggi. Some of this material is reminiscent of the finds from Gulen and Rollag where axes were found in a crack or wedged between stones. All the iron objects in eastern Norway were made possible by the considerable iron production in the region during the Iron Age and early medieval period (see, for instance, Rundberget 2007: 20–27). Some of the finds may be deposits, but others are probably offerings.

The assemblages of iron objects can be difficult to separate from the hoards or depots, and the graves from Ullensaker and Vang have often been particularly hard to define. Often they do not possess the normal sets of weapon or jewellery associated with Viking Age finds, and this is true in Vang even more so than in Ullensaker. The absence of weapons or jewellery often makes it difficult to date these graves or even ascertain whether they are graves at all. Eivind S. Engelstad felt this difficulty in one of the neighbouring districts, Vestre Slidre, where two celts were found at Handemyren, a place name containing the element *myr* meaning 'bog'. The artefact types and the significant place name (evidence that there was indeed a bog in the area) would seem to indicate a hoard or votive deposit, but the fact that the objects were found in a mound with coal and many bones led Engelstad to interpret the site as a grave (Engelstad 1929: 354–55). In graves from these regions, and particularly those from the Viking Age, gender is difficult to determine as well. In Vang, graves which were dominated by weapons also contained weaving tools, and graves dominated by jewellery contained arrows. However, there seem to be few or no female graves in any of the municipalities selected from this region, except perhaps in the case of Ullensaker as we will explore soon.

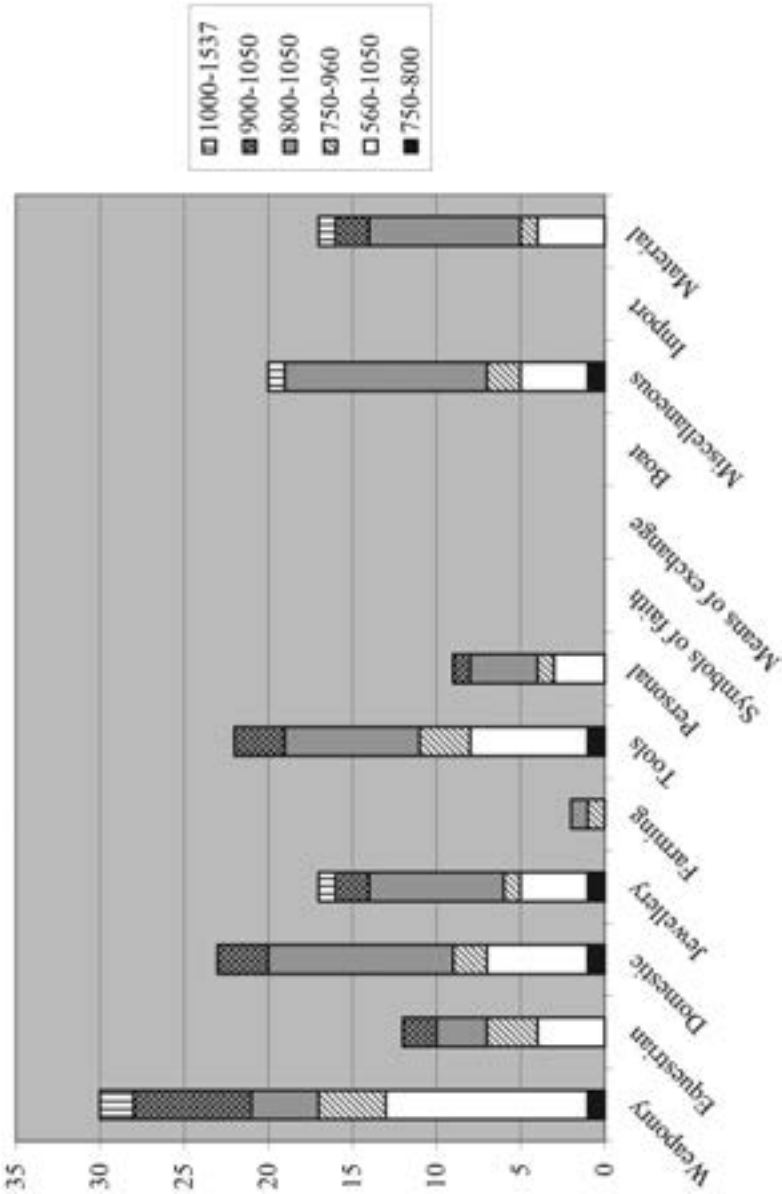
Barrows account for forty-two of the fifty graves from Ullensaker, and only two are flat graves. The body was probably usually cremated in Ullensaker: there are twenty graves that have been interpreted as cremations, compared to only three inhumations. Yet for the rest of the graves, which make up about 50 per cent



Map 10. Inland and valleys in eastern Norway.

of the material from Ullensaker, the treatment of the body is unknown. The mean number of types of artefacts per grave is five.

For some of the graves, it has not been possible to determine gender (Graph 32), but in two examples the sex was determined on the basis of skeletal analyses. Nevertheless, male graves seem to outnumber female ones by about two to one, and only one is thought to be a double grave with both sexes represented. This means that there is probably a stronger representation of female graves in Ullensaker than in comparison to the general pattern. Household utensils and tools occur in higher-than-average numbers in Ullensaker, and this district is particularly rich in grave goods, with personal equipment and equestrian gear such as spurs, saddles, and stirrups. Steatite vessels and pottery are frequently found, and since cremation was probably the norm in this area, these might have been used as sepulchral urns. There are no boats, which could be explained by the distance from the seashore, and no trading utensils or imports. However, by the same token there are hardly any tools for husbandry, harvesting, or agriculture either. Coins were found only on one occasion — in a grave from the Merovingian



Graph 32. Number of types of grave goods in Ullensaker, per period.

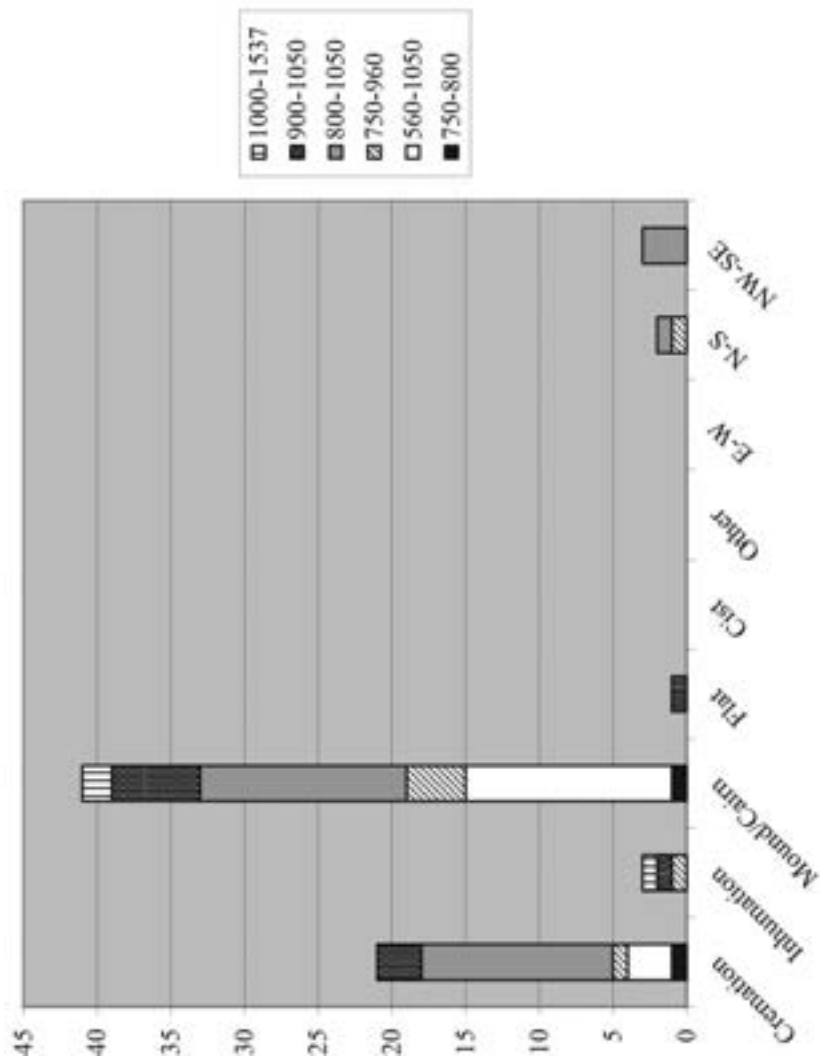
period — and these were only described as two ‘possible’ coins (*No. 345*). If the interpretation is correct, this would be the only item that could be classed as a grave good from the Merovingian period that did not appear in the Viking period.

In graves with weapons or jewels or dress fasteners, a strong gender pattern emerges from the grave goods. The weapon-dominated graves never included any household utensils other than a kettle, normally of soapstone, while many household utensils were found in female graves. The opposite could be said about horses: only in one example was part of a horse skeleton found in a female grave, while the rest were found in male graves. Personal equipment is found most often in female graves as well, while tools such as scissors, knives, and whetstones seem to have belonged to both male and female graves.

Two graves will be addressed in more detail on account of their possible Christian influences. At Kverner, Kløfta, a grave (*No. 332*) has been interpreted as flat. A farmer found it during the wintertime when the ground was frozen. This was a female inhumation grave, and the body was laid down on a layer of a tight, 5-cm-thick stone packing of small stones. On the woman’s chest, grave goods were found under and around an upside-down steatite vessel. She was found with buckles belonging to her dress, a small knife, a possible gaming piece, and an oval stone, 3.8 cm long, interpreted as a replacement for an egg-shaped stone. The reason for this interpretation is not clear. Egg-shaped stones occurring in Russian graves have been interpreted as an old, non-Christian symbol of fertility and rebirth of the Earth. On the other hand, the egg was adopted by early Christians as a symbol of rebirth, and similar objects occurring in graves in Sweden in this same period are believed to be symbols of Christ. One of the buckles is dated to the phase of Viking Age art that fell between the Borre and Jelling styles, which dates the grave to the end of the Viking Age (*c. 900–1000*).

At Habberstad, a man was buried in a rectangular wooden coffin (*No. 347*), dated to as late as 1000–60. The sex was determined on the basis of osteological analyses. The dead man had only a sword, a shield, and fire-striking utensils with him. These could be interpreted as not much more than dress accessories, and the coffin seems to have been east–west oriented. There was no sign of cremation, but a barrow covered the grave.

With these introductory remarks in mind, it seems that neither of these two graves can be interpreted as definitively, unambiguously Christian, and in the case of the first grave in particular, the uncertainty of its context should be kept in mind. The simply equipped graves are the only ones that could possibly have been influenced from Christianity in Ullensaker but, then again, the graves were not richly equipped in general. The latest date of a Norse grave is 1000–60/90,



Graph 33. Elements of the burial rite and grave forms traced in Ullensaker.

but there is also an uncertain find (*No. 340*) that can be dated to the medieval period (1050–1536). This comprised a finger ring and a scabbard belonging to a double-edged sword, which, according to the museum catalogue, was found in a mound. The way that this information was recorded suggests that it was not regarded as wholly reliable.⁴⁰

Våler in Finnskogen, close to the border with Sweden, was dominated from the seventeenth century by Finno-Ugric settlers who employed slash-and-burn cultivation practices, but these techniques were used even earlier. Several traces of economic activity have also been found, some of which are probably from the late Iron Age/early medieval period (Eskeland 1994: 28–30, Holm 2002).

There are no absolutely certain cultic finds from Våler from the late Iron Age. However, two Viking Age finds are of interest in this respect, which have already been mentioned above:

1. One or two axes were found 20 cm deep with some dark soil, but there is nothing to indicate a grave. This may have been a hoard or perhaps a sacrifice (*No. 379*).
2. Around sixty iron ingots found beneath a cairn could be interpreted as a hoard or a sacrifice. The cairn most probably was associated with the find, or else it may be the result of a later clearance of stones from the field as part of the cultivation of the land.⁴¹

The lack of graves from the late Iron Age in Våler is probably not because the area was unpopulated. As early as the twelfth century onwards the Eidsivating and Borgarting Codifications forbade people from going to the fortune tellers at a place called 'Finnemarken' in the eastern district of Norway. The location of Våler in relation to Finnemarken is uncertain, however, and the nature of the late Iron Age/early medieval religious cult in the area is unknown. Yet several traces of economic activity were found, some of which were probably from the late Iron Age/early medieval period. The lack of relevant material from Våler may be due partly to the lack of archaeological projects in the area (Holm 2002). However, a recent project in Gråfjell covering a 193 km² area of a similar character north of Våler found only ten graves during surveying, in spite of there being considerable known activity during the Iron Age and Middle Ages. Furthermore, the few recorded graves that were excavated turned out to be natural formations or

⁴⁰ Catalogue no. C13779 in the Historisk museum (Historical Museum) in Oslo.

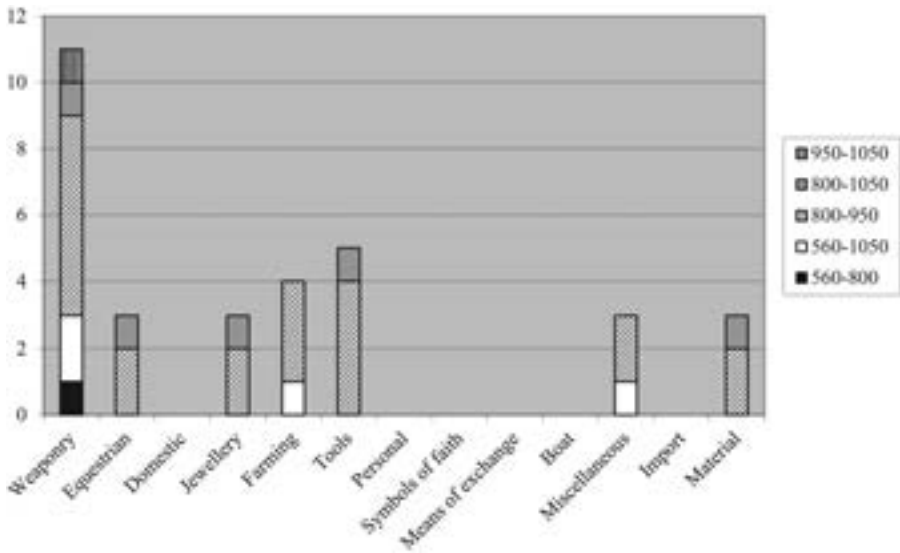
⁴¹ Catalogue no. C24133 in the Historisk museum (Historical Museum) in Oslo.

something other than graves (Stene 2004, Stene 2005). Therefore recognizing graves in this area is obviously a problem. This may be due to a burial cult that was very different from the normal Norse burial practices, which could indicate a different ethnic makeup in the local population.

Ringebu and Sør-Fron are neighbours in the valley of Gudbrandsdalen in Oppland. The landscape and occupation patterns are similar in both municipalities, and the possible traces of cult activity from the late Iron Age/early medieval period have several similarities as well:

- There are few graves from both areas (six and seven respectively), and only one has been dated to the Merovingian period.
- None of the graves were interpreted as female, but three could be double graves with one male and one female (one in Ringebu, two in Sør-Fron).
- Both areas lack household equipment, personal equipment, symbols of belief, means of exchange, imports and boats among the grave goods (Graph 34).
- The alignment is known for only one grave, which was aligned south-west–north-east.
- Both Ringebu and Sør-Fron have a few possible hoards or sacrifices of a similar character with homogeneous content: three finds contained only two axes (note also a similar find from Våler, as described above), one contained five arrowheads, and one had harvesting and agricultural tools. The two hoards in Ringebu were covered by a stone slab, and the agricultural tools in Sør-Fron were found in scree. For the others, the circumstances of the find are not known. The fact that no charcoal, ash, or bones were observed in connection with these finds supports the theory that these finds were something other than graves. Graves do exist, however, with only one or a few tools and no typical grave goods, and also a few inhumation graves, so such an interpretation is not absolutely certain.

The only cremations in the area, however, were found in Ringebu, where there were twice as many types of artefacts in the graves as in Sør-Fron (a ratio of 5:2.6), despite the fact that, in total, these two areas have the same number of cremations and inhumation graves. By the medieval churchyard in Ringebu there is a special type of cremation grave: *c.* 5–10 litres of charcoal and ash were used to fill a pit. The pit was dug around 75 cm deep into the ground and was covered with soil, while the grave itself was flat. The dated grave that is part of this analysis contained only a few tools (*No. 367*).



Graph 34. Grave goods in Ringebru and Sør-Fron.

For graves from these areas, it is not possible to suggest any standard female kit. In addition to weapons, the males most often had some agricultural or husbandry utensils, or other tools, and on one occasion there was some equestrian gear as well. This was also the case with two of the three double graves.

The latest find from Ringebru is dated to 950–1050, and from Sør-Fron to 900–50 or to the Viking Age in general. The latest find in Ringebru is a cremation (*No.* 368), and the spearhead from this grave has been dated to 950–1050 (Solberg 1984).

One particularly mysterious grave dates to a later period. This was found close to the top of Krøkla Mountain, 1 160 m above sea level in Fron. A man was buried close to a big rock, fully dressed, and covered by a circular cairn (4 m in diameter and approximately 0.3 m high) and the cairn was probably never covered with soil.⁴² In the middle of the northern part of the cairn was a big rock, and to the south of this, in the centre of the cairn, was a grave with an east–west oriented inhumation grave. There were no grave goods except the man's clothes and dress

⁴² Catalogue no. C36693 in the Historisk museum (Historical Museum) in Oslo is. From an unpublished and undated report by Arne Skjølsvold, based on the excavations in July 1980. I am grateful to Jostein Bergstøl, University of Oslo, for making me aware of this grave.

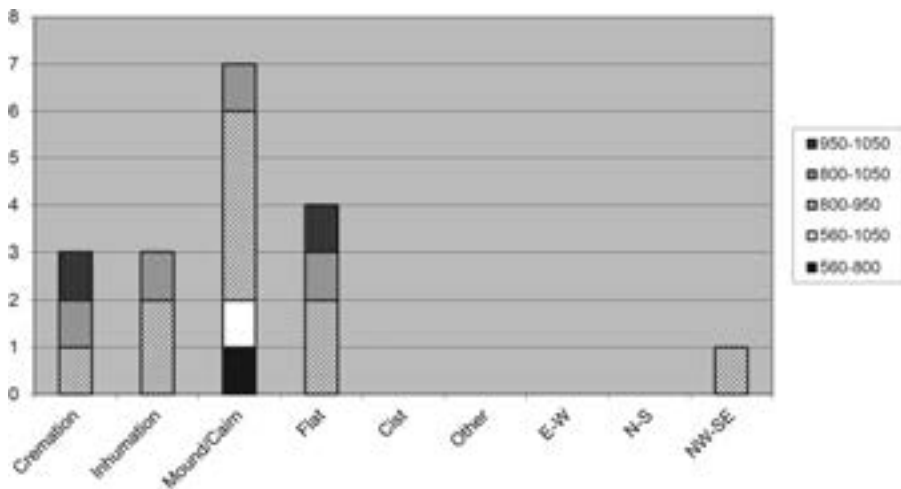
fasteners. Traces of birchbark have been found, and possibly coffin remains as well. The birchbark has been radiocarbon dated to 790 ± 110 BP, cal. AD 1022–1396.⁴³ Based on the descriptions, it is clear that this mountain grave is later than any other grave in a cairn, and several hundred years later than the Christian graves at Veøy. The character of the grave as well as the location could suggest various interpretations, since the grave exhibits various characteristics associated with Christian, Norse, and Saami graves:

- The grave could be Norse, since the person was buried fully dressed, the grave was situated close to a big rock and covered with a cairn. In this area, particularly in the mountains of Rondane to the north, quite a few Iron Age graves that could be Norse have been found in the mountains. The grave's lack of rich grave goods and its east–west inhumation do not make a Norse identification impossible in any way; however, the date is later than most Norse graves.
- The grave could be Christian on account of its east–west orientation and the fact that it is an inhumation burial lacking traditional grave goods and with possible traces of a wooden coffin. Birchbark is found in early Christian graves, as we have seen above with graves in Oslo and Bø. However, the location outside a Christian graveyard and the use of a cairn as a burial monument are features not associated with Christian burial norms (Salvesen and Gunnes 1971: 100); similarly, the fact that the body was buried fully dressed in ordinary (?) clothes is not normal for a Christian grave from this period.
- A third possibility is that the dead man was a Saami. The location of the grave in the mountains under a cairn with no weapons and the presence of birchbark could certainly fit a Saami grave, possibly influenced by Christianity. The late date might correspond with such an interpretation.

The excavator of this site, Arne Skjølsvold, has discussed the various alternative interpretations of this grave. The dead person was probably strongly attached to the mountains, because he or she lived there and/or worked there. Either this person was Saami, or the grave represents a continuation of the tradition of Norse mountain graves, performed by persons who were not farmers and Christians, but who may have been influenced by Christianity. However, no ethnic symbols were

⁴³ Laboratory number T4041, 95.4 per cent probability. Calibrated with OxCal v4.1.1 Bronk Ramsey (2009); Reimer and others (2004).

found, and Saami burial traditions are even more difficult to verify than settlement sites in this part of Norway (Bergstøl 2008: 169). Scholars have debated whether or when there was a Saami population here, but in 2006 the remains of a Saami occupation site were found in Lesja in Oppland, dating to around 1000. ‘Holy stones’ were found, which indicate that they practised a normal Saami, non-Christian cult (Bergstøl 2008: 141–42).



Graph 35. Burial rite and grave forms in Ringebu and Sør-Fron.

If a Christian died in the mountains, he or she would normally be carried down to the village and buried according to Christian customs. However, what happened if the body was first discovered only after some time, or if it was a long way to get help? There would have been a choice between collecting the bones and burying them in the village, or, if the body were partly decomposed, a more pragmatic solution may have been sought. There are certainly many situations that could call for alternative burial practices. At Mære some graves have been explained in a similar way, as some of the skeletons were lying in a state of disorder, suggesting that the dead were buried after the body had decomposed, or that the body had been reburied (see ‘A “Pagan Temple” and an Early Christian Church at Mære?’ above in this chapter). Whatever the reason, this person at Krøkla found their final resting place on the mountain.

Eighty-six finds from the late Iron Age in Vang have been interpreted as graves. The Viking Age material from this region is, as we have seen, extremely difficult to interpret and date. However, of the seventeen graves from the Merovingian period (560–800), nine included a rather typical male inventory consisting of more than one weapon and no textile production tools, and one included a typical female inventory that lacked weapons. Graves with only a shield or arrows were identified as ‘male’ only if they contained a sword, spear, and/or axe, and, similarly, graves were identified as female only if they contained buckles, an arm-ring, or several beads. The conclusion from my analyses of all possible graves from the late Iron Age in Vang is that only four graves can be classified as female, thirty-nine as male and two as double graves, while for the rest gender identification was not possible.

There is no doubt that most of the finds should be interpreted as graves, judging by the character of the grave forms and the traces of the rituals. It is simply the case that in Vang the inventory developed into a very different form in the Viking Age compared to other places. In the cases where there is some doubt I have classified the finds as graves, or depots, and/or sacrifices following the criteria described above.⁴⁴ However, many finds from Vang in particular have been left out of the analysis due to their classification as stray finds or due to a lack of information. For instance, many arrow- or spearheads and axes have been found in the mountains or during ploughing, in caves, under crags, or wedged between stones, or in cracks in rocks. Several major avalanches during the nineteenth century revealed some of this material. Twenty loom weights were also found lying by a large stone, but it is not clear how these should be interpreted.

The graves in Vang are consistently poorly equipped, with an average of 3.3 types of objects per grave. No boats or trading/bartering utensils were found, nor any symbols indicating religious beliefs.

The female kit for graves in this region is not possible to identify, as the remains are too poor. Two of the flat, female graves are from the Merovingian period, and if we were to draw any general inferences it would be that they all have some objects of glass or copper alloy, even if these kinds of materials are scarce in Vang. Beyond this, the only obvious pattern is that the female graves seem to be invisible or non-existent. With one or two possible exceptions, however, household utensils occur either in female graves, double graves, or graves of uncertain gender. The same tendency can be seen in the case of keys and boxes, which tend

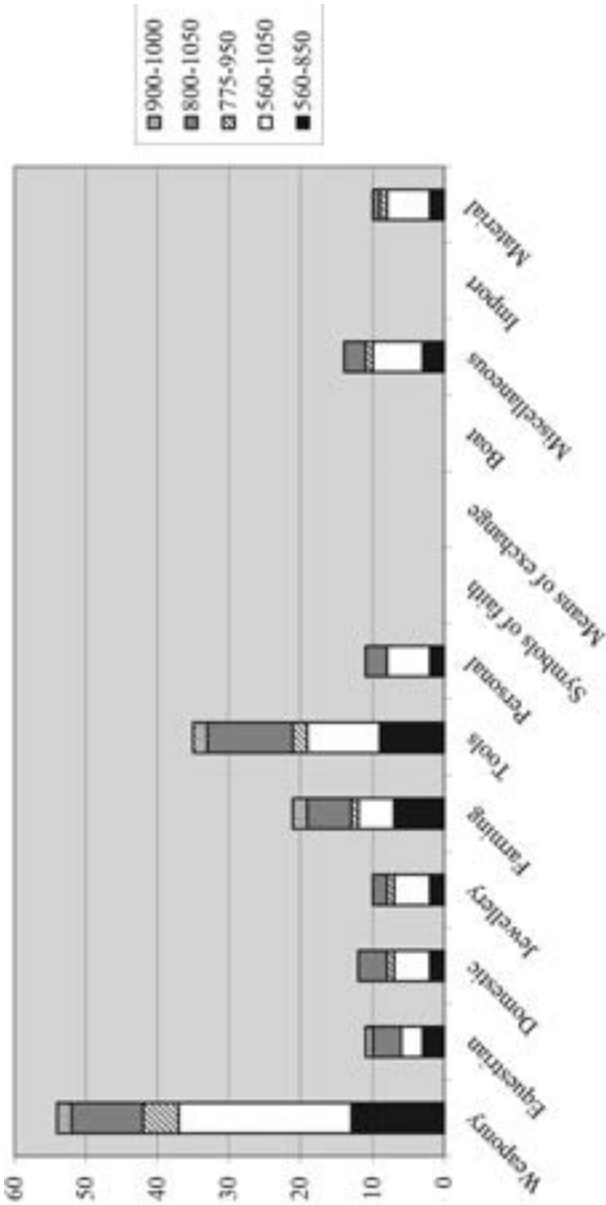
⁴⁴ See ‘The Nordic Countries’ in Chapter 3.

to be associated with female graves or with graves containing household equipment, although boxes occur in three examples of graves that have been interpreted as male, and keys in one example.

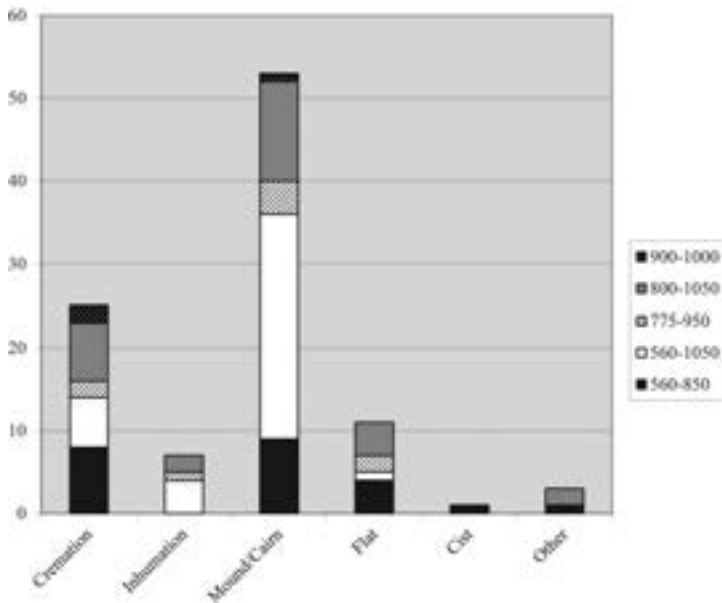
More can be said about the male kit. The richest of all the graves are two graves interpreted as male and dated to 900–1000 (*No. 454, No. 455*). In these are found four or five types of weapons, one or two types of agricultural tools, and one other tool, while one grave had a horse bit and horse rattle. Three graves from the Merovingian period are also rich, including three or four types of weapons as well as one or two types of tools. One of them also contained two agricultural tools, and another grave had two types of jewellery, two bits, five other tools, and a whirl. These examples are typical of graves from Vang; based on the inventory of graves with weapons, the male kit frequently consists of tools and utensils for husbandry or agriculture, and occasionally horse/equestrian equipment. Household utensils do not seem to be part of the male kit.

There are no imported objects, no finds indicating trade, and almost no potentially imported resource materials found in Vang (Graph 36). Only one grave from the Merovingian period contained a mosaic glass bead, one from the Viking Age had elements with silver and bronze, and one dated to the late Iron Age contained an arm-ring of copper alloy, while two others of the same age contained a glass bead. From these finds, it seems as though Vang was rather lacking in foreign connections during the late Iron Age.

Vang is unique, though, in the fact that eighteen graves — more than 20 per cent of all the graves from the late Iron Age — are flat graves, and this is a tradition going back to the Merovingian period (Graph 37). The proportion of flat graves compared to graves under a barrow or a cairn is about the same from different parts of the period. One grave from the Merovingian period and two graves from the Viking Age were found close to a large stone. This could indicate that the proportion of different types of grave forms was rather stable over time. However, among the graves dated broadly to the late Iron Age no flat graves have been recorded, and the barrow form dominates completely. But it should be noted that the two latest graves from the Viking Age were barrow burials. This indicates that the proportion of flat graves was not the result of Christian influence. This is even more evident when grave forms are studied in connection with grave rituals.



Graph 36. Grave goods in Vang.

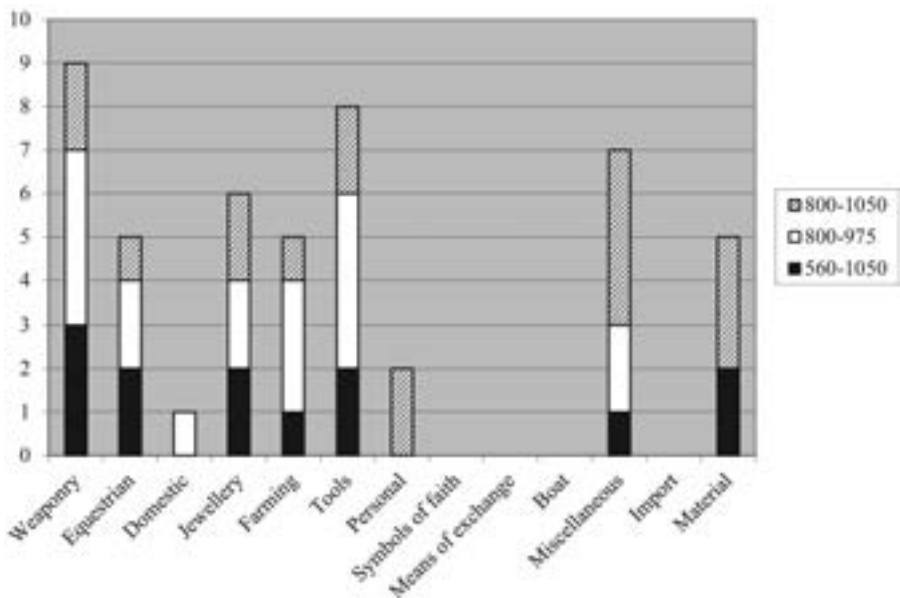


Graph 37. Traces of burial rite and grave forms in Vang.

The relative proportion of cremation to inhumation graves at Vang in the Merovingian and Viking periods is estimated to be 4:1, but 2:1 for those that have been dated more generally to the late Iron Age. All flat graves, with only one exception, are cremations or of uncertain form, and only one flat grave is a certain inhumation grave, dated generally to the late Iron Age (*No. 432*). Considering both the grave forms and the treatment of the body, it is not possible to see the tradition of flat inhumation graves as a Christian influence. There are also examples of changes in the rite from cremation to inhumation: at Bunde, five barrows were lying in a row on a west/north-west–east/south-east alignment, and these are known as *Kirkehaugene* (English: ‘the Church mounds’). At least two of these were dated to the early Iron Age and several layers of ash and charcoal were found in conjunction with them. One of these barrow cremations had a secondary inhumation grave from the Viking Age on top, with a body and a horse both buried there (*No. 427*). Even though this was excavated in 1895, there is no reason to doubt the connection between the body and the horse. The horse and the grave in a barrow were definitely not part of a Christian burial, even if this represented a change from a cremation to an inhumation burial.

The basis for determining the latest date of a Norse grave in this region is poor, as most of the finds were dated to the late Iron Age in general, to the Viking Age in general, or else to the late tenth century.

Fourteen graves from Lom date to the time period relevant to my investigations. None of these have been dated definitely to the Merovingian period, but four have been dated generally to the late Iron Age. Six graves are interpreted as male and three as female. There are on average 5.9 types of artefacts per grave, which is a relatively high number, and they are predominantly found in the male graves. However, no objects associated with trade/barter or boats were found, nor were there any imports or symbols of belief. Only one comb was found, and it was classified as a personal object, and this was found in a grave that could not be identified as either male or female (Graph 38).

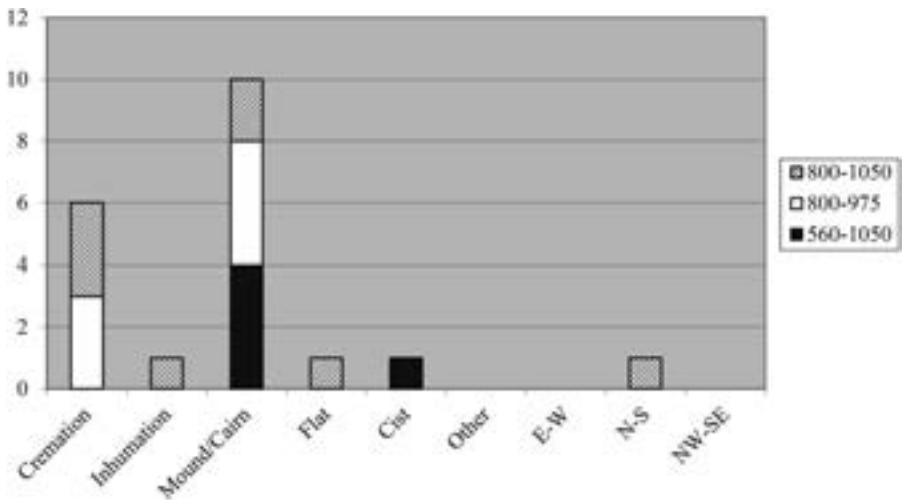


Graph 38. Grave goods from Lom.

The female graves are all dated to the Viking Age, and they were poorly equipped. Little was found except pieces of jewellery, and these were neither rich nor plentiful. One exception included two buckles, two bronze pendants, and some iron objects. If the female graves in Lom had been as poorly furnished as the ones in Vang, however, they would have been hard to trace.

The male kit was far better equipped. The graves were particularly rich in weapons: six of the seven male graves contained four or five different types of weapons, and often several of each kind were present. Horses and/or equestrian gear, harvesting and agricultural tools, and other types of tools were also common.

The rich finds from the male graves and the poor finds from the female graves are indicative of some general trends in this part of the country: the poor representation or lack of female graves seems to be common for most municipalities of eastern Norway, with the exception of Ullensaker.



Graph 39. Traces of burial rite and grave forms at Lom.

At Læshø in Lom, which lies 920 m above sea level, there was a grave similar to those found by the medieval church at Ringebu, where charcoal and ash had been collected in a pit constructed under the flat surface of the grave (*No. 356*). In addition this evidence of burning, the Læshø grave — dated to 950–1050 — contained many rich grave goods, with objects found on top of the pit. There were many weapons, and although the sword (Jan Petersen's type P) was affected by the fire, it was still possible to detect decorative features with both silver and some kind of copper alloy.

Cremation dominated the graves in Lom from the late Iron Age, and only one inhumation grave was found (*No. 349*) (Graph 39). The putative inhumation

grave was the only grave providing information on alignment, and it was aligned north–south. This inhumation in Lom displays some strange features, for the body was buried with its head to the south and its face turned to the ground, and the cranium had a round hole, *c.* 1 cm wide.

There are no signs of any influence from Christianity in Lom before the Norse burials disappear. The latest Norse grave is dated generally to the Viking Age, and another is dated more specifically to 900–1000 (or possibly 1030/50).

The Christianization of the Inner and Upper Parts of Eastern Norway

There are no signs of Christian influences on Norse cult activities in any of the selected municipalities in these parts of eastern Norway before the Norse burials disappeared, and no particularly early Christian cult places are known. Two graves from Ullensaker — from Kløfta and Habberstad — have been discussed as displaying possible Christian influences, but none of these could be interpreted as definitively Christian. The simply equipped graves are the only ones in Ullensaker that could possibly have been influenced by Christianity, but then again, the graves are not generally richly equipped in that area.

The latest date of a Norse grave in this region can only be dated to the Viking Age in general, but one uncertain grave in Ullensaker is dated to 1000–60/90 or to the medieval period. The mysterious and exceptionally late mountain grave at Krøkla was probably a burial after the bishopric of Hamar had been founded, but it could belong to any religion and will in all likelihood remain a mystery.

This is a region where cremations dominate, and most graves in Ullensaker, Vang, and Lom are of this type. There are, however, differences: the relatively few graves in Ringebru and Sør-Fron were almost entirely from the Viking Age, but while three of four graves in Ringebru were cremations, only inhumations have been found in Sør-Fron. A special type of cremation in flat graves has been found in Ringebru, with a similar type in Lom, with grave goods and a pit approximately 75 cm deep, filled with charcoal and ash (see *No. 367* and *No. 356*).

In Vang more than 20 per cent of the graves were flat graves, and clearly follow a tradition going back to the Merovingian period. With only one exception the flat graves were also cremations or of uncertain form. Only one flat grave is an inhumation grave, dated generally to the late Iron Age (*No. 432*). The flat graves in Vang were clearly not the result of Christian influences.

The bishop's see in Hamar was founded in 1152/53 as the only inland bishopric, at the same time as the Nidaros province was established. By this time there must have been Christian congregations in the region, but these were not

particularly early, or else they left no obvious traces. Vang is a key location on the main route from the west coast to eastern Norway where inland goods and valuable materials such as iron seem to have been exchanged for marine resources. Exchange of ideas often follow economic transactions, but only minor variations and changes in the burial customs can be observed in Vang, and there is nothing to indicate close communication with external areas. In spite of the many graves recorded no imported objects have been found, no finds indicating trade, and almost no possible imported resource materials. There is no evidence of any external impulses in the region, and the same is probably true in the case of other remote municipalities such as Lom and central parts of Gudbrandsdalen.

Throughout this chapter, significant differences in ritual behaviour have become apparent, existing on a local level as well as a regional scale. In Chapter 5, these differences will be summarized and investigated further on a national level to see if it is possible to reach any conclusions regarding the dating of various aspects of the Christianization process in Norway. In addition to this, some further relevant archaeological evidence will be explored in terms of its relevance on a national scale, including data that hitherto has not been addressed in detail but is important to the main objectives of the present analysis.

A PERSPECTIVE ACROSS NORWAY

Thor's Hammer: An Antipathetic Response to Christianity?

The Thor's hammer symbol consists of one long vertical fess and a transverse. The symbol occurs from the eighth to the eleventh centuries, but consists of two main types: one type has several hammers attached to a ring, and most of these are from the eighth and ninth centuries. The other type is a hammer used as a pendant, and most of these are from the tenth and eleventh centuries (Staecker 1999: 234). The hammer may be made of precious metal and decorated, for instance with circles or filigree (as is often the case with the pendants, see Figure 16), or it may be plain and made of iron (as is often the case with the hammer rings).

Taking into consideration all the inscriptions, moulds, and objects including Thor's hammer pendants and Thor's hammer rings, only twelve or thirteen examples of Thor's hammers are found in Norway (Table 11). The artefacts are found both in male and female graves, as well as in hoards, at an urban settlement and as a stray find. Some of the dates suggest that the hammer continued to be a vital symbol into the eleventh century in Norway.



Figure 16. Thor's hammer from Verdal. Bergen Museum. Photo courtesy of the Fotoarkivet, Bergen Museum.

Table 11. Finds of Thor's hammers in Norway. Gender is determined on the basis of objects, not according to osteological analysis. The date is determined by the context of the find. A find combined with a coin should be dated as contemporary with, or later than, the coin, particularly when the provenance is the Middle East.

Object	Location	Context	Burial custom	Date
1. Thor's hammer, silver, decorated	Vendel, Nord-Torsdalslag?	Stay find		
2. Ring with 9 iron Thor's hammers, undecorated	Hilde, Innvik, near Stryn	Female grave	Grave, cremations, in a mound with a boat	Tenth century
3. Thor's hammer, iron, undecorated	Kaupang, Tjølling	Urban site		c. 800-960
4. Thor's hammer, iron, undecorated	Kaupang, Tjølling	Female grave	Grave, inhumation, aligned NNE-SSW, in mound, with boat	c. 850-900
5-6. Thor's hammer inscribed on two Arabic coins	Kaupang, Tjølling	Urban site		844-869 (coin) 951-955 (coin)
7. Thor's hammer on a silver iron ring, undecorated	Gjerdn, Rokketstad	Hoard		Viking period
8. Thor's hammer? silver, decorated, filigree	Tidens, Rollag	Hoard (746.8 g)		991 (coin)
9. Mould for Thor's hammer, undecorated	Myres, Eidsberg	(Male?) grave	Grave, cremations, in a mound	Viking period
10. Thor's hammer, silver, decorated with acorns	Sorslde Vik, Fitjar	Male grave	Flat grave, inhumation, aligned N-S, with boat	Viking period
11. Ring with two Thor's hammers, silver, undecorated	Veda, Sand, Ryfylke	Hoard		First half of the tenth century, (coin)
12. Thor's hammer, silver, undecorated	Bedfret, Suldal	Hoard?		978-1016 (coin)
13. Thor's hammer, silver, decorated	Hane, Romedal, Hedmark	Female grave	Grave in mound	Viking period

The object from Tråen in Rollag is discussed in Chapter 4 both as a possible Thor's hammer¹ and as a potentially Christian cross (see 'Western Parts of Viken (Skien, Bø, Kaupang, Tønsberg, and Rollag)' in Chapter 4, Staecker's type 1.2.3 (Staecker 1999), and Figure 17). Neither of these interpretations is entirely certain, as only a fragment of the object survives.

I consider both interpretations to be equally likely, and therefore the object is included in Table 11. Furthermore, the last object listed in the table could



Figure 17. A possible Thor's hammer or a cross pendant from Tråen, Rollag. Oslo, Kulturhistorisk Museum, University of Oslo. Photo: Åse Kari Hammer. Courtesy of the Kulturhistorisk Museum.

be categorized as both a Thor's hammer and a Christian cross, or a combination of both (see, for example, the Icelandic artefact that seems to fulfil such a dual function, as discussed by Graham-Campbell 1980: 187, Roesdahl 1992: 314). An object from the stave church at Lom has also been categorized as a Thor's hammer by the chief excavator, Håkon Christie (Christie 1978). This object is a cross-shaped metal pendant, but if the object were hung around a neck, the cross would be upside down. However, Jörn Staecker has argued convincingly that the hole for the chain is not part of the arm, and his hypothesis is supported by the existence of a similar artefact from England, which has been identified definitely as an equal-armed cross (defined by Staecker as type 1.2.4 Variant B; Staecker 1999: 101). Due to the preferred interpretation as a Christian cross, this item is not included in Table 11.

The designs for a Thor's hammer and a Christian cross are not very different, and there are particular similarities between the design of a hammer and a T-cross. Such a resemblance was underlined by Johannes Steenstrup in 1929, when he argued that it was common in Sweden and all the Nordic countries to wear a Thor's hammer from the ninth to the eleventh centuries. Steenstrup maintained that the Thor's hammer was not a symbol of a particular religion but should rather be understood as a general holy symbol that offered protection; furthermore it

¹ See the museum catalogue, Kulturhistorisk museum in Oslo, no. C21858.

would be absolutely wrong to see the Thor's hammer symbol as a protest against Christianity (Steenstrup 1929).

As early as the thirteenth century, Snorri Sturluson had already noted the resemblance between a Thor's hammer and a Christian cross, as demonstrated in his story about King Håkon the Good:

Da hornet var fylt første gang, talte Sigurd jarl for drikken og signet den i Odins navn og drakk kongen til av hornet. Kongen tok imot det, men gjorde korsets tegn over. Da sa Kår fra Gryting: 'Hvorfor gjør kongen dette? Vil han ennå ikke blote?' Sigurd jarl svarte: 'Kongen gjør som alle andre som tror på egen makt og styrke, han signer hornet i Tors navn. Han gjorde hammertegnet over det før han drakk'. (Snorre 1980: chap. 17)

(When the horn was filled for the first time, earl Sigurd held a speech for the drink and blessed it in the name of Oðin, and drank of the horn to the king. The king received it, but made the sign of a cross over it. Then Kår from Gryting said: 'Why is the king doing that? Does he still not want to make a sacrifice?' Earl Sigurd replied: 'The king does as everybody else who believes in his own power and strength; he blesses the horn in the name of Tor. He made the sign of the hammer to it before drinking'. (Snorri and Hollander 1967: chap. 17))

Returning to archaeological evidence, a mould from Trendgården in Denmark may quite possibly have produced both Thor's hammers and Christian crosses (Graham-Campbell 1980: 187). As has been argued in our introduction, this could be understood as a process of acculturation, or else evidence that people had a rather pragmatic attitude towards religious symbols, which would support Steenstrup's theory. However, in recent years this material has been studied by several scholars, and we now know more both about distribution of the finds and their chronology (Gräslund 2002, Staecker 1999, Wamers 1994, Nordeide 2006). In light of this new work, it is therefore possible to modify several parts of Steenstrup's theory. For example, based only on the evidence of the six Thor's hammer pendants which have been found, it is not possible to suggest that it was common to wear a Thor's hammer pendant in Norway. Additionally, Staecker has warned generally against interpreting the combination of a cross and a Thor's hammer as a sign of syncretism, because Christianity did not give its followers any opportunity to accept such a pagan token. Instead, theirs was a clearly defined symbol used to distinguish and separate believers from non-believers (Staecker 1999: 244). Besides, as demonstrated by Snorri, people tend to associate a symbol with a specific meaning, even if this meaning may vary from person to person and from context to context. The similarity in shape of the Christian cross and the Thor's hammer is therefore important, for people were not ignorant as to what religion the objects should symbolize; rather it was the design of the symbol they chose to use that could vary. If the Norse religion was more tolerant to variations

in cult and symbols, they might adopt a Christian cross as a symbol for Thor more easily than the exclusive Christians might accept a Thor's hammer as a cross.

According to Staecker, the Thor's hammer pendants were invented independently of the Thor's hammer rings, as a direct response to the Christian cross. Subsequently, he believes, the defeat of paganism may have contributed to the habit of wearing a cross pendant, as a victorious display employed by followers of the newly dominant religion. In this respect the Thor's hammer pendants rather than the Thor's hammer rings might be more feasibly interpreted as an antipathetic reaction to the Christian cross pendant, because these two objects are similar in design, function, and meaning (Staecker 1999: 236). Staecker then goes on to argue that:

Die Thorshammeranhänger sind der deutliche Ausdruck für die Krise der heidnischen Religion im 9. bis 11. Jahrhundert, da es ihr schwer fällt, sich mit adäquaten Mitteln gegen die machtvolle Christianisierung zur Wehr zu setzen. (Staecker 1999: 243)

(The Thors hammer pendants are the clear expression of the crisis of the pagan religion from the ninth to the eleventh centuries, because it was difficult for them to find adequate means to counteract the powerful Christianization of Scandinavia.)

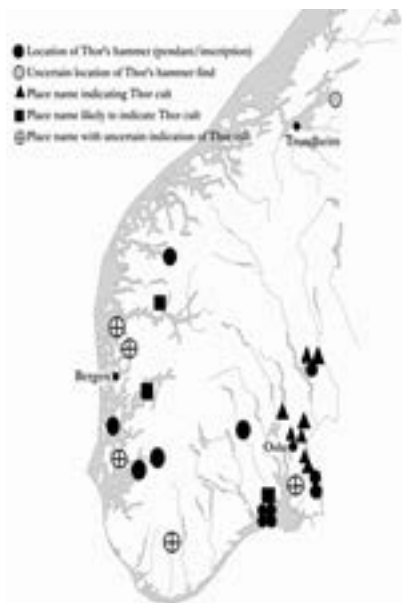
Consequently, an eventual crisis in the Norse religion at some point between the ninth and the eleventh centuries and the disappearance of the Thor's hammers probably eased the passage of Christianity into Scandinavia. Staecker's conclusion is that at the time when Thor's hammer pendants disappeared, the Christian community had established itself in the region and entered a phase of consolidation (Staecker 1999: 243).

Why the Thor's hammer symbol was invented around the middle of the eighth century is not clear. However, if the Thor's hammer pendant is interpreted as a reaction to the Christian cross pendant, the hypothesis is difficult to sustain if the hammer pendants are shown to be earlier than the oldest cross pendants in their respective regions. Staecker has argued that this is the case in regions other than Gotland, with the pendants frequently dated earlier than the context of their find (Staecker 1999: 236). The cross pendants did not show up in Sweden and Denmark before the tenth century, and this time-lapse between the Thor's hammer and the cross pendant is problematic, for the hammers could not have been invented as a reaction to something that was not yet there. It is also problematic to apply existing theories to the archaeological material from Norway, if Norway is studied on its own. The few finds from Norway do not support Staecker's theory regarding the chronological relationship between Thor's hammer rings and pendants, the former being the earliest (Table 11). However, due to the low number

of finds from Norway, the Norwegian case should not be taken as disproving this hypothesis more generally.

The distribution of Thor's hammer objects in Norway is concentrated around the southern part of the country, and particularly in the Kaupang area. Seven of the eleven to thirteen Thor's hammer artefacts from Norway — that is, more than 50 per cent — come from Iron Age graves or occupation layers. The Iron Age grave material and the Viking Age/early medieval urban sites are among the most frequently represented monuments excavated in Norway. With this background in mind, it seems likely that the numbers of Thor's hammer artefacts found can be considered to be representative. The only group that could be under-represented might be the hoards, where there might be significantly more hammers still to be found than in other contexts. Nevertheless, even if this should happen, these few objects cannot be taken as evidence of a crisis in the Norse religion in Norway, particularly not north of Sogn og Fjordane (Nordeide 2006).

The numbers of hammers are surprisingly few and their distribution area unusually restricted, when we consider how popular Thor was supposed to have been among the Norse people in Norway. This is an impression based largely on literary sources, but this can be compared with other evidence for the Thor cult,



Map 11. Distribution of Thor's hammer objects and place names indicating Thor cult activity.

namely place names indicating cult activity associated with this god. The toponymic evidence supports the distribution of Thor's hammers, as both groups of evidence are concentrated in the southern parts of Norway (Map 11). This result is also in line with the results from De Vries's study of theoforic place names in Scandinavia with Thor elements (De Vries 1956–57, II: 116–17).

It appears therefore that a 'Thor's cult area' existed in Norway, limited to the southern parts of the country's present territory. One of the conclusions from the various analyses of the distribution of Thor's hammers is that Thor was not worshipped all over Norway. Rather, he was a god who was worshipped in the southern parts of Scandinavia, probably more in Sweden and Denmark than in Norway (Nordeide 2006). Turning to the written sources, it is Odd in his *Saga of Olaf Tryggvason* who mentions that Thor was worshipped at the temple at Mære, while Snorri in his later version did not mention Thor. Unlike Odd, Snorri visited Trøndelag, and may have had reasons for not mentioning Thor among the gods worshipped at a temple in that region. Odd may have based his ideas on a general assumption that Thor was also popular in Trøndelag (Mundal 1990), and this hypothesis fits in well with Bagge's ideas about Odd, who he thinks invented most of the accounts of the various stages in King Olaf Tryggvason's conversion (Bagge 2005b).

One of the very few Norwegian graves with a Thor's hammer, a female grave in Stryn, at Nordfjord, Sogn og Fjordane, may in fact have been a grave in accordance with Swedish burial customs. This grave was a cremation in a boat-shaped mound with an iron ring with nine Thor's hammers attached. Unfortunately it was found during cultivation work, initially excavated partly by a farmer and only re-excavated by archaeologists early in the twentieth century. However, among the few finds uncovered during the re-excavation were the sepulchral urn of bronze with burnt bones and the Thor's hammer ring (Shetelig 1912: 183).² This find combination of a Thor's hammer ring in a grave and a sepulchral urn with burnt bones is unique in Norway, but many similar combinations have been found in Sweden. If the grave at Stryn was indeed of a type typical in the eastern parts of the Swedish region around Lake Mälaren, whilst also occurring at Åland and in Russia, the Thor's hammer ring would have rested on top of the sepulchral urn (Gräslund 2002: 55). But due to the circumstances of the find we do not know the position of the ring in this particular grave. Perhaps this dead woman was originally from Sweden or married to a man who came from Sweden. It is otherwise

² See also Shetelig in *Bergen Museum Aarbok* 1901/12: 25–28, and *Bergen Museum Aarbok* 1903/3: 28–29; for the Bergen Museum catalogue see nos B5717 and B5766.

difficult to explain the striking similarity between this grave in Stryn and those far away on the other side of the mountains, in eastern parts of Sweden.

This grave from Stryn is the northernmost location for a Thor's hammer that is not a stray find. The only hammer found further north was discovered in its final location in Verdal in Nord-Trøndelag, but as a stray find it may have had a different provenance. However, an object of peculiar shape from Nord-Trøndelag should also be mentioned in addition to those listed in Table 11: a monumental, Christian stone cross found at Rol, Inderøya. The cross shape is either worn away or else it had been reshaped, because today the cross bears a striking resemblance to a Thor's hammer (Figure 18). The question is whether this represents an intentional transformation, or whether the shape was made only by coincidence, through natural erosion over the years.

The conclusions that can be drawn from the study of Thor's hammers in Norway are thus as follows (Nordeide 2006):

- They are too few in number to prove any crisis in the Norse religion.
- The relative chronology between the Thor's hammer rings and the Thor's hammer pendants is not clear: there is no evidence to argue that the rings are older than the pendants.
- No evident distribution pattern regarding gender and find context exists.
- Practice of the Thor cult is not confirmed with certainty north of Sogn og Fjordane.
- The Norse religion was probably more varied than the impression given by studies of certain written sources.

Nonetheless, it is remarkable that a vital symbol for one of the Norse gods was invented during this particular period and this fact needs stressing. At least some of the objects from Norway were found in contexts that are so late that they were likely to be contemporary with a Christian presence in the region, either as a result of permanent settlers or due to Christian visitors. It is likely that the Christians highlighted the cross as a Christian symbol, even if they did not wear the crosses as pendants. It is just as likely that the Norse responded to these encounters, and that the Thor's hammer symbol was one of the responses that has been recognized and preserved up to the present day. The date and the distribution of the symbol should therefore be seen as significant for the study of the Christianization process, because such patterns may highlight areas with unusual attitudes towards this religious development and which may have affected the process. For instance,



Figure 18. High cross from Rol, Inderøya in Nord-Trøndelag. Photo and reconstruction drawing: S. W. Nordeide.

there may have been places where the Christianization process was particularly aggressive, or the Thor's hammers may indicate areas with alliances or particularly good contacts with Sweden and Denmark, where Thor's hammers seem to have been more common. Dates and locations where Thor's hammers appear may be highly relevant to this question.

Norse Graves: Results in a Norwegian Perspective

Grave Goods

There is generally a variety of grave goods in the Merovingian period, and even more so in the Viking period. The numbers of categories of objects generally increase in the Viking period, but with only one possible exception: in all areas, the types of grave goods that were present in the Merovingian period were also present in the Viking period. In the graves dated to the Viking period some more types were added, however, and more specimens of each type also occurred compared to before.

In the earliest period, many of the municipalities have so few finds that it is not possible to draw any conclusions (see Graph 1). The situation in Vang and Rauma is better, and these areas not only have similarly high numbers of types of grave goods, but the composition of the grave goods is similar as well: relatively high proportions of weapons, tools, equestrian gear, and agricultural tools, while at the same time a lack of boats (Table 12). However, in Rauma some imports were found that were lacking in Vang.

In the Viking period a particularly high number of objects are categorized as being personal belongings in the graves at Frosta, Tingvoll, Rauma, Valle, Grimstad, Ullensaker, and Vang, but in all cases this practice followed the traditions from the Merovingian period except for Tingvoll. Some craftsman's tools were also present both from the Merovingian and Viking periods in Frosta, Tingvoll, Rauma, Selje and Herøy, Gulen, Grimstad, Valle, Ullensaker, and Vang. At Birkenes, Sør-Fron, and Ringebu personal belongings represent a new element among the grave goods in the Viking period. While personal belongings, jewellery, dress fasteners, and weapons could well be included with a person in a grave even if he or she were Christian, tools and boats are definitely not to be expected in a Christian-influenced grave. There were absolutely no reasons for a Christian to have this kind of equipment in the grave.

There are only two cases where symbols of belief have been found in graves from the Iron Age in the selected areas:

- A Christian reliquary was found in a richly late Viking Age grave in Rauma, in an obviously Norse cultic context. Someone had broken into the reliquary, and it had obviously lost its original function. In addition, the grave contained a Christian ritual hanging bowl and a piece of what was probably the staff of an abbot or bishop (Marstrand 1963).
- A lead cross was found in a barrow at Fjære. This was added at a later point in time, when the grave was reopened perhaps for further rituals.

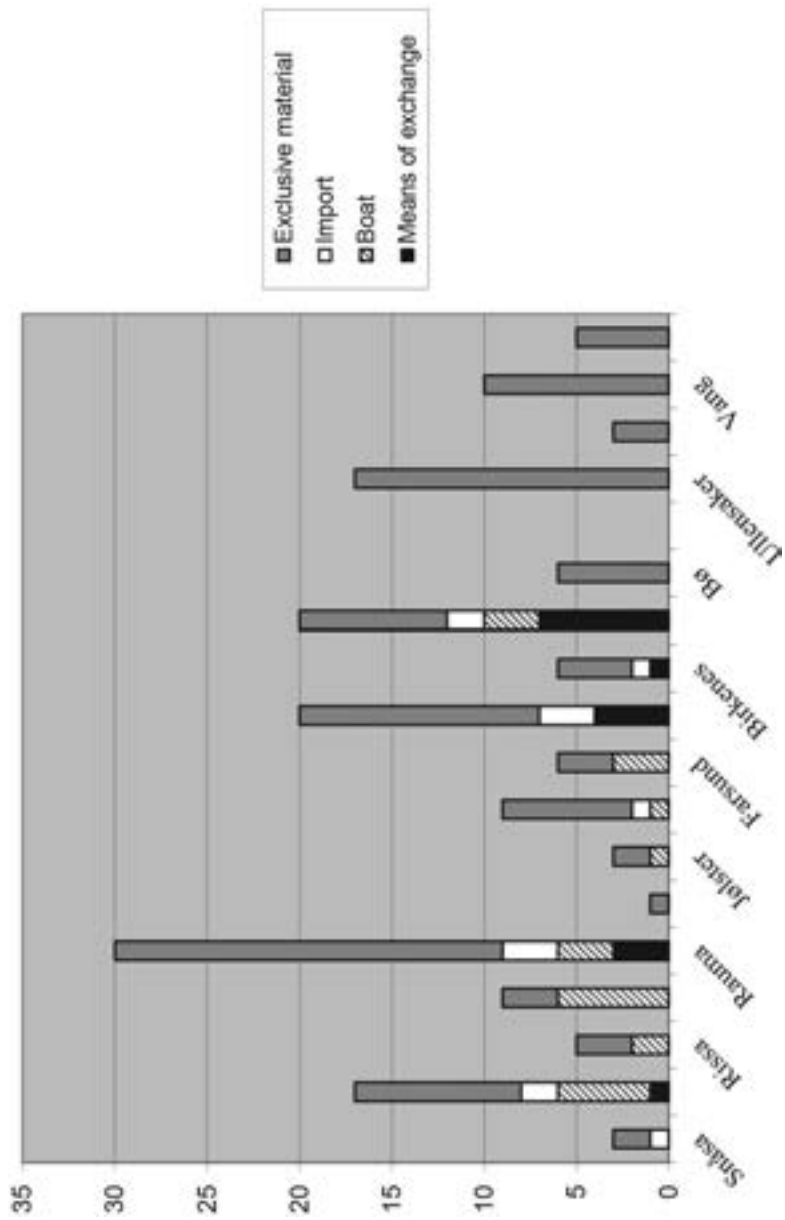
In addition, a few items from hoards should be mentioned:

- An object interpreted either as a Thor's hammer or a Christian cross was found in Rollag, dated to some time after 991.
- A cross pendant, probably worn, was found in a rich silver hoard at Slemmedal, dated to some time after 915/920. Since this was part of a treasure, it is not known whether it had been worn in this area or somewhere else.

Communication between the local community and outsiders may become visible through artefacts related to activities involving trade and exchange, and we will consider these individually below. Exotic or non-local influences can be detected in surviving artefacts, imported objects, and items that could have been part of an exchange and barter system. Additionally, the presence of grave boats is also relevant, possibly testifying to wider networks of communication. A boat, depending on the size of the boat, may have made it possible to communicate with more distant regions. However, most of the boats included in this analysis are relatively small, and would have been used rarely — if at all — for long-distance communication.

The most precious resources are most often found in graves which appear to be of females. This should not lead us to conclude that females dominated this resource market. Rather, the apparently eternal desire of the Norse female to be decorated with pretty and costly objects makes them the likely possessors of these kinds of items: both their dress accessories and jewels tend to be made of copper alloy, glass, gold, and silver. The use of the same materials by men was mostly in the form of decoration for swords, as fittings, and so on.

Objects used as means of exchange are concentrated in just a few areas, as can be seen from Graph 40: a few have been found in Rauma and Birkenes, while many more occur in Valle and Grimstad. Imported finds are also concentrated in the same areas, while one item has also been found in Bø. The hoard from Rollag should be mentioned as well in this connection, containing many coins and



Graph 40. Artefacts possibly signalling contact with people outside the community. An area that lacks such evidence has been left out from this figure.

imports from various areas. The selected municipalities in the region furthest south of eastern Norway are thus very well represented both in terms of trading utensils and imports. Beyond these, only Rauma is well represented in the case of such finds. Grave boats, however, seem to be associated more with the coastal or lake districts than other kinds of finds, but not all such districts show evidence of the tradition of putting boats into graves (see below).

Boat Graves and Boat Rituals

In the material selected for the Merovingian period, boats are recorded in two graves in Farsund, while there is one possible example in Tingvoll, though this is uncertain. During the Viking period, boats occurred regularly among the grave goods at Frosta, Tingvoll, Rauma, and Grimstad. In Rauma, boats only occurred close to the sea. Among the municipalities far from the coast, a boat only occurred in one grave from Jølster (Graph 40). The alignment varies for the boat graves as well as for other graves, and tends to follow the topographical characteristics of the land.

The graves in which the boats were found generally vary in character as much as the graves without boats. They cannot be characterized in any particular way regarding grave goods, grave forms, cremations, or inhumations, and so on.

The idea of providing the dead who had lived near the sea with a boat makes sense if the grave goods were meant for practical purposes in a similar second life, but then the absence of boats in graves in other coastal areas would not make sense. One would, for instance, expect boat graves in Selje and on the islands of Herøy along the extreme western coast where people depended greatly on boats, but no boat remains are recorded in the few graves from the late Iron Age in that area. The boat was undoubtedly important for the communities living at Selje and on Herøy, and played a meaningful role in religious rituals; it was simply that the boat was part of other kinds of rituals in these districts, but not for burials. Boats, pointed sticks and other precious items were sacrificed in the bogs,³ and at least some of this activity — that from Kvalsund — is dated to the Merovingian period.⁴

³ For instance: Bergen Museum B9384, a double ring (1.75 m and 0.40 m in diameter) of pointed sticks found 40 cm deep in a bog at Leikanger, Herøy; a boat plank found in bog 1957 at Sandvik Nordre, Selje; Bergen Museum B6613, two decorated bronze fittings (of Irish origin, probably gilded) and 12 glass beads found 1 m deep in a bog in Aarsheim, Hove in Selje.

⁴ See also 'The Western Coast: Iron Age Bog Sacrifices at Selje, Herøy, and Gulen' in Chapter 4.

Kvalsund is located by a narrow and shallow inlet on the island of Nerland-søya, in the municipality of Herøy, in an extreme coastal environment. The site is close to one of the stretches of water that is most difficult to cross by boat on the north–south route along the west coast of Norway. The inlet has been important as a sheltered part of the route. Several burial monuments and a circular enclosure were found at the same headland, dating to both the Bronze Age and the Iron Age. At least four boats were buried in the bog at Kvalsund on at least three different occasions (Shetelig and Johannessen 1929). Originally, the site was prepared carefully: the boats were deposited in an artificial pit dug almost to the bottom of the bog. Half of the depth was filled in with a layer of turf, moss, heather, wood-chippings, and other materials, measuring 0.5 m deep and 15 m long. After some time in the open, when the hollow would have filled with water and become a little pond, the parts of one larger and one smaller boat were laid down upon this layer, with all the elements roughly aligned north–south. They were then entirely covered with moss, turf, twigs, wood chippings, and similar materials until the pit was filled in all the way to the top of the bog. Some of the moss applied was white and pure and did not grow in this bog, but was collected from somewhere else. The types of plants used to fill the hollow affirm that this work was undertaken during the spring or early summer, and definitely before midsummer. At the southern end was an area of about one square metre covered by nettles. Some stones were placed in the pit, but not in an obvious pattern. The stones have been interpreted as stepping stones to allow easy access to the pit (Shetelig and Johannessen 1929: 27). Many narrow wooden pieces such as pointed branches, twigs, and pieces of the boat such as oars were inserted into the hole. They were forcefully driven more or less vertically through the white moss and turf until their lower ends reached the bottom of the hollow. The sticks were not put down in any obvious pattern. No body nor conventional grave goods have been found. The only thing found resembling a real object was a hollow piece of wood, interpreted as a possible loudspeaker.

At least three of the four boats were deliberately and systematically destroyed, piece by piece, with pure manpower and no use of tools. Some parts were partially burnt. The fourth boat has not been preserved. The site was closed later in the summer or autumn, which means that the activity continued throughout the whole summer season, although it is not known how constant the activity was.

The combination of a boat and/or pointed wooden sticks and other artefacts found in a bog seems to be a special feature of the coastal region in the west, in Herøy, Selje, and Gulen (see ‘The Western Coast: Iron Age Bog Sacrifices at Selje, Herøy, and Gulen’ in Chapter 4). Bog finds of boats, or pieces of boats or boat

equipment such as oars — either finished or unfinished products — also belong to a group of finds along the whole of Norway's western coast, running all the way from north to south (Map 12). Only one similar find has been found inland in eastern Norway, in Valdres (Shetelig and Johannessen 1929: 34–56, Nordeide, in preparation). Such boat finds are dated from AD 200, but they occur most frequently in the late Iron Age. Even if boat graves and bog-boat pieces are a predominantly coastal phenomenon, boat graves have a wider geographic affiliation than the bog finds, and the environmental context is different as well.



Map 12. Bog finds of boats/boat parts from the Iron Age in Norway.

The bog finds are not graves, but one ship grave in particular is interesting because it combines elements from both these categories of finds. In the Storhaug barrow at Avaldsnes in southern Norway the oars belonging to the ship were deliberately destroyed, and one of them was placed vertically in the mound.

Pointed sticks or poles inserted into the ground in the mound were also observed (Opedal 2005: 42–44). The ship from Avaldsnes is roughly contemporary with the Kvalsund ship, radiocarbon dated cal. AD 690–800, most likely from the period 680–730/750 (Opedal 1998: 65). The wooden sticks inserted with great power in the grave as well as in bog finds could have similar meanings, shared by both types of rituals. This aspect of both the graves and the bog finds might be explained as being associated in some way with the meaning of life and death and the importance of fertility for those who participated in the rituals.

The ritual site at Kvalsund reminds us in some ways of the well-known ship grave at Oseberg in Vestfold. This site was also carefully prepared (Gansum 1995b: 171–72), with a 23 m long ditch dug and roughly 100 m³ of clay removed to make room for the keel of the boat. The clay was then placed along both sides of the ditch. The boat was lowered into the space and the mound partly constructed. Two women were buried in the boat inside a wooden grave chamber. Among the grave goods was a carriage, four sledges, some decorated posts, fifteen horses, four dogs, two oxen, and a wide array of kitchen utensils, agricultural tools, tools for textile production, and other equipment including expensive pillows and textile tapestries (Brøgger, Falk, and Shetelig 1917). The abaft part was filled in and sealed by the mound first. The grave chamber was built late in the summer of 834 (Bonde 1994), and buckets of apples and blueberries indicate that the mound was closed in the late summer or early autumn of that year.

The grave at Oseberg and the bog boats at Kvalsund were both arenas for religious rituals in the summer season, and they both include a boat. However, the Oseberg grave was made for two women possessing many grave goods, and the whole event happened over a short period of time (Brøgger, Falk, and Shetelig 1917: 123–64). By contrast, there is no grave at Kvalsund, and rituals were performed there during the whole summer season. Although it is not rare to find grave goods deliberately bent or broken in Iron Age graves, all the grave goods were laid down carefully at Oseberg. The Kvalsund boat was deliberately and systematically destroyed and the only ‘objects’ present were pieces of wood, some of which were violently rammed into the ground. The distribution and the environment around the bog sites also suggest that they should be interpreted differently to boat graves in general. Yet at the same time it should be noted that many of these finds are not dated, and a date more specific than the Iron Age in general is not possible for many of the boat finds.

The time of year was crucial to annual rites, whereas burials themselves normally took place at whatever point during the year that the person died. The long duration of activity at Kvalsund during the summer season might be

interpreted as yet another indication of how important the summer was, and still is, to the Scandinavian people. The long, cold, dark winter makes the warm summer inversely proportional to its importance; just as it seems natural to have a ritual celebration of Midsummer's Eve, it would have been every bit as natural to have an arena where religious rituals could take place to mark the sowing, growth, and harvesting of crops. Such rituals would ensure the continuation of life as the community knew it. The boat would serve as a physical symbol of this process and joining to the universal symbol of water which is always linked to purification, fertility, and the source of new life (Eliade 1974 [1958]: 188–212). The boat is known to have been one of the symbols used in the so-called agricultural rock carvings in Scandinavia as early as in the Bronze Age.

The fiercely powerful driving of vertical elements into the ground — from whence all life comes — could be understood in the same context of meaning as the importance of seasonality and water; thus this action could be seen to be another important part of the ritual. The bog finds therefore combine many vital elements that could be understood in the context of annual rites: water, soil, fire, the boat, and human strength. The cemeteries could also have been used for annual rites, associated, for instance, with ancestral cults. Some similarities between the events at Oseberg and at Kvalsund are, from this perspective, not so strange.

The Grave Forms

Although tumuli dominate the grave form during the Merovingian period, flat graves were common in Rauma and Vang, while in Tingvoll the only grave that has been identified is also a flat grave (Graph 41). Stone cists from the same period have been found both in Rauma and Vang, but apart from these two municipalities the grave forms observed are so few that the results are nearly useless.

In the Viking period, there was still a remarkable number of flat graves in Vang and even an increase in the relative amount of flat graves in Rauma; flat graves were also discovered in almost all of the other areas, except two (Graph 42). In Valle, the proportion of flat graves compared to barrows is relatively high as well, but in Tingvoll only graves with visible monuments above the ground have been found, and these are mostly cairns. In fact, no flat graves at all have been observed in Tingvoll from the Viking period. Stone cists occur most frequently in Rauma and Grimstad, but are found in other places too. A more varied use of grave forms and burial places took place in the Viking period than in earlier periods: burials under stones, in scree, in caves, on rock shelves, and so on. This is particularly true

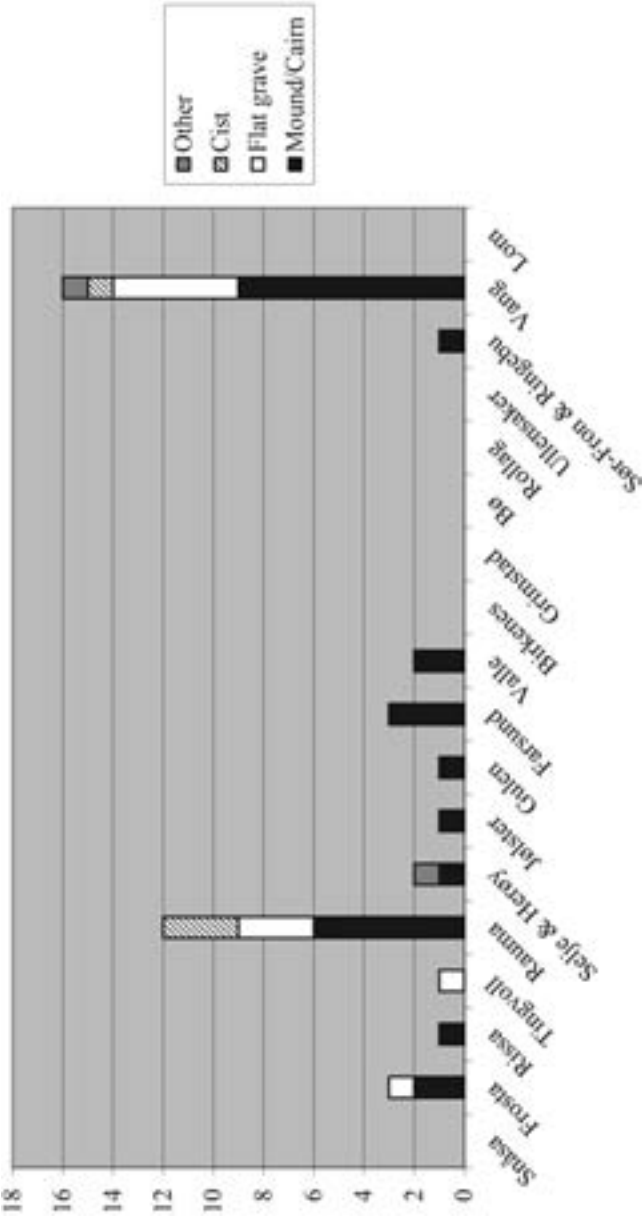
in Rauma, Jølster, Grimstad, Valle, and Lom. In the material we have selected secondary burials were observed especially in Gulen, but also in Vang.

One specific case in Rauma is of interest: late graves were found under an overhang in the hill above the buildings of a farm. This remote and possibly hidden grave place indicates a burial ground that may have been forced to the periphery by a Christian elite, perhaps like some late Norse graves from the eighth century that were hidden in a cave in Ireland (Connolly and Coyne 2005; see 'Nord-Møre with Tingvoll, and Romsdal with Rauma' in Chapter 4 of this volume).

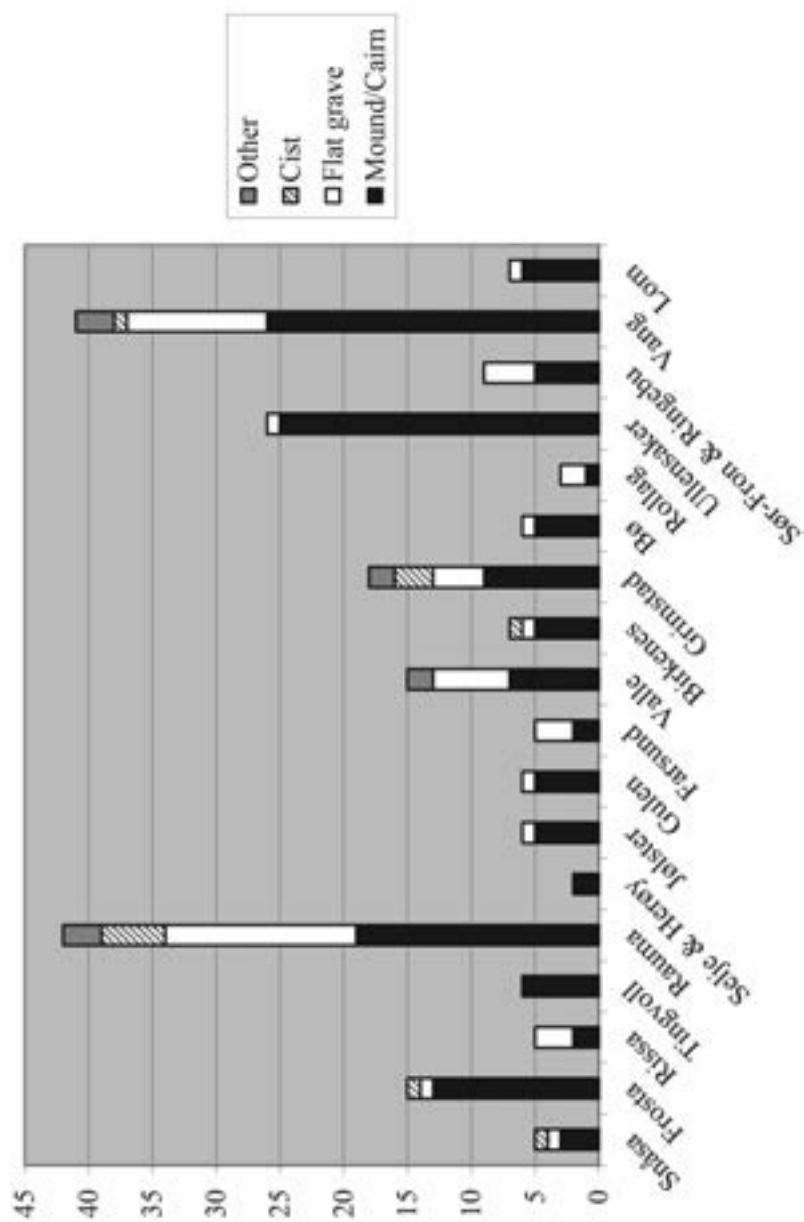
Rauma is the only municipality with a significant increase of flat graves from the Merovingian period to the Viking Age, though the low number of monuments identified from the Merovingian period should be kept in mind. What should also be noted is that in Rauma and in the western part of the Oslofjord a remarkable clustering of different types of grave forms, at various places, shows that the type of grave form was an established tradition rather than a new invention that came about as a result of Christian influences. As far as grave goods are concerned, the richest graves may also have been the flat graves, and they may either be cremations or inhumations in barrows surrounded by a ditch. No trace of a gradual increase in Christian influence on the Norse graves has been seen among the grave forms.

The grave form should be interpreted as a religious symbol, but an imposing appearance might have had a strong socially and politically symbolic value as well. It has been argued that the barrow should be perceived as a symbol of political power, and maybe as a meeting place for a cult of the ancestors and for Thing gatherings (Gansum 2004, Kisuule 2000). In the small *fylke* of Vestfold, for instance, nine huge barrows were built after 950, while in Denmark only three huge mounds were built in the Viking period. Conversely, neighbouring Østfold shows the same pattern as in Denmark and Bohuslän. This development in Vestfold has been interpreted as a sign of social tension (Kisuule 2000: 75).

Consequently, this might be interpreted as evidence that there were fewer social stresses in Denmark, but to the south of their border Denmark first had to contend with the mighty Frankish empire and later the German empire, and was engaged in conflicts with both (Gelting 2007, Staecker 2005). It is obvious from this that tension as an explanation for the number and size of barrows is not sufficient. James Campbell's suggestion is perhaps helpful: if the big, rich barrows represented a royal dynasty, then they would have stood in the landscape as strong, monumental statements of dynastic power. It is likely that a conquering dynasty would have invaded such monuments in an attempt to reduce the power of the established authority, subsequently building new monuments of their own. This would mean that the richest surviving barrows would belong to the most



Graph 41. Grave forms observed in the selected municipalities in the Merovingian period.



Graph 42. Grave forms observed in the selected area in the Viking period.

successful dynasties (Campbell 2000: 80). A consequence of this could in fact be a situation that was the opposite of Kisuule's suggestion: a high level of conflict may have led to more destruction of the biggest and richest barrows.

Sometimes a ditch encircling the mound of the barrow has been noted, and there may also be perpendicular bridges on either side of the mound crossing the ditch. Barrows surrounded by ditches and bridges have been observed in Grimstad in Aust-Agder and at Gulli in Vestfold; at Gulli even a cult building with similar arrangements was found ('Western Parts of Viken (Skien, Bø, Kaupang, Tønsberg, and Rollag)' in Chapter 4). According to Nicolaysen, the bridges were left by the constructors of the monument to make it easier to fill in the sand on the barrows (Nicolaysen 1876: 120). This is a pragmatic interpretation that would find little support today. These bridges are observed in some districts but not in others, and the differences in the appearance of the graves should instead be explained by cultural or religious variations.

The tradition of providing the grave form with bridges has, for instance, been explored in terms of how it may have played a role in myth and cult. Bridges have been a frequent motif in Christian and Jewish literature as a passage across the monstrous mythical flood for a people of justice. In Christian literature it was a punishment to be dipped in an unpleasant flood, and only good people were able to pass over this flood on a bridge. In western European Christian literature, bridges appear from the sixth century where they are described in the writings of Gregory of Tours (died *c.* 594). The bridge occurs in Norse literature from the twelfth century, and on Scandinavian runic inscriptions, particularly in Sweden but also in Norway. These inscriptions are assumed to date to the period of Christianization (Wellendorf 2006: 282–98). The bridges associated with Norse graves seem to be earlier than the Christianization process, however, and they may also have developed from more universal ideas about mythical floods rather than as a result of Christian influence.

Cremation and Inhumation Burials

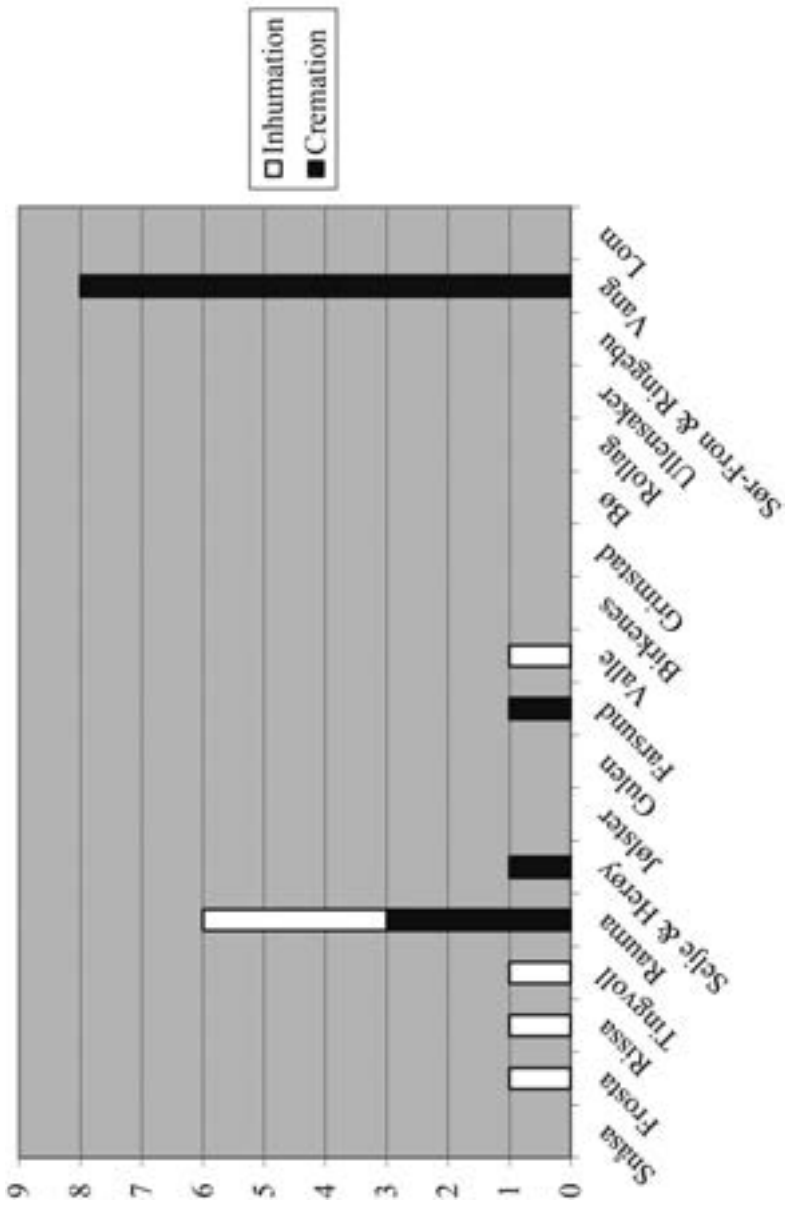
Cremation graves from the Viking Age are often in an arrangement that suggests the remains of a bonfire. Burnt bones, objects, and charcoal are spread out over the area where the fire would have burned, sometimes in a shallow pit covered over with stones and soil (as, for instance, in Rauma). Local variations also occur: sometimes the grave goods were not placed in the fire, sometimes the burnt bones were collected and kept separately in a sepulchral urn (for instance, in Stryn), and sometimes they collected the burnt bones and ash, which they placed in a small

stone chamber, setting the grave goods outside, around the chamber (as occurred in Rauma). In another variation (as seen at Ringeby, in Jølster and Lom), a pit was dug and everything was placed inside it. Normally the grave goods were not burnt unless they were used as part of a cremation ceremony, or as some kind of sacrificial ritual.

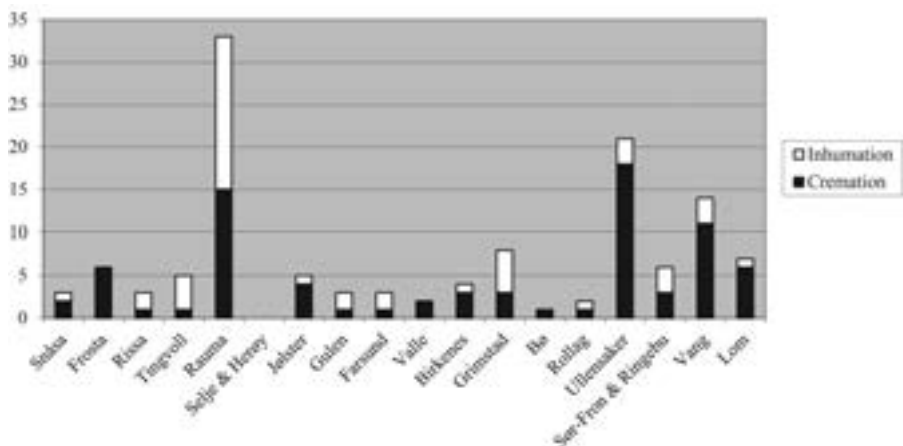
In the material selected, only one inhumation grave has been observed from the Merovingian period in Frosta, Tingvoll, Selje, and Valle, while in Herøy, Farsund, and Vang only cremation graves are found (Graph 43). In Vang, even though there is one inhumation that has been tentatively dated to the Merovingian period and several inhumations dated to the late Iron Age in general, there were certainly more cremations than inhumation graves in this region in the Merovingian period, while in Rauma there were slightly more cremations than inhumation graves, but these were not evenly distributed throughout the landscape. The inhumations and cremations were clustered in various parts of the municipality throughout the late Iron Age.

More graves have been observed from the Viking period, and in many areas during this time people seem to have continued with their old traditions (Graph 44). In Rauma those villages that practised cremations continued to do so, as did those that practised inhumations. Most frequently, cremation predominated over inhumation rituals, but Tingvoll was still dominated by inhumations. Also in Vestfold, the cemeteries in Tønsberg, at Gulli, and around Kaupang particularly demonstrate the variation between local practices regarding cremations and inhumations. In some areas the relative number of cremations increased during the late Iron Age, but in other areas the opposite tendency can be observed: in Farsund two out of three graves in the Viking period were inhumations, and in Vang there were three inhumation graves in addition to the eleven cremations, whereas only cremations have been observed from previous periods. The fact that the Merovingian period had a generally low number of graves should, however, be kept in mind.

The analysis of the material has demonstrated that late Norse inhumation graves could be as rich as cremations were austere. This means that a cremation in some respects may have been more similar to a Christian inhumation burial than to a Norse inhumation burial. It is possible that it did not matter very much to people whether the body was cremated or not, but it is just as likely that these graves were not influenced by Christianity in the treatment of their dead. The

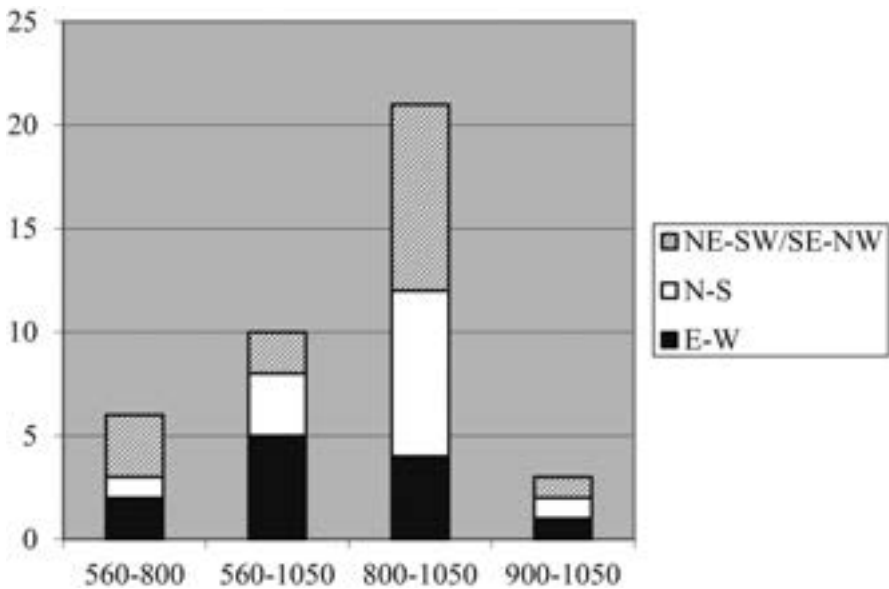


Graph 43. Cremations or inhumations during the Merovingian period.



Graph 44. Cremations and inhumations during the Viking period.

only possible interpretation of the frequency of inhumations before Christianity appeared is that they were traditional. In areas dominated by cremations, people continued this tradition. In one example, at Tingvoll, the ritual changed from inhumation to cremation during the course of burials in one and the same barrow, probably occurring within one and the same family group. This could be interpreted as an antipathetic reaction to the Christian presence in the area towards the end of the Viking Age. We know that this is likely as a contemporary Christian cult was probably practised in a nearby district, at Veøy. In a similar case at Vang the ritual also changed from cremation to inhumation, inserting a Viking Age grave into an earlier barrow. However, a horse was included in this grave, and the combination of a horse with a barrow provides no reason for believing that this was influenced by Christianity. The increase in inhumations has been observed on a few occasions in districts previously dominated by cremations; if this was combined with other 'Christian' criteria, it warrants a discussion about whether this was the result of a religious change following the increased influence of Christianity. Such situations are found in the municipalities of Farsund, Grimstad, and Ullensaker, and may provide cases for such a discussion, but none of these cases are very evidently the result of Christian influence.



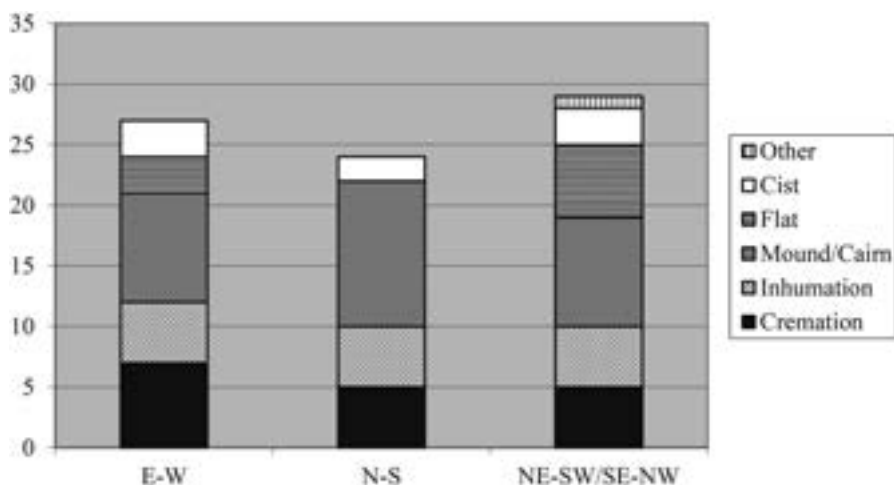
Graph 45. Alignment of the grave in various periods.

The Alignment of the Grave

In the material we are examining, it has only been possible to observe the body's alignment for three graves from the Merovingian period. None of these were actually north–south aligned, but two were east–west and one was north–east–south–west aligned. In addition, regarding graves dated generally to the late Iron Age, east–west-oriented graves dominate the evidence (Graph 45). It is impossible on this basis to argue for a general Christian influence on the graves during the late Iron Age. The tradition of east–west orientation is an older tradition than Christianity in Norway.

The numbers of graves with known alignments are very low. But it is possible to look for more specific examples of changes related to alignment during the Viking Age if alignment is combined with other, potentially Christian, criteria. In general, it is possible to determine alignment for more graves in the Viking period and in the late Iron Age in general. In Grimstad — one of the two municipalities where only north–south alignment was observed from the Viking

Age — there was also an increase in inhumation burials. Furthermore, perhaps surprisingly, the north–south aligned graves were predominately inhumation burials. Tingvoll, Birkenes, Valle, and Lom also had only north–south-aligned graves. In three municipalities only east–west-oriented graves have been observed, but it should be noted that the numbers are very low: Snåsa, Ringeby, Sør-Fron (in each of which districts only one grave occurs), and Rauma (where there are three such graves).



Graph 46. The relationship between alignment and other characteristics of the graves.

In Graph 46, alignment is combined with the type of grave form and the treatment of the body. This shows that for the north–south-aligned graves the grave forms are generally dominated by barrows or cairns instead of flat graves, and inhumations are generally more prevalent than cremations. The east–west-oriented graves are roughly equally divided between cremations and inhumations. This is contrary to the expected picture if the correlation between alignment and body treatment was supposedly influenced by Christianity. The northeast–southwest or northwest–southeast aligned graves have a higher proportion of flat graves, but even so, these graves are mostly buried in barrows or cairns. Moreover, this group is dominated by cremations, primarily represented among the flat

graves, which again contradicts the notion of flat graves and inhumations as representing a gradual movement towards Christian burial traditions.

Only two examples of an east–west-orientated grave combined with other ‘Christian’ criteria have been found; both were inhumations in flat graves. The first is at Frosta, but this grave was dated to the Merovingian period and equipped with several weapons, tools, and agricultural utensils. The other one is from Farsund, radiocarbon dated cal. AD 770–980. No artefacts were found in this disturbed grave, but a fragment of a sword was found nearby that was interpreted as having come from the grave. As a sword could be interpreted as a personal belonging, this grave could be potentially Christian, even though it is not found in a Christian burial ground.

The present investigation indicates that alignment seems to be determined more by the local terrain than by some rigidly chosen direction, and, combined with other variables, it does not seem to have been influenced by Christianity. This confirms previous results, for instance, in Hordaland, where the alignment of twenty-two flat graves could only be determined as three being north–south and two east–west (Gellein 1997: 44). In Etne in Hordaland eight out of nine graves were north–south aligned, while the ninth was east–west oriented and in a tumulus (Madsen 1998: 64). It appears in Trøndelag as well that the most important factor in the location and alignment was to provide the deceased with a good view and a comfortable resting position (Nilsen 1997: 80, Næss 1970). This again shows that local variations should be expected, and that the alignment of graves does not seem to be a significant variable for Norse graves. Moreover, the alignment of Christian graves may also vary and adjust according to local topography (Nordeide and Gulliksen 2007). This underlines the importance of not placing too much emphasis on alignment when looking for traces of the Christianization process. The overall conclusion, however, is that it is not possible to perceive a general Christian influence anywhere on the basis of alignment alone, with the exception of one grave in Farsund that could be reasonably identified as Christian.

Gender

Biological sex has only been determined on four occasions in the material under scrutiny: two males and two females all dated to the Viking Age. One of the females was found in Snåsa, buried in a flat grave in a 1.8 m long cist from around AD 800–950 (*No. 130*). The woman, who was approximately twenty-five years old at the time of her death, was buried in her costume with two oval buckles, a bronze hook, and an Irish, reused fitting, probably applied to her belt. For her

grave goods she had a knife and a sickle, and some nails may represent the remains of a chest. The other female was an adult, and she was cremated and buried at Habberstad in Ullensaker (*No. 348*). In her grave a steatite vessel, an etui for needles, a key and a lock, a box, twenty-six rivets, a fitting, a nail, and an iron ring of some sort were found. One of the males was buried at Habberstad as well, in a rectangular coffin in a barrow dating to around 1000–60 (*No. 347*). This was an inhumation grave, and the grave goods comprised a sword and a shield, a flint, and a strike-a-light. In addition, a nail and a rivet were found. The other male was a contemporary of the first male, buried around or after 1000 at Bringsvær in Grimstad (*No. 290*). Buried with him were an axe, a knife, flint, a comb, a balance with six weights, and a German coin kept in a leather purse together with a plum stone. This man was buried in a cist under a huge stone slab. Consequently, the graves included in this investigation in which the biological sex has been determined have confirmed the relationship between males and weapons as grave goods.

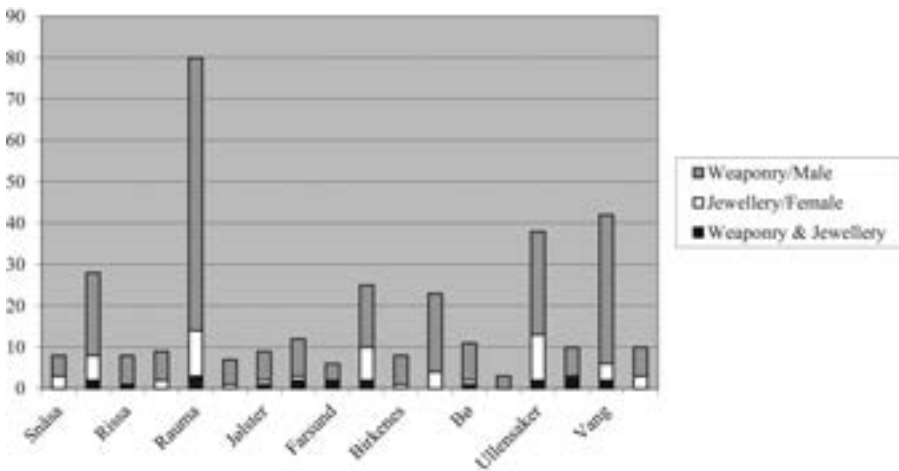
While most of the jewellery and dress fasteners are female, it has been argued that the ringed pins and annular/pennanular brooches could also have been significant for a male (Sellevold, Hansen, and Jørgensen 1984, Svanberg 2003). However, this is not evident in the material that has been selected here, as the items occur in graves of each gender. Therefore — and also due to the fact that an exact classification has not been possible — the pins have not been used for gender classification in this current work.

The gender aspect in analyses of finds and their contexts has aided the interpretations of the possible grave finds in our sample. As will be evident from the catalogue, jewellery and weapons do not emerge as dominant features among the grave goods across all the selected municipalities, as we just saw with the female grave from Ullensaker. To some extent in Ullensaker, and to a large degree in Vang, Sør-Fron, Ringeby, and Lom, it appears as though female graves can be identified more effectively by other objects instead, such as household equipment, keys, and boxes. These items, however, are not only found in female graves, and cannot be thought of with the same degree of certainty as other markers of gender, such as oval buckles.

Among the probable late Iron Age graves in the selected area, 55 per cent are gendered as male, 12 per cent as female, 4.4 per cent contained both male and female, 28.8 per cent are of uncertain gender and at least one was a child. This provides a ratio of 4.5 male graves to each female grave. However, the dominance of male graves is not found everywhere. In Farsund, Ringeby, and Sør-Fron it appears that a female was not considered to have a proper grave unless she was buried along with a male, while in Rollag, Rissa, and Herøy no female graves are

found at all. In Snåsa, Frosta, Tingvoll, Selje, Valle, Ullensaker, and Lom the ratio of female graves is higher.

At least one grave among the Viking Age graves in Tønsberg, K117, was deviant.⁵ The deceased was dressed in a female costume with oval buckles and did not have any weapons. This was the basis for interpreting this as a grave of a female. Nevertheless, the tools of a smith were unexpectedly found in the grave as grave goods, and, among other items, a pair of bellows, and fishing equipment (Nordmann 1989: 11–17). Fishing equipment and smith's tools are not normal among female grave goods.



Graph 47. The relationship between graves dominated by jewellery (female), weapons (male), and double graves in the selected municipalities calculated in percentages for each municipality. Note the various numbers of graves for each municipality (Graph 1). Våler has been left out, due to its lack of definite graves.

No specific Christian influence on female graves in our sample has been observed. Females were no more likely to be buried oriented east–west, in flat graves, or by an inhumation burial. It is possible that some females were Christian but did

⁵ See ‘Western Parts of Viken (Skien, Bø, Kaupang, Tønsberg, and Rollag)’ in Chapter 4 for further details.

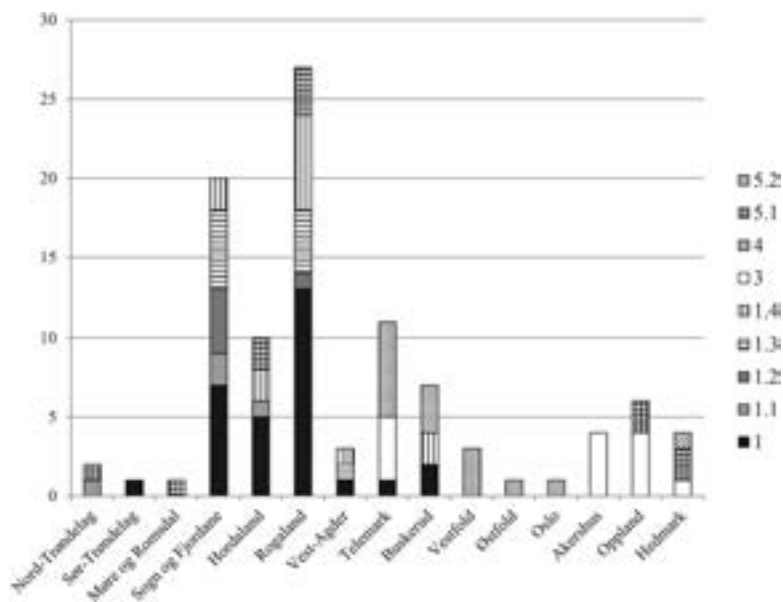
not have the opportunity to influence their own burials, and their spouses buried them in accordance with Norse customs. However, no other criteria can be used to show a tendency that would point to the women having been converted earlier than the males. No Christian cult objects were found in female graves in the selected areas that could be interpreted as reflecting their own symbols of belief. Although some Christian cult objects were found in a female grave at Setnes in Rauma, they were in a demonstrably Norse grave context, contained in a large, richly equipped barrow. At least one of the originally Christian objects was deliberately broken. This may signify that the female's family was either hostile or indifferent to Christianity, and those who buried her were definitely not Christian.

Free-Standing Cross Slabs and Stone Crosses (High Crosses)

Stone crosses are found in many parts of Europe, but most stone crosses in the Nordic countries are found in Norway. Only three stone crosses are preserved from Denmark, and these are rather small, of the type that could be erected at the end of a grave (Moltke 1972). Stone crosses are also found in Gotland in Sweden, but otherwise the Swedish crosses are considered to be late and of a different kind than the Norwegian crosses (Rydbeck 1972). Only two stone crosses are preserved in Finland, and according to tradition, these crosses were erected as memorials to the builder of the church (Cleve 1972). In western Norway, from Jæren to Sunnmøre, there are more than fifty stone crosses (Birkeli 1973: 214). Thirty-five stone crosses are found in eastern Norway, but only one stone cross and a cross slab are found in Trøndelag, both within a small area in Nord-Trøndelag. These two are the northernmost objects of this type in Norway (Nordeide 2005a; see Figure 4 and Figure 18). The part of the country with the highest frequency of crosses is Rogaland, while Sogn og Fjordane is second and Hordaland ranks third (Graph 48). Place names containing the element 'cross' (Norwegian: *kors*, *kross*) are also more numerous in the western part of the Nordic countries (Birkeli 1973: 60). On this basis stone crosses have been regarded as a western phenomenon, and the influence behind this phenomenon has thus been regarded as coming from the west, from the British Isles.

Throughout the early Christian period in Norway, it seems likely that both wooden and stone crosses were erected, but only the stone crosses have survived. There are also many different types of crosses, and they have been understood in different ways regarding their function. The cross slabs and stone crosses might be categorized as follows (after Nordeide 2010: 164–65):

- Category 1: Stone cross, no particular type; lacks circle.
 - 1.1: Cross with circular/semicircular armpits
 - 1.2: Cross with rounded armpits
 - 1.3: Cross with right armpits, less than 90° (as in a Maltese cross)
 - 1.4: Cross with right-angled armpits
- Category 2: Free-standing cross with ring; stone background between cross arms and circle. (None have been found in Norway.)
- Category 3: Wheel cross: cross encircled; empty space between ring and cross.
- Category 4: Ring cross: cross with ring, cross arms extends beyond the ring; empty space between cross arms and ring. (In Norway the ring could be placed on either side of cross.)
- Category 5: Slab with cross decoration.
 - 5.1 Cross motif lacks circle
 - 5.2 Ringed cross motif



Graph 48. The distribution of stone crosses and cross slabs in various counties.

Kristine Holme Gabrielsen has categorized the crosses in Rogaland, Hordaland, and Sogn og Fjordane according to five different types based on the angle between

the cross arms and the stem (Figure 19). She found that crosses of type A, D, and E are often constructed close to prehistoric cemeteries and farmsteads, while type B crosses are found in connection with roads and Thing places. This could indicate that the function of the crosses was slightly different at various times and places (Gabrielsen 2002).

Written sources on this topic are scarce in the Nordic countries. The first mention of a free-standing cross in Denmark is by Saxo Grammaticus (*fl.* 1150–1220). According to Saxo, in 1176 Grønsund was invaded by the Vends who cut down and destroyed a cross that the pious inhabitants had erected on the beach (Moltke 1972, Zeeberg 2000, II: 14:44:10); this was probably a wooden cross. Additionally, according to the legislation of the town of Holbæk from after 1268, in a new edition from 1549:

En fremmed, som kommer til Holbæk og slar ther nogell i hiel i byen eller innen fredh korsett, han skall bødhe. (DKG, III: 325, Moltke 1972: 124)

(A stranger who comes to Holbæk and kills someone in the town or within the area of the cross of peace, he shall pay.)

The cross seems to serve here as a marker of a border for an area under its own jurisdiction, and at least part of the agreement for this area, witnessed by the cross, is that peace should reign within this area.

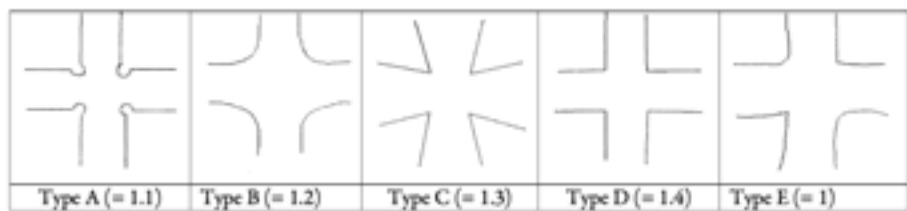


Figure 19. Gabrielsen's types of stone crosses in western Norway, with equal categories of this volume in brackets (after Gabrielsen 2002: 25).

A cross is also mentioned in a medieval Norwegian document, which states that in 1394 four elderly men in their seventies and eighties swore that in their youth there had been a large cross west of Eidskog church,⁶ and that their parents had told them that mass for the pilgrims was once held by this cross, and that sacrifices had been made there. This cross was first erected as a memorial to St

⁶ Eidskog is east of Oslo, close to the Swedish border.

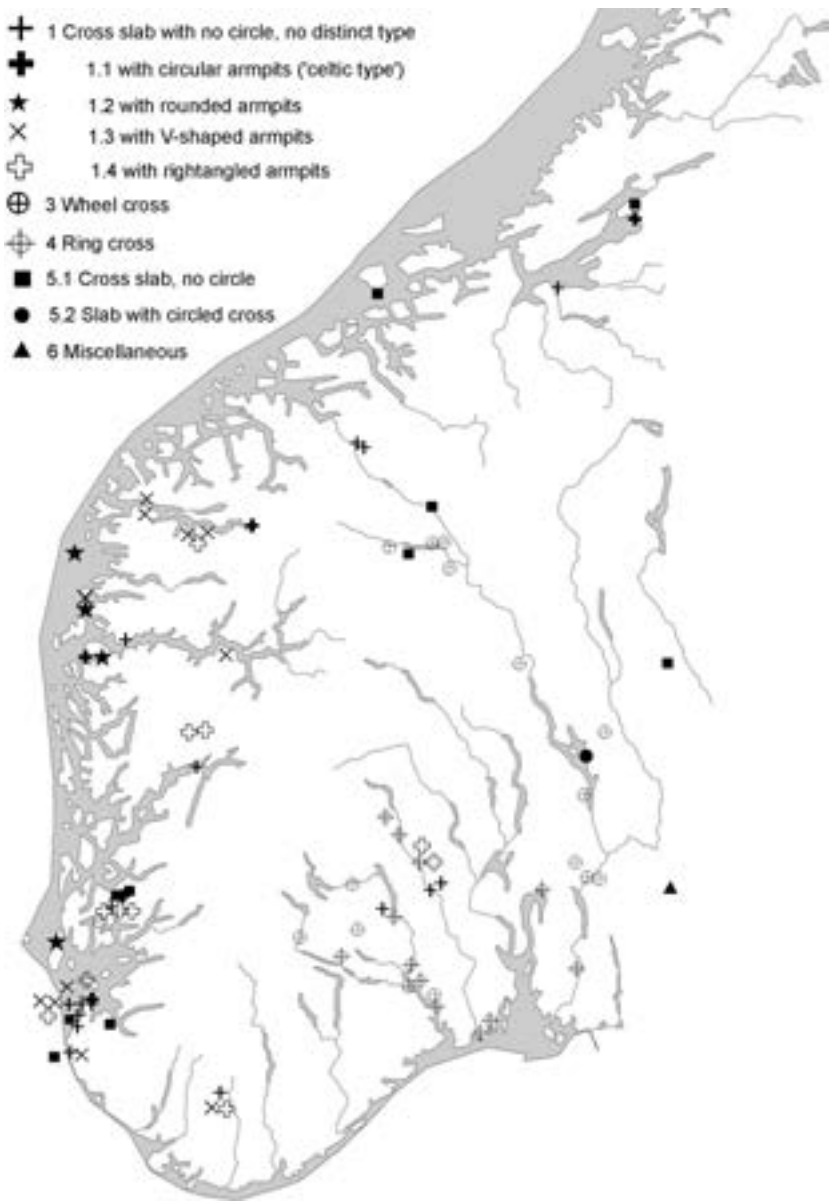
Olaf, who had rested there (DN, I: no. 545, 18/2-1394). The document could be understood as marking the replacement of the old cross with a new one in 1394, but it does not actually say this explicitly. Nor does the document tell if it was a stone cross. It says that the cross should *vppi baldazst* ('be sustained'), which could connote that some efforts were needed to keep the cross, either in terms of taking care of it (perhaps because it was not of stone and therefore less durable), or in terms of keeping up the activity by the cross.⁷ Regardless, this document provides us with a living tradition dating back to around 1300–1400 concerning a cross erected to the memory of St Olaf, and this tradition dates the original cross to the time after Olaf was declared a saint in 1031 (Sandnes 1997). The tradition states that the cross was erected in memory of a special event, and functioned as a place for gatherings, prayers, and holding masses for pilgrims.

Birkeli's investigations found that at Christian cemeteries more stone crosses were found than cross slabs — that is, large stones with crosses — and also that the latter category was found more often in connection with non-Christian graves. Birkeli assumed that the stone crosses had been moved to the cemeteries (Birkeli 1973: 219), but archaeological analyses have shown that most of the stone crosses were not in fact moved from their original places to Christian cemeteries. On the contrary, the crosses seem to be standing *in situ* (Madsen 1998: 82).

Crosses in eastern Norway are mostly situated in association with a church or a churchyard, and most of them are ringed crosses, with a circle integrated in the top of the cross and the arms of the cross widening outwards from the stem (type 3 and 4, Figure 20). Only a few exceptions of crosses without rings have been found in eastern Norway (Type 1), and these were all found in Numedal (Map 13). The style of the Numedal crosses is reminiscent of the stone crosses from western Norway (Amundsen 1999: 87). Whatever the design of the cross, the diameter of the ring in the cross motif is always approximately 45 cm. This indicates that there was some authority, most probably from someone in the Church, who decided the design of the cross (Amundsen 1999: 85). Ringed crosses are also widely spread across the British Isles (Cramp 1988, Fisher 2001, Harbison 1992),⁸ and similar crosses are also found frequently in Niedersachsen, Bremen, and Hamburg (Hoffmann 1935, Müller and Baumann 1988).

⁷ I am grateful to Else Mundal and Sverre Bagge for their assistance in interpreting this document.

⁸ See also, for instance, the 'Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture in England', various volumes and authors.



Map 13. The geographic distribution of various cross monuments.



Figure 20. Typical stone crosses for eastern Norway: The one to the *left* is from Hedrum in Vestfold (from Lange 1955); the one to the *right* is from Vågå in Oppland. Photo: Mari Elise Bergli.

Stone crosses in western Norway could be located in a churchyard or as free-standing monuments. Normally they are 1–4 m high, and although they have small variations in their designs, they are all rather simple pieces of masonry (Nordeide 2010, Figure 21).

When decoration does exist it is usually located close to the centre of the cross. In contrast to the stone crosses from eastern Norway, no circle is integrated in the motif; it is only a plain cross (Category 1). Furthermore, these types of crosses are found also in the British Isles, in Germany, Poland, and Russia. The variations in the styles of cross monuments in east and west Norway indicate differences in authority, influences, or time periods as possible backgrounds to their distribution. An interesting cross slab is found in the churchyard at Hustad, Inderøya in Nord-Trøndelag. It is particularly significant for this study because it was known as *Odin-steinen* ('The Odin Stone'), and the decoration on one side involved both a cross and a portrait of Odin (Figure 1). A closer look at the decoration reveals that the supposedly one-eyed man with a moustache actually had two eyes, but his face was not equally well made and preserved on both sides. The upper contour of his head was identical with the lower line of an obvious Christian cross, and the



Figure 21. Types of stone cross from western Norway: two newly discovered crosses from Kors cemetery at Flatmark in Rauma, Romsdalen. Photo: S. W. Nordeide.

man was more likely to be Christ than Odin. The other side of the stone was heavily damaged by dynamite, but it is clear that this side contained a cross decoration as well (Nordeide 2005a).⁹ The stone was found 0.5 m deep in the ground on the south side of the church, lying parallel to the building. The depth and decoration on both sides indicate that the cross slab was lying in its original place, but had fallen from its upright position. The church at Hustad is thought to have been a private church (*Egenkirke*, *Eigenkirche*) built by a local aristocrat. One might then assume that the cross slab were erected by an aristocrat as well. The church may have been built at a former cult place, with a wide view in all directions to rich, cultivated areas. The only stone cross from Trøndelag is found at Rol, roughly 15 km to the south of Hustad by the same fjord as Hustad (Figure 18).

The Christian origin of the stones at Hustad and Rol is beyond doubt, but one question may be whether the formation of the Rol cross into the shape of a Thor's hammer and the laying down of the Hustad cross slab was done deliberately (see also 'Thor's Hammer: An Antipathetic Response to Christianity?' in Chapter 5).

⁹ I have not been able to study the back side of the stone myself. A photo of the back side of the stone was kindly shown to me by Dr Ian Fisher from Scotland.

The depth of the Hustad stone reveals that the stone fell over a long time ago, and was only discovered with the use of dynamite in modern times. If the two stones were constructed by some local aristocrats and were among the earliest Christian monuments in this small district, then it is quite possible that local people reacted negatively to this, opposing the Christian influence. The date of the stones is uncertain, however.

In the British Isles, stone sculptures associated with burial monuments are seen as a manifestation of the local lord's power and authority (Hadley 2002). Gabrielsen has argued that the stone crosses and cross slabs in Norway were erected in a similar fashion by rich landowners, the king, a priest, or by a community assemblage (Gabrielsen 2002: 125). In Sweden the rune stones are also assumed to have been erected by landowners, since it is unlikely that anyone would be allowed to erect such a monument on another man's land.¹⁰

Large, upright stones, either shaped as a cross or with a cross decoration, are first and foremost traditionally associated with the Christianization of Norway. Based on style and distribution, Birkeli saw the stone crosses — particularly those in western Norway — as the result of missionary work, first and foremost conducted from a base in Scotland, England, or Ireland during the tenth and into the eleventh centuries. Yet the high crosses could have had a secular function as well, as monuments to guide sailors at sea, or to show them a way to a sheltered, Christian harbour, such as the cross at Kvitsøy in Rogaland, which is around 4 m high with long arms (Birkeli 1995: 222). The Kvitsøy cross has also been interpreted as a symbol denoting a place where Christians would gather to take part in cult rituals, just as the example of the fourteenth-century cross erected to the memory of St Olaf quoted above seems to illustrate.

Although free-standing stone crosses are absent in Sweden, it seems that rune-stones there fulfilled a similar role. There are approximately 2500 rune stones in Sweden, the main area of distribution being the region around Lake Mälaren, and around half of these are decorated with crosses (Lager 2003). Rune-stones can be highly decorated, and it has been argued that the erection of the rune-stones ended shortly after the establishment of a bishopric, at which point the people began to build churches. Consequently, it seems as though the churches replaced the function served by the rune-stones. These hypotheses also have parallels in the British Isles: in Ireland the presence of stone artefacts such as crosses, decorated stone slabs, and so-called ogham stones (with inscriptions written in the old

¹⁰ Linn Lager, paper given at the conference 'Sacralisation of Landscape', Bergen, 20 September 2007.

ogham/ogam alphabet) are interpreted as indications of Early Christian origins for a church site (Culleton 1999).

Birkeli considered the stone crosses and cross slabs to be evidence of strong influences coming from the British Isles. Insular stone crosses with runic inscriptions from the eighth to the tenth centuries prove that Norse people came into contact with these kinds of monuments when they were in the British Isles. Again, the same theory has been applied to the rune-stones in Sweden, which are believed to have been designed and constructed with considerable British influences behind them (Birkeli 1973, Lager 2003). However, comparing the material from Norway with other parts of Europe shows that stone crosses from Norway are similar to their continental counterparts, particularly those of Germany, whether the simple crosses of the same type as those in western Norway or the ringed crosses of the same type as those in eastern Norway. In Germany these monuments are mostly regarded as memorials. If the monuments in Norway are compared to their potential insular models, those in eastern Norway are more similar to them in several ways than those in western Norway (Nordeide 2010).

Chronology plays a key role in analysing the function and influence of these monuments, but in spite of several efforts, a solid chronology for this material has proved very difficult to establish. The shapes of the crosses are not easily dated, nor are the stones themselves. The period 750–900 is so far the earliest suggested date for the earliest stone crosses in Rogaland, but this has gained little support so far (see Fuglestad 1997: 51–52, Fuglestad and Hernæs 1996: 146–47; with criticisms put forward in works such as Gabrielsen 2002: 38, 60). Dating the material in western Norway by linking the type of stone to known stone quarries has also been attempted, as has establishing a chronology on the basis of the typology of the stones and cross types compared specifically with their insular counterparts. The ground underneath the cross, which could provide a *terminus ante quem* for its establishment, is rarely excavated, and on the occasions when a stone cross has been erected on a barrow, the barrow itself has been dated to the Bronze Age or early Iron Age (Gabrielsen 2002: 49). Consequently, this is too early to help us establish a more precise date within the general span of the late Iron Age or the Middle Ages. Birkeli dated the large, simple crosses in western Norway roughly to the early Middle Ages, and the smaller one from eastern Norway to the later Middle Ages (Birkeli 1973: 84, 255). The stone crosses in western Norway are generally dated to the period from around 950 to the early eleventh century, but they could be earlier as well as later (see, for instance, Madsen 1998: 73). This chronology is highly problematic as well: Birkeli highlighted the fact

that the greater part of the high cross tradition in the British Isles happened after the supposed period for erection of similar stones in Norway, which could explain the much simpler design of the crosses in Norway compared to England, and he also argued that the ring was not part of the cross motif in the early phase of these monuments in the British Isles (Birkeli 1973: 237, 255). Yet this, as well as other suggestions by Birkeli regarding the chronology and function of stone crosses, is based on the supposition that the material from western Norway has an early date, which is not an indisputable assumption (Nordeide 2010). The concentration of stone crosses in western Norway together with this suggested chronology has provided the background for a hypothesis that they are the result of missionary work by King Håkon the Good (934–61). However, linking King Håkon the Good to the erection of high stone crosses is a somewhat circular argument, the premise being that the distribution area corresponds to King Håkon's empire and the crosses must consequently be dated to the tenth century; and because the crosses are dated to the tenth century, they must be associated with King Håkon the Good's reign (see Solberg 2000: 316–17).

Finally, there are occasions when the date of a stone cross or a cross slab can be estimated on the basis of a runic inscription, such as the one on a tall, narrow cross slab from Kuli at Nord-Møre with a cross decoration (Figures 22a and 22b):

Þórir ok Hallvarðr reistu stein þinsi ept Ulfjótr(?) ... Tolf vetr hafði kristindómr verit í Nórøgi.

(Þórir and Hallvarðr raised this stone in memory of Ulfjótr ... Twelve winters had Christianity been in Norway.)

It has been suggested that the date of the stone fits with the Thing gathering held by King Olaf Haraldsson and his bishop, Grimkell, at Moster in the early 1020s, where a number of Christian laws were established (Knirk 1996). This date is not certain, however, and a wooden paved road passing by the stone has been dated by dendrochronology to the year 1034. Yet this road may possibly even predate the stone, as such stones were normally erected along existing roads (Munch 1982).

Elsewhere, the Frösö stone states that Christianity was brought to Jämtland by Austmaðr Guðfastarsun. The stone has been traditionally dated to around 1050, but it has also been argued that the runes could be dated to as late as the 1080s (Brink 1996a, Williams 1996).

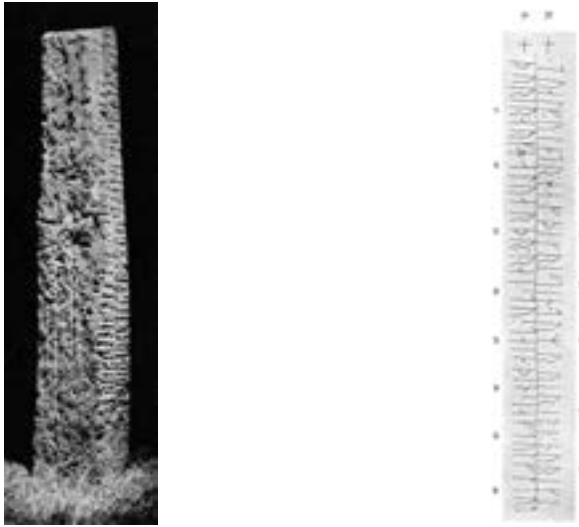


Figure 22. The cross slab from Kuli, with runic inscription (Liestøl 1957). Courtesy Riksarkivet.

The Kuli and Frösö stones make up two of an exclusive group of three stones in Scandinavia upon which there are inscriptions concerning the Christianization process. The third stone is the famous Jelling stone in Denmark, with the runestone inscription declaring that Harald Bluetooth Christianized the Danes. It has been suggested previously that the stone was raised in 965, but more recently this date has been questioned on the basis that it is not possible to date the stone to any specific year. It cannot be ruled out, however, that the inscription may refer to events between 974 and 983 (Staecker 2005). Jämtland belonged to the church province of Uppsala in Sweden from the second half of the twelfth century, but was subordinate to the king of Norway. However, Stefan Brink has argued that the region belonged culturally to Sweden, and that the Norwegian king never managed to make the area ‘Norwegian’ (Brink 1996b). It becomes less obvious, therefore, how relevant Jämtland is to the discussion of the Christianization of Trøndelag and Norway during the eleventh century.

The runic inscription on a stone cross in Rogaland mentions Erling and Olaf, identified as Erling Skjalgsson (who died in 1028) and St Olaf (who died in 1030) (Liestøl 1954: 254). This suggests 1028 as the earliest possible date for this inscription.

Chronological comparisons of relevant material from other countries are unfortunately not very helpful. Analyses of rune-stones in Sweden have concluded that they are based on a Christian concept, but it is often impossible to give a precise date for the individual cross symbols. The rune-stones were erected during the late ninth to the beginning of the twelfth centuries, with a general peak in the late eleventh century but variations from region to region (Lager 2002, Lager 2003). The few crosses in Denmark are dated to the twelfth and thirteenth centuries (Moltke 1972).

The tradition of raising monumental crosses in wood and stone seems to have continued for a long time in the British Isles. In Ireland, stone slabs were popular as grave markers from the seventh to the ninth or early tenth centuries, but this practice also continued later (Redknap 1996). One cross-carved slab has been dated to the sixth or seventh centuries, and parts of high crosses are found at Ferns and Taghmon, probably dating in both cases to the eighth or ninth centuries. Possibly the smallest 'high cross' in Ireland, from Kilmokea, is only 56 cm high (Culleton 1999: 156). Free-standing crosses located elsewhere in the British Isles have been dated variously from the eighth to the fifteenth centuries. They are earlier in Scotland than in England, and although there may be forerunners that date to the seventh century, no surviving crosses are earlier than the mid-to-late eighth century (Laing 2006: 199–205).

In Germany similar monumental crosses are regarded as late medieval and early modern, and the inscriptions on a number of these have confirmed that such monuments were used in the late and post-medieval period. For instance, in Niedersachsen, including Hamburg and Bremen, quite a few stone crosses or cross slabs are dated from the thirteenth to the twentieth centuries. However, most of the monuments have not been dated, and quite a few are similar to both the eastern and western cross types in Norway, even if none are as high as the high stone crosses in western Norway (see, for example, Hoffmann 1935, Müller and Baumann 1988, Störzner 1984, Störzner 1988). The aforementioned document from 1394 in eastern Norway testifies to a lively tradition in Norway for the period from around 1031 to approximately 1400. This means that people may have erected stone crosses for several centuries in Norway as well.

From this perspective, the previously suggested date for the stone crosses and cross slabs from western Norway to the period *c.* 950–1050 seems even more uncertain, as it appears to be both earlier, and more concentrated within a narrow time frame, than in other countries. Furthermore, the reason for focusing solely on possible western influences is not as obvious as literature on the subject might suggest. If the material is linked to the missionary phase of Christianization in

Norway, it is particularly relevant to compare this with continental material, for Norway was part of the area subject to the missionary impulses of the Hamburg-Bremen archbishopric, and not only those coming from the British Isles, which are the influences that scholars have traditionally focused on. Indeed, Hamburg-Bremen was founded with the express aim of bringing Christianity to Scandinavia and the north. However, if the date of the material changes, the function, and historic context of the material changes as well, meaning that it would then have to be discussed in different terms.

The same phenomenon may take different forms in different regions. If the erection of such crosses is to be linked to the Christianization process, then it is not unreasonable that the tradition of Christian-erected stone (or wood) monuments in Sweden could be dominated by rune-stones, while in Norway and the insular regions high crosses might be the most common form. However, there are also significant differences between the east and west of Norway, and these differences should be addressed. None of these traditions were popular at all north of Trøndelag in Norway, and only barely existed north of Dovre (Map 13). If the material is dated differently and seen to extend over a longer period, a lengthy tradition might then allow an opportunity for regional and chronological changes to develop, particularly with respect to form and function.

Attempting a conclusion regarding cross slabs and stone crosses raises more questions than it answers. This material has not turned out to be very useful in achieving a more precise date for the establishment of Christianity in Norway (Nordeide 2010). Unless our knowledge about the function and dates of the crosses improves, it will not be possible to derive any reliable theory about this phase of the Christianization process on the basis of the stone crosses and cross slabs. Nevertheless, what can be concluded is that the different parts of Norway were exposed to and/or received different Christian traditions, or else that the exposure and/or reception occurred at different times.

Lead Mortuary Crosses

The oldest Christian cross pendants and pendants with a crucifix from the Nordic countries date from the tenth century (Gräslund 2002: 59–60). The problem with interpreting a cross as a symbol has been outlined above, and due to such problems deciphering when the Christian cross appeared for the first time in Norway, and was used as a Christian symbol, is not straightforward. While Christian objects in obviously non-Christian, cultic contexts are practically worthless for this study, religious objects in the settlement area are not. If a religious object

is found in an otherwise neutral or a relevant religious context, the object may well have kept its original meaning.

One type of cross is the exception to this rule: eighteen lead mortuary crosses were found in Christian and non-Christian graves in Norway, some with Christian inscriptions and some without. Most of the lead crosses were found in western Norway, of which ten were found in the bishopric of Stavanger. No such crosses are known from Denmark, but some exist in England and France (Sørheim 2004). In Sweden only one lead mortuary cross has been found, in an eleventh-century grave in Västergötland (Staecker 1999: 85–87). The distribution of lead mortuary crosses closely follows that of the stone crosses in Scandinavia.

Lead mortuary crosses with inscriptions for absolution or exorcism were placed on the chest of the body in Christian graves. They were common in Anglo-Norman areas from the eleventh century to around 1200 to give the deceased the protection a cross could provide. This practice is thought to have been imported to Norway, particularly to southwest Norway and the Stavanger bishopric, as a result of the region's supposedly close connections with England. Even so, the texts on the Norwegian exemplars relate more to exorcism than absolution, and have been interpreted as a protection against evil. The lead mortuary crosses in Norway are, however, found mainly in barrows, and one theory is that members of the Christian clergy placed the lead items into the graves several centuries after the burial (Sørheim 2004: 219–21). Although not all these crosses are found in connection with a grave, this theory could well be correct, as on several occasions it has been noted that the lead cross was found outside the original grave, at a higher level.¹¹

At the Folkebibliotekstomten site in Trondheim, a lead cross was found in a post-medieval context (Nordeide 1989: 127).¹² The cross was found at the site of a former churchyard from the Middle Ages, and it is quite possible that the cross originates from one of the earlier Christian graves in the area. A plain lead cross was also found in the occupation layers of the Archbishop's Palace, just outside the northern edge of a long, wooden building — no. 76 — in the southern part of the Palace. This building was built after 1500 and was probably quite new when it burned down in 1532.¹³ The cross was found in the layers associated with this narrow time period (Nordeide 2003), but its function cannot be explained.

¹¹ See, for instance, no. B4820a, Bergen Museum, from Re, Time at Jæren in Rogaland, and no. C8277, Kulturhistorisk museum, Oslo, from Fjære, Aust-Agder (No. 277).

¹² Catalogue no. N86481, Vitenskapsmuseet, Trondheim.

¹³ Period 6 (Nordeide 2003), Catalogue no. N139214, Vitenskapsmuseet, Trondheim.

It is likely that the tradition of putting Christian lead mortuary crosses into non-Christian barrows occurred in the early phase of Christianization, during which the barrows still held some meaning for the community. As such, this tradition is significant for how the early Christians related to their ancestors in parts of Norway. Why this tradition was not evenly spread throughout the country cannot be explained at the moment, but the answer could relate to the differences that have been observed between various types of stone crosses. At any rate, as the lead mortuary crosses are not easily dateable, they cannot as yet contribute to a closer dating of the conversion process.

Dating the Conversion: The Latest Norse Cult and the Earliest Observable Christian Cult

For most of the graves in our sample it was not possible to attribute a specific date; most were dated only generally to the late Iron Age or to the Viking Age, which gives a latest possible date around 1050. Table 13¹⁴ presents a list of the latest dated graves in our sample but because of the difficulty of dating, the table often lists both a general date and a more precise, later date. The latter refers then to the latest objects in the municipality that can be precisely dated with a greater degree of certainty.

The general impression given by this table is that, in most areas, the non-Christian cult ended some time between 950 and 1050. There are, however, some later exceptions: at Mære in Nord-Trøndelag, Valle in Setesdal, and in two of the municipalities in the inner parts of eastern Norway, namely Ullensaker and Sør-Fron. In Rauma in Møre og Romsdal some relatively late graves have also been recorded. These exceptions need to be summarized with supplementary comments:

- Mære — the present interpretation suggests that there was no lapse in time between the end of the Norse cult and the building of the wooden church that was erected at the end of the eleventh century, *c.* 1075.
- Valle — the grave goods in this rich Norse grave included coins struck as late as 1065/80. In addition, a possible Danish penny was found in an associated barrow that provided a definitive date at the end of the eleventh century or even later.

¹⁴ Latest dates from Hordaland and Gulli, Vestfold is from around 1050 (Gellein 1997, Gjerpe 2005: 26, 134).

- Ullensaker — two barrows were dated very late; one with a sword of Jan Petersen's type Æ — normally dated to 990/1000–1060/90 — and one with a sword considered to be 'medieval', dating from 1050–1536.
- Sør-Fron — this last example is not very useful because the mountain grave could be Saami, Christian, or Norse. It is radiocarbon dated to AD 1040–1400 (calibrated by 68 per cent), but with a 54 per cent chance of the date being between AD 1150 and 1300.

Table 13. The latest reliably dated non-Christian graves/Norse cult in the selected material.

Area	Chronological basis	Latest traced date for Norse cult
Snåsa	Grave goods	Viking Age
Mære	Place of cult	1050/1100
Frosta	Grave goods	950–1050
Rissa	Grave goods	Viking Age; 900–950
Tingvoll	Grave goods	950–1050
Rauma	Grave goods, coin	post-975/1000–1050
Herøy	Grave goods	late Iron Age; 800–950
Selje	Grave goods	Viking Age; 850–950
Jølster	Grave goods	Viking Age; 850–950
Gulen	Grave goods	Viking Age; 850–950
Rogaland	Thor's hammer, coin	post-978/1016
Farsund	C14; Grave goods	Viking Age; 900–1000
Valle	Grave goods, coin	post-1065/80
Birkenes	Grave goods, coin	post-991/97; 925–1050
Grimstad	Grave goods	950–1025; post-983/1002
Bø	Grave goods, coin	910–1040
Kaupang	Thor's hammer, coin	Post-951/55
Rollag	Grave goods	900–1040
Ullensaker	Grave goods	1000–1060; 1050–1536
Ringebu	Grave goods	950–1050
Sør-Fron	Grave goods; (C14)	Viking Age; 900–950; (1040–1370)
Vang	Grave goods	Viking Age; 900–1000
Lom	Grave goods	Viking Age; 900–1000/30

From the available information in the selected areas, I consider it likely that the Norse cult continued after the Viking period in Valle, Mære, and Ullensaker,

and possibly in Rauma as well. Some finds, whose date or the context of the find makes them more uncertain, also appear relevant in inland areas of eastern Norway, in Valle, Bø, Vang, and Ullensaker. I suspect additional late Norse graves might exist in these municipalities, but this is speculation. Future excavations with better methods of excavation and recording may confirm my suspicions. For most areas it is not possible to summarize the situation more precisely than to say that a continuous non-Christian cult existed until the end of the Viking Age, which was around 1050. The exceptions to this, where Norse burial cult might have ended earlier, are few: Rogaland, Farsund, Trondheim, and Kaupang. These examples, however, are not as obvious as they may seem at first glance:

- Kaupang — the urban settlement ended around the middle of the tenth century, and consequently we should not expect to find any later cult activity at this site. The item dated is a Thor's hammer inscribed on an Arabic dirham, struck in 951/55, and we have to assume that it would have taken some time for the coin to travel from the Arabic country to Norway. The belief in Thor must have prevailed to at least the time when the coin arrived at its Nordic latitude.
- Rogaland — this item is also a Thor's hammer, found in a hoard containing coins struck in 978/1016. The find has to be later than this, but then again, the Thor's hammer may have no longer been in use when it ended up in the hoard. Even so, the example above, from Kaupang, demonstrates that the symbol was still active at Kaupang during the second half of the tenth century. Norse graves are recorded from the time around 950–1000 and the beginning of the eleventh century. This argues against a very early final stage for Norse cult activity in Rogaland.
- The non-Christian cult in Farsund seems to have continued beyond around 1000.
- In Trondheim almost no Norse graves have been observed, and none that can be reliably dated to the late Viking period. This observation, however, only covers the area of the medieval town and its immediate surroundings.

In addition to these examples, it should be kept in mind that the activity at the probable cult sites at Hove in Nord-Trøndelag and Leikvin in Nord-Møre ceased around 1000.

The basis for dating the earliest traces of Christian cult activity in Norway is generally better than the basis for the dates presented in Table 13. Table 14 lists the earliest dated traces of Christian cult activity in Norway. As can be seen, dates based on coins and dendrochronology are available more often for this material.

When a coin is found in a primary context in a grave, the grave must be at least as late as, or slightly later than, the coin. As long as it is a Norwegian coin and has kept its original function, we know it cannot be much later than the reign of the king who produced the coin. Research has shown that *renovatio monetae* was quite effective in Norway during the Middle Ages, and coins belonging to the previous king's reign were swept away rapidly to produce coins for the new king (Gullbekk 1997, Gullbekk 2003: 33–99). However, if the coin was used in a secondary context, perhaps reshaped and fitted into a pendant, a weight or something similar, the coin may have survived longer.

Unfortunately, the Christian burial tradition does not typically include many artefacts. When no wood is preserved and no coins are found, the chances of establishing an accurate date become poor. The results from radiocarbon analyses often suggest a long time period to which a sample might be realistically dated, and therefore the evidence may be difficult to use in discussions of how early Christianity became established. This is particularly tricky if few samples were taken and measured from a site, or if the measurements were made long ago (Nordeide and Gulliksen 2007). The graves from Hernæs, for instance, could not be used to prove the very early presence of Christianity at Frosta, but neither does the interpretation exclude an early date.

The earliest dated Christian cult places are in Trondheim, Borgund, the Skien area, Tønsberg, Oslo, and on Veøy, and of these, the community on Veøy is by far the oldest. The same dates from Veøy calibrated by 95.4 per cent are 716–990 and 685–987. The dating evidence is quite convincing from all these places. The graves in Bø may be rather early as well. Among the other early sites, it appears that several of them were established during the middle or second half of the eleventh century. All dates are based on churches or cemeteries, except the one from Oddernes, close to Kristiansand, which contains an inscription that has been conclusively dated to around 1025–50. The inscription refers to 'this church',¹⁵ which indicates that the church must have been nearby. What is particularly interesting is that these sites coincide with quite a few of the medieval Norwegian towns or central places, or else are situated in places nearby.¹⁶ This is probably no coincidence, and I will return to this significant observation in the next chapter.

¹⁵ 'Eyvind made this church [...]'. See pp. 188–89 in this volume.

¹⁶ The dates of two skeletons in early Christian graves in Stavanger support this observation: Skeleton 27: cal. AD 982–1030 (68.2%); Skeleton 26: cal. AD 990–1034 (68.2%) (Sandvik 2006).

Table 14. The earliest dated traces of Christian cult activity (all ^{14}C results are calibrated by 68 per cent).

Place	Chronological basis	Earliest date for traces of Christian cult
Mære	Graves/church; coin	1050/1100; 1047/74
Frosta	^{14}C , graves	1020–1180
Trondheim	^{14}C , graves; coin	981–1025; 1029/35
Veøy	^{14}C , graves	780–961, 772–965
Borgund	Coin in grave	1003/9
Selje	Coin in grave	1060/70
Kaupanger	Church	c.1100?
Urnes	Church, dendro, re-used N-portal	1050++
Kinsarvik	Coin under/predating church	1055/65
Oddernes	Christian inscription	c.1050
Bo	^{14}C , grave	950–1080
Skien	(^{14}C , Christian grave?); church	(890–990); 990–1030
Tonsberg	^{14}C , graves, St Peter's church	950–1080
Oslo	^{14}C , graves, St Clement's church	980–1020

Part III

Cult(ural) Change: From Norse to Christian Cult

INTERPRETING THE EVIDENCE: THE PROCESS OF CHRISTIANIZATION IN NORWAY

Norse Cult in the Late Iron Age and Early Middle Ages

A relatively distinct pattern of non-Christian cult during the late Iron Age, particularly in the case of burial cult activity, can be observed in the areas selected for this study. This is possible despite the unfortunate predominance of outdated archaeological excavations and poor records. First of all, the outstanding feature of the Norse burial cult is variation, even more in space than in time. This is particularly so in Rauma and the early urbanized region of western Viken. The variation concerns all parts of the ritual: the type of grave form, the ritual complexity, and what artefacts and how many types of artefact were put into the graves as grave goods. In some districts the number of objects retrieved may be more distorted than others due to subsequent agricultural activity or other kinds of disturbances. In addition to these factors, differences may also occur within a single municipality, as well as between various regions.

The level of chronological accuracy that can be established for the material is, however, problematic. A large part of the material can only be dated to the late Iron Age in general rather than to any more specific, narrower period of time. Because the number of graves from the Viking period is generally higher than the number of graves from the Merovingian period, one statistical probability is that — if more graves could be dated more precisely — the numbers from the Viking period would be even greater compared to those from the Merovingian period. In other words, if more graves were found, they would probably be dated to the Viking period more often than to the Merovingian period. But such statistics cannot help us solve the problem of which graves should be classified as belonging to the later period. In most districts, female graves are outnumbered by male

graves, while there are almost no female graves at all in large parts of eastern Norway.

Due to the wide variation of cult activity, it is not helpful to present a general description of Iron Age graves in the selected areas. Instead I will refer to the descriptions in Chapter 4 and in the Appendix. In any of the selected areas, differences between the burial cults of the Viking Age and those from the Merovingian period could be described simply as an addition of grave goods, both in terms of the quantity of items found and the number of types. The grave goods in the Merovingian period were still present in the Viking period, but the later graves contained more types of artefacts and more of each of them. Other elements remained very much as they were before. This pattern can be observed until the period when Norse burial customs ceased, and in most places these customs remained vital up to that point. Even if it is not possible to present a generalized description entitled 'The Norse Cult in the Late Iron Age', it is important to consider whether any relevant information exists regarding where, when, and how these differences can be observed.

The evidence that emerges during the course of this analysis does not suggest that women were the group who paved the way for the Christianization process. Female and male graves were equipped differently, but we cannot conclude that females were buried more frequently than males in a 'Christian' way; that is, oriented east–west, in flat graves, and coffins or in inhumation graves with few grave goods. Females were often buried in rich boat graves and they possessed artefacts more frequently than males, artefacts made of precious raw materials often used for personal, decorative objects such as dress fasteners, ornaments, and so on. Female graves do not typically involve Christian symbols. In eastern Norway, few female graves have been observed at all, with the only graves identified being male or those where the gender cannot be determined. It is hard to believe that women and men had different belief systems. Rather than religious differences, the differences between male and female graves may be explained by gender patterns in the past, such as the social status of women contrasted to that of men, and the consequences that this may have had for the volume and nature of the grave goods or the design of the grave monuments in female graves in comparison to their male counterparts.

Previous scholarly research may fill in some of the geographical gaps in the present investigation, or throw light on the results and analyses of the selected areas. But, due to differences in the points of departure between this current work and some of the previous studies, it is sometimes difficult to compare the results directly. It is possible to illustrate the difference between old and new results by

comparing some of Engelstad's data from his investigation into Christianization in eastern Norway with the results above. Engelstad's main concern was with the Viking period, although he briefly addresses earlier finds and pays attention to place names, the earliest church sites, runic inscriptions, and so on. Many of his results are different from the interpretations presented here. For example, Engelstad concluded that Valdres was one of the earliest places to be Christianized in eastern Norway (Engelstad 1929: 381). Even if much of the material from Valdres is the same today as in Engelstad's time, there is nothing in the new results to indicate early Christianization of this region. Engelstad also decided that cremations were the dominant form of burial ritual in Gudbrandsdalen, but there was a tendency towards an increasing proportion of inhumations during the Viking period until inhumations came to dominate completely in the eleventh century (Engelstad 1929: 334). He argued that the increase in inhumations was a result of Christianization. However, a glance at his tables reveals that there was only one grave from Gudbrandsdalen from the eleventh century, and while the ratio between cremations and inhumations was 18:8 in the ninth century, it had become 9:3 in the tenth century. In my opinion, the only possible interpretation of this statistic is that there was actually a relative increase in cremations during the Viking period in Gudbrandsdalen. Nevertheless, inhumations did actually dominate the material from two of the municipalities in Gudbrandsdalen, namely Ringebru and Sør-Fron. This was the situation both in Engelstad's time and today, but Engelstad analysed all the material from Gudbrandsdalen together, which concealed the local differences within the valley. By focusing on old traditions in each individual district, which has been the methodology employed in this volume, it often becomes obvious that inhumation was a traditional practice in Norse culture rather than a change that came about as a result of Christianization.

How is it possible to reach such different conclusions from the same evidence? Judging from Engelstad's inferences, it appears that he studied individual elements and generalized for a wider geographical area. He based his interpretations on a relatively simple, evolutionistic perspective, viewing Christianity as being determined to spread gradually throughout the landscape, following natural routes regardless of cultural facilitators or hinderers. He presumed that Christianity reached the inner parts of eastern Norway via two main routes: firstly, from the south via Glomma River and Oslofjorden and, secondly, from the west, via Valdres (Engelstad 1929: 377–79). Even if Engelstad appeared to be judging archaeological evidence on its own terms, he frequently found support in Snorri's accounts of the activities of the missionary kings, as well as for other issues. Consequently, it seems that he must have worked on the basis of previously established

models regarding how and when Christianity was established. The main reasons why the conclusions in this book are different from those reached by Engelstad are these. We have adopted a generally more critical attitude towards the information in the later written sources, emphasized contemporary archae-ological elements as part of a wider whole, understood the importance of religious ritual, and focused on the specific time periods and geographical contexts. Such differences are typical of the contrast between the research paradigms of the early twentieth century and those of the twenty-first century.

This study has asserted that for Norway in general the number of grave goods in cremation graves increased towards the end of the Viking period, with particularly rich cremation graves occurring in the tenth century (Solberg 2000: 223). This has primarily been observed among the counties in Viken; Vestfold in particular experienced some sort of 'pagan revival' in the latter part of the tenth century. This was different from Østfold on the other side of the fjord, which followed a pattern more closely linked to Sweden. The ratio between cremations and inhumation graves was relative even in Vestfold, while cremations totally dominated in Østfold. Most of the cremation graves in Vestfold were dated to before 950, but some cremation graves in Østfold and Vestfold were dated to as late as 1050 (Kisile 2000: 77–79). Even if the number of large barrows from the late Iron Age are lower compared to the early Iron Age, the size of the barrows grew considerably: the average diameter of the big barrows in Vestfold was 23.3 m in the early Iron Age compared to 41.7 m in the late Iron Age, and the corresponding average height was 2.3 m compared to 5.9 m. The graves were also internally 'richer' in the late Iron Age: for example, in the case of the Oseberg and Gokstad ship graves (Gansum 1995b: 163).

In western Norway the situation is similarly varied: in Etne in Hordaland the relative number of cremation graves increased during the Viking period compared to the Merovingian period, but in contrast to eastern Norway, relatively more grave goods have been recorded in the inhumation graves than in the cremations (Madsen 1998). In Vik in Sogn we have seen how the number of graves increased in the Viking period compared to the Merovingian period, but decreased from the ninth to the tenth century. The interpretation of this is that society became stratified during the period 750–1030. The decrease in Norse graves during the tenth century could be seen as a sign of the aggregation of individual farms into manors; since the barrows have been understood as a result of landownership, fewer barrows could indicate fewer landowners and larger entities. The alternative interpretation is that this is a sign of Christian influence (Bødal 1998). As a general description of the situation in western Norway, Solberg has argued that:

I Sogn, i Nordfjord og på nordre Sunnmøre er det en markert nedgang i tallet på funn fra 800-tallet til 900-tallet. Her er det knapt registrert gravfunn fra 1000-tallet, og den kristne gravskikken synes fullt ut å ha erstattet den hedenske før år 1000. Hordaland viser et noe annet bilde. [...] En håndfull graver er datert til 1000-tallet. Hedendommen synes således å ha hatt et sterkere grep i Hordaland enn i øvrige deler av Vestlandet. (Solberg 2000: 315)

(In Sogn, in Nordfjord and at northern Sunnmøre there is a marked decrease in the numbers of finds from the ninth to the tenth century. Hardly any graves are recorded from the eleventh century, and Christian burial customs seem to have fully replaced pagan ones before the year 1000. The picture is different in Hordaland. [...] A handful of [Norse] graves are dated to the eleventh century. Paganism seems to have had a firmer grip on Hordaland than on other parts of western Norway.)

It has been suggested that in Hordaland female graves tended to contain more restrained equipment and some possible Christian symbols. The situation could indicate a greater Christian influence on females than on males, but Gellein warns against jumping to conclusions on these grounds, as this interpretation obviously rests on weak foundations (Gellein 1997: 95). In Vik in Sogn some of the late Iron Age female graves were the richest, and many of these contained insular material. The region of Jæren and Sogn og Fjordane is also extremely rich in imported objects in Iron Age graves. However, Vik has more imports from the British Isles than any other region in Sogn, and these attest to contact with distant (possibly Christian) areas or with people who had such connections. No such early Christian activity has been recorded in Vik, however. The presence of insular material in female graves in Vik has been interpreted as a result of matrimonial alliances between Vik and an Irish region (Bødal 1998: 106). This is an interesting theory, for it is quite possible that a patrilocal marriage alliance structure existed, meaning that wives were brought from Ireland to Vik and vice versa. During the late Iron Age the British Isles received Scandinavian immigrants, and people were probably crossing the ocean by ship regularly. The result may have been acculturation, in both directions. However, we do know that a Scandinavian woman among the immigrants to Ireland could have practised their Norse religion as well as the Christian religion (see Connolly and Coyne 2005: 174–76).

Alliances based on intermarriage and the fostering of children may have been important for keeping the peace between potential rivals. This and the possible importation of slaves to Norway could have brought people belonging to different religious groups — such as Christians or Muslims — into close contact with each other. This could have been one factor that resulted in a gradual change of the burial cult in Scandinavia as we will see below.

While Norse cult practices could be extremely varied overall, the customs within an individual district seem to have been more consistent. This applied also to the duration of the cult: the date when the Norse cult ended differs from area to area. In some places Norse graves disappeared relatively early on and in others relatively late (see ‘Dating the Conversion: The Latest Norse Cult and Earliest Christian Cult Observed’ in Chapter 5).

Source criticism cannot explain the differences in the traces left of cult from area to area. Differences in distribution patterns surely offer some reliable representation of reality. Even if one and the same meaning can be illustrated by different rituals and symbols and, conversely, one and the same ritual or symbol may give several meanings, it is hard to believe that all the variations could be understood within the same complex of belief system. My own conclusion in this matter is thus very similar to the previously cited conclusions made by Andrén, Jennbert, and Raudvere 2006 (for which see ‘History and Background’ in Chapter 1). When major differences occur in various parts of the country — such as the inhumation graves with horses, boats, ditches, and so on at Gulli in Vestfold, in contrast to the cremations in Ringeby, or the complex grave forms in Gulen — it is easy to explain them as the result of differences in belief systems. Natural topography has always made communication across Norway difficult, and it is natural that individual belief systems and cult activities would have been created, but when the same pattern is observed in one and the same village, the question of how this should be conceived is far less straightforward.

Looked at through the traces of its cult, Norse religion might be compared with historic Hinduism in the first millennium BC, as a religion not founded by any religious leader. Because of this background, Hinduism has never been as dogmatic as Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam, and has not espoused dogmatic theories about world creation, the character of the soul, and so on. Instead it could be described as a ‘virgin forest’ with wild plants and differences in character at various times (Glasenapp 1973: 17–18). The Hindu pantheon is manifold, and various local divine characters and heroes have been adopted, although at a late stage they found unity through the trinity of Vishnu, Brahma, and Shiva. In addition to worship at a temple, a great number of new rituals and festivals were introduced into private and public life, so that the entirety of a person’s existence became religious, from birth to death. Today, Hinduism remains a religion capable of maintaining old traditions and assimilating new elements (Glasenapp 1973: 39–50). Although the actual belief systems of Hinduism and the Norse religion were obviously different, the manifold, non-intellectual, and tolerant character of early Hinduism and its organizational structure might also be useful terms to

describe the character of the religion that existed behind the traces of cult observed in Norway in the late Iron Age.

Erik Gunnes argued that the multiple gods in the Norse pantheon must have started to become a burden on the intellect of the Norse people, which would have made Christianity more attractive to them (Gunnes 1976: 226). It has also been posited that the invention of the Thor's hammer was a sign of crises in the Norse religion (Staecker 1999: 243). Nevertheless, few signs of any great crisis in the Norse religion have been found, at least regarding the degree of moderation in burial expenses towards the end of the Viking period. Arguably, the uneducated Norse people would hardly have noticed the quantitative difference between Christianity's many divine figures (God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, the angels, the saints, and so on) and the similarly various divine figures in Norse religion. On the contrary, this must have been one of the similarities between the two religions that made it easier for the Norse people to convert. They probably had a personal favourite among the divine figures within Norse religion, and found a new favourite among the Christian saints for a particular purpose. The Christian God would probably have been too abstract to worship alone for a typical, non-intellectual person.

Christian Influence on Norse Cult?

One of the main issues addressed in this book regards the possible influence of Christianity on Norse cult, and the need to determine whether there is any way to document the presence of a Christian community or Christian individuals in the region, or whether locals were introduced to Christianity elsewhere, adapting impulses and changing old customs (ON *siðr*). Various concepts are used for describing the encounters between various groups of people who belong to different religions, which in this case involves the meeting of a world religion (Christianity) and a local religion (Norse or Saami). As discussed in Part I, 'acculturation' has been the term we have preferred to use to describe this situation. Perhaps several acculturation processes occurred simultaneously, with the Norse being influenced by the Christians, the Christians being influenced by the Norse, and then the Norse influenced first by the Saami and then by the Christians.

A situation in which several religions occur side by side in one and the same district could be described as a diverse religious arena. 'Religious dualism' is the term used for the particular case of the same people practising two religions, but for different purposes (Saler 2000: 36–38). It is undeniable that even in a single religious community, different understandings, attitudes, and aspirations could

exist. Benson Saler has discussed synchronic variability in terms of a 'Little Tradition' and a 'Great Tradition' which, even if criticized, may have some value for conceptualizing differences in the recorded material. The Great Tradition can represent elements such as widely respected sacred texts¹ and ritual observances. The Little Tradition can refer to local folk variants of the Great Tradition that could be characterized by local concepts and practices, as well as the reduction or absence of some of the textual and other features of the Great Tradition (Saler 2000: 33–34). Following this distinction, it is possible, for instance, that the burial cult might represent the Little Tradition with a mixture of Norse and Christian customs, while in other matters people followed the Great Tradition, which could have been 'official' Christendom in whatever form it was perceived; or vice versa. Assimilating new ideas while still practising former traditions would demonstrate one kind of gradual change.

The diverse nature of the material from the Iron Age burial cult has complicated efforts to map possible processes of acculturation, which might otherwise be observed as gradual, ritual changes. However, as demonstrated in Part II, there are few examples in the selected material that can be classified as examples of what I defined in the introduction as category (c): 'those showing evidence of a systematic change from local traditions to an intruding — in this case, Christian — tradition, beyond the churchyard'.² Some objects of Christian origin have been identified, but in a context that fails to prove that they retained their original meaning.

The general pattern that can be observed from our sample material is that graves from the Viking Age normally followed the traditions from the Merovingian period, concerning alignment, grave form, the treatment of the body, and grave goods. Regarding the last of these, all the categories of grave goods found from the Viking Age were also found in the same district in the Merovingian period. Graves from the Viking period were generally 'richer' than those from the Merovingian period, contained more types of objects, and also more items, but otherwise they maintained the older traditions of the district. This pattern is generally observable for each area up until the time when burials ceased to be carried out according to Norse traditions.

Only a few examples have been identified as diverging from this general pattern, perhaps as a result of an acculturation process that changed the ritual so that

¹ In this context I regard oral text as being as relevant as written, as this was a society with strong oral traditions.

² See 'Selected Material and Methods' in Chapter 1.

it was more in accordance with Christian traditions. The most convincing example comes from Farsund, where three flat graves were found that dated to the Viking Age, which contrasted sharply with the evidence that all graves from the Merovingian period were covered by a barrow. One of the flat graves was also east–west oriented and seemed to contain just a sword. The sword was not found *in situ* in the grave, but even if it had been in the grave it could have been construed as part of the costume. Some bits of charcoal were added to the grave. As described earlier (‘Early Christianity and Christianization’ in Chapter 3), charcoal did occur from time to time in Christian graves, and therefore these graves in Farsund could have been Christian even if they were not found in a churchyard. But due to the generally poor quality and sparse number of grave goods in this district, we cannot be certain about possible Christian influences in Farsund. If the earliest inhumation graves at Faret by Skien and Liknes in Vest-Agder are indeed Christian — a supposition that I have more doubts about than the excavators — then they were located in a former Norse cemetery. Additionally, in the case of the cemeteries in Kaupang, debate continues over a number of Christian elements in certain graves, which might denote foreign visitors. None of these cases are clear-cut, however, but if they are Christian, then they would have been buried in Norse cemeteries. These are the only possible cases that we have observed in this analysis where people may have been influenced by Christian burial customs, but not buried in Christian cemeteries. But in Sweden and Ireland this phenomenon is much more clearly and widely observed (Artelius and Kristensson 2006, Redknap 1996: 764, Connolly and Coyne 2005: 174–76).

In Grimstad there was a tendency for greater variations in burial rituals to occur towards the end of the late Iron Age. Only five inhumation graves are recorded, but all these are from the Viking or early medieval period and cists occur from the Viking Age as well. This pattern could once again be the result of an acculturation process. However, only one grave has been dated to the Merovingian period, which means that the nature of the tradition from the previous period is very uncertain. For instance, the only grave from the Merovingian period was one of the three flat graves in Grimstad. The increasingly varied burial customs through the Viking Age could be explained by Christian influences, but as other Christian features have not been found except the inhumation graves, this could also be explained as the result of some other kind of social tension or creative response to increased interaction with people from outside the family group. In Ullensaker two graves have been discussed as possibly having been influenced by Christianity (‘Saami Religion and the Christianization of the Saami’ in Chapter 3), but neither case is convincing. The unusual grave located under a cairn in

the mountains in Nord-Fron could be Christian as well as Norse or Saami, even if the grave was covered by a cairn. Nevertheless, the date for this grave is quite late (c. 1150–1300), from a period when Norway had already been established as a Christian province.

Overall, no change is observable in our sample to suggest that Norse burial rituals changed as the result of particular positive responses to Christian cult activity before the cult became exclusively Christian. However, a more convincing pattern was observed in quite a few examples that suggested that the opposite was true: changes brought about as the result of a negative response to Christianity, if a turning away from Christian-like burial customs can be interpreted this way. In Frosta and Valle the cremation tradition grew stronger through the Viking Age, and in Tingvoll a change took place over time in a single barrow, with an inhumation dating from the early Viking Age and a cremation from the late Viking Age. In Rauma one or more graves were found under an overhanging rock, and the objects contained in them have been dated between the tenth and the first half of the eleventh centuries. This could indicate that people felt compelled to carry out their Norse rituals in secret, yet wanted to perform them in spite of legislation forbidding them to do so. In the same municipality a set of Christian ritual objects was found in a Norse grave. The reliquary had been broken into and its sacred content probably removed, thus demonstrating disrespect for Christian symbols in Rauma in the latter part of the Viking Age. The examples from Grimstad mentioned above should be repeated here as well: the burial traditions grew more heterogeneous towards the end of Iron Age, which could be viewed as a response to the intrusion of Christianity.

The apparent tendency of the local Norse populations to respond negatively to Christian influences seems to be supported by stronger evidence than the hypothesis that they perceived Christian influences in a positive light. Additional (but uncertain) examples of this include the high cross from Rol and the cross slab from Hustad in Nord-Trøndelag. The Rol cross was either worn down by the weather, or reshaped by humans to give it a striking resemblance to Thor's hammer, and the cross slab fell or was pulled down from its originally upright position (see 'Free-Standing Cross Slabs and Stone Crosses (High Crosses)' in Chapter 5). Even if there was no cult of Thor in Trøndelag, the population may have known the shape of a Thor's hammer, just as they were aware of the shape of the Christian cross. Such a reshaping of the Christian cross was probably the simplest and most effectively conspicuous way of destroying a Christian symbol. In this same region, it seems as though the traditional cult places at Hove were unwillingly vacated around 1000, although maybe with the hope of returning at a later date.

Elsewhere, it is likely that the old cult place at Mære was forcibly abandoned around fifty years later; and we might conclude that some form of uprising was associated with this event.

These latter examples indicate hostility towards Christianity or an unwillingness to give up old cult places. They demonstrate the fact that people took pride in old traditions through the conspicuous practice of Norse cult. It is therefore not surprising that some level of conflict regarding the Christianization process has been traced in Trøndelag, Nord-Møre, and Romsdal, and perhaps in Agder as well. This conflict took place during the latter part of the Viking Age or early medieval period in these municipalities, though unfortunately more precise dates cannot be established for each area. Nevertheless, it could indirectly indicate some kind of presence of Christianity in the vicinity. It is hard to believe that such demonstrations would have been worthwhile if, for instance, their intended spectators had been living across the North Sea, but the presence of only a few Christians or one important person in the neighbourhood might have been enough reason.

Previous results from relevant research outside the areas of our sample indicate similar conclusions elsewhere: in Hordaland attempts have been made to trace possible Christian influences in 502 graves from the late Iron Age. The conclusion was that 'paganism' flourished during the late Iron Age, there was an increase in Norse cult activity during the tenth century and a drastic reduction during the eleventh century after which it came to a relatively sudden and full stop. Gellein's interpretation of this was that there might possibly have been Christian influence over some time, followed by a quick, more formal transfer to Christianity (Gellein 1997: 97). More detailed analysis of the municipality of Etne, based on the same kind of material, reached more or less the same conclusion: that the shift to Christianity was an abrupt event (Madsen 1998: 98). There were more flat graves in the Merovingian period than in the Viking period, and the symbolic meaning of the mound seemed to grow more profound towards the end of Viking Age. Grave goods became more numerous in the Viking Age than in the previous period, as did the proportion of cremations. Norse burial customs remained vital up to the end, and there was no sign of Birkeli's 'phase of infiltration' (Madsen 1998).

A development different to that in Hordaland has been suggested for Rogaland. Research by Per Hernæs on Rogaland seems to show that Christian influence began as early as around 700, for Christian-influenced graves can be found from this period onwards. There was also a gradual change in Norse cult activity that was the result of an acculturation process between the Norse and Christian

religious practices. Hernæs's conclusion was based on analyses of around 200 graves from the late Iron Age in Rogaland that fulfilled the following three criteria: first, graves that were strikingly poorly equipped with grave goods and contained primarily personal belongings; second, that they were inhumation flat graves; and third, that the graves included Christian elements. However, his conclusions were derived from the supposition that artefacts in Iron Age graves should be viewed as the surest method for detecting Christian influence (Hernæs 1995: 92). For instance, he interpreted rock crystal as a Christian artefact, although in fact rock crystals are found in graves in eastern Norway throughout the whole of the Iron Age, and should not be interpreted automatically as a token of Christian influence (Carlström 1994: 50–51). This fact, together with interpretations of other unconventional grave objects,³ makes Hernæs's hypothesis disputable. However, if the catalogue of information that Hernæs included in his article is interpreted in light of the methodologies applied in this book — focusing on rituals rather than artefacts — the conclusion can be altered to make it more satisfactory. It seems that in Rogaland Christian influence was not as early and obvious as argued by Hernæs. His catalogue demonstrates that there were quite a few Norse graves in tumuli and various grave finds dated to the tenth century, while Norse grave finds also exist from the early eleventh century onwards.⁴ Similarly, the catalogue information suggests that the eleventh century marked the end of the Norse burial tradition in Rogaland.

Earliest Traces of Christian Cult

Generally speaking, the earliest churches that still stand in our sample regions of Norway are not old enough to be of great interest to this study. The small finds do not add very much to the picture of the Christianization process in Norway, except for the finds in Trondheim. The high stone crosses and cross slabs have proved difficult to use as well, at least for the time before around 1030, because both their chronology and function is unclear. The most important observation regarding the stone crosses is their significant distribution pattern: free-standing, monumental, plain, and un-ringed crosses were most popular in western Norway with a few in Numedal in eastern Norway, while only one stone cross and one

³ For instance, a richly decorated, round gilded buckle is thought to have included a Christian cross, catalogue no. S4399.

⁴ For instance, catalogue no. S6782, Arkeologisk museum i Stavanger (AmS).

cross slab have been observed in central Norway. In eastern Norway the crosses are ring-crosses, considerably smaller than in the west and often found as part of a church or associated with a Christian grave at a churchyard.

Saga writers and later historians emphasized the important role played by kings in the Christianization process. Modern analyses of late Iron Age graves in Hordaland have centred on old royal manors, examining the question of whether they could have played a leading role in the region's Christianization process. In light of the international links that existed between the royal household and foreign centres of power, such a pattern might be expected, but it has not been possible to prove that the royal manors functioned as stepping stones in the Christianization process (Gellein 1997: 96).

In the present study, the best source for studying the earliest Christian cult activity in Norway has been archaeological traces at old church sites and cemeteries. Although Christian graves more or less followed Christian conventions in terms of their lack of grave goods and so on, the character of the graves shows minor local variations regarding factors such as body position, use of coffins, wrappings, and the presence of grave goods such as hazel wands. This is, however, in accordance with international standards for Christian graves for this time period; to a certain degree local variations were the norm. Local variations include burying small children and babies as close as possible to the wall of the church, which seems to have been a trend at several places in Norway, particularly at Mære and Bø. This might be a particular local adaptation of the *sub stillicidio* — graves located under the roof of the church — where, for example in Germany, graves placed closest to the church wall and to relics were regarded as being of the highest quality and status (Hassenpflug 1999: 64–65). In Bø, children were provided with hazel wands placed outside the coffin, while in Oslo the wands were placed inside adult coffins. Hazel wands have also been excavated in Trondheim. Elsewhere, some bodies were wrapped in birchbark (in Oslo and Bø), some had a *vidjer* (or *width*, a twig tied into a ring) bound around the coffin (in Oslo), and some had head-stones (in Hernes). Some of the bodies were buried in coffins, but many were not, and sometimes the coffin consisted of various constructions made of planks or hollowed trunks.

According to Lars Redin, body position developed gradually over time: the arms were initially placed along the side of the body (Type A), then on the pelvis (Type B), then on the stomach (Type C), and finally resting on the chest (Type D) (Kieffer-Olsen 2000, Redin 1976). These stages of development seem to occur in many places in the Nordic countries, but the absolute chronology of the various stages is still debated. However, the oldest of these positions (Type A) is believed

to have dominated until *c.* 1250 in South Scandinavia, and this practice continued there for quite some time (Kieffer-Olsen 2000). This is, however, not confirmed very convincingly by our sample, as illustrated, for example, by the data from Bø and Mære, which should encompass graves from the Type A period. Since the dates of these graves should be reliable, the 'Type' typology for Scandinavia should be modified where early Christian graves from Norway are concerned.

We have also observed several cases where Christian graves are earlier than the first church. This was the case during Phases 1 and 2 at St Clement's in Oslo, as well as at St Peter's in Tønsberg, at the post church in Bø, Kaupanger, Ringeby, Nore, and probably also at Mære. At Villa in Rauma, at Ålhus in Jølster, and at Hernes in Frosta no remains of a church have been recorded. This may illustrate the need for a graveyard at an early stage of the Christianization process, before any — or an adequate number of — churches were built. In the case of Hernes the church may have been located outside the area excavated; in other cases excavation methods may have been too poor to enable post holes to be traced. Nevertheless, every cemetery was probably associated with a church, even if it was not at the same site. From what we know about the early stages of Christianity in Norway's neighbouring countries, it was not uncommon for a church not to be present. In Sweden no churches were found at cemeteries such as Sântorp Snickaregården and Nölby 2 in Västergötland (Theliander 2005: 338), while early on in the British Isles, perhaps up to as late as around 1200, Christian cemeteries were located at some distance from their associated churches. Similarly, in Lund in medieval Denmark more than thirty single graves were found outside the cemeteries (Carelli 1992, Lucy and Reynolds 2002a). The situation in Lund may reflect the early Christian legislation in Norway, which stated that criminals were to be buried outside the cemetery, even if, according to the Gulathing law codes, they had to be buried at the high water mark. These requirements have also been discussed in relation to the probable Christian graveyard at Ålhus in Jølster. Some executed bodies from the late medieval period have been recorded as being buried at Faret in Skien.

Churches had to be consecrated by a bishop together with between fifteen and thirty men on horseback. According to the early Christian laws in Norway, the church needed to have an enclosed cemetery within twelve months of its establishment, but the character of the consecration ritual is not known. Moreover, it is not known what the normal practices were for the consecration of cemeteries with no church. A church with a cemetery was to be visited every twelve months by the bishop (Olafson 1914a: 25), but what the practice was for a cemetery located at a distance from a church is not known. On a few occasions, hoards were

found at church sites or cemeteries that predated the cemetery or the church. These could have been the remains of a consecration ritual involving the sacrifice of objects to the ground. A large silver hoard with coins and two beautiful cross pendants was found at a cemetery in Trondheim with a *terminus post quem* of around 1035, while a hoard of roughly the same age was found under the floor of the stone church at Stein, Ringerike (Table 2).

The earliest traces of Christian cult activity have been recorded at Veøy, where graves from the late ninth or early tenth century were found. These were later encompassed by two distinct stone enclosures that date from the early Middle Ages. A possible church was found in the centre of the enclosures. The earliest phase of Christian cult activity at Veøy seems to be an isolated event, too early to fit any narrative of Christianization as it appears in the sagas. The Christian settlement may have originated in Denmark or Germany, or the British Isles, perhaps as part of a missionary strategy. The people of the British Isles must have been among the first to hope for a change in the Viking religious mentality, as their Christian holy places had been raided from the end of the eighth century onwards; this may have been part of the motivation behind their mission. If the originally Christian artefacts found in a Norse grave at Setnes in Romsdal originated in the congregation at Veøy, this would mean that a British, Christian institution probably existed there, and the abbot's or bishop's staff indicates that this institution was most likely a monastery (see 'The Christianization of Møre og Romsdal' in Chapter 4). The removal of these Christian ritual objects indicates that there was an unintended break in the Christian cult there. However, it is quite possible that the insular, Christian objects at Setnes have a different story; for instance, they might have been taken during raids on the British Isles or exchanged via middlemen travelling to Rauma.

The results from Hordaland indicate that Hordaland did not experience a slow and gradual transition to Christianity. Bergen, which later became a town of great importance, is not very useful in this respect, as it is believed to have been founded in 1070 by King Olaf kyrri. However, quite soon after its foundation, Bergen became an important ecclesiastical centre. The bishop's seat was transferred to Bergen from Selja also during King Olaf's reign (Helle 1997: 245). Stavanger was another medieval town with a bishop's seat in the Norwegian Church province. The bishopric was founded in 1125, but so far no occupation layers have been found that are earlier than the twelfth century (Løken and Jacobsen 2004). Because of this lack of pre-episcopal activity, the town is not of great importance for the current discussion. Apart from these towns, the location of the earliest traces of Christian cult in Norway display striking similarities with

early medieval towns or central places: the earliest traces of Christian cult are found in Trondheim, Borgund, Veøy, Skien, Bø, Tønsberg, and Oslo. Indeed, apart from the rural cemetery at Bø not far from Skien, the sites for the earliest traces of Christian cult include most of the medieval towns and/or central places.

General Discussion

When mapping the latest traces of Norse cult activity and the earliest traces of Christian cult activity, some major problems emerge that need to be addressed:

- The coexistence of Norse cult and Christian cult has been observed in two districts, but in most places there is a period of time between the latest Norse and the earliest Christian cult activities. The key question is: how should this situation be understood?
- The earliest signs of Christian cult activity occur in two main areas (Romsdal/central Norway and Viken/the inner parts of the Oslofjord region), and there is a significant correlation between the earliest towns/central places in these areas and the appearance of the earliest Christian cult. The latest Norse cult is mostly observed in other regions, such as in Agder and inner parts of eastern Norway. In a few locations such as in Trøndelag, Tingvoll, and Romsdal, some degree of conflict has been observed, associated with the Christianization process. The question is: what insights can be gleaned from this geographic information?

The Gap in Time between the Latest Norse and Earliest Christian Cult

The coexistence of Christian and non-Christian cultures in the earliest period of Christianity in Norway is to be expected in one form or another. This has been observed elsewhere, for instance in Sweden (Artelius and Kristensson 2006) and Ireland (Redknap 1996). The character of the groups, the nature of their coexistence, and the question of how various groups organized the space between each other during the earliest phase of Norwegian Christianity are all issues that require further investigation.

Belief is spiritual, and it is not possible to read the minds of people from the past, particularly not on the basis of archaeological sources. That the cult took a more or less practical form, however, can be seen through the evidence that has been uncovered. The people who lived in the late Iron Age probably regarded

cosmology as more of a sacred whole than we do today in western societies, but it would still not make sense to categorize all their actions as 'cult'. Even if many actions could be performed in ritualistic ways, it would be wrong to call all actions sacred. People in the past left many traces behind, but it can be presumed that most of the religious cult from the time before *c.* 1150/1200 cannot be traced archaeologically. Most graves, for instance, have not been found, as the several thousand recorded graves from the late Iron Age cannot possibly comprise the population in Norway over approximately 500 years. The number of graves varies between regions as well. The sites analysed in this book should thus be understood as a tiny proportion of those that actually existed, most of them probably related to members of the social elite who occupied the highest echelons of society.

If this is the case, then where are the missing graves or cult places? Numerous large-scale excavation projects at various places in southern Norway have not revealed many new, large cemeteries, except for the cemetery at Gulli in Vestfold, which is exceptional for its high number of graves. Part of this problem can probably be explained by the fact that almost no cemeteries have been completely excavated in Norway, and most of the barrows were excavated more than a century ago. The main goal in many of these old excavations was to discover the contents of a grave inside a barrow, not whether there could be anything of interest in the stratigraphy of the mound itself, or what could be found outside or around the barrow. The character of the cult, the preservation conditions, excavation methods, and cultivation techniques are probably the main factors that influence whether potentially significant sites are revealed and how they are subsequently documented. In a number of records from these early excavations, notes state that there were more graves in the area beyond those recorded. In my opinion it is likely that many missing graves are close to already recorded monuments rather than at larger, yet undiscovered, cemeteries still hidden in the landscape. If this is the case, the spatial distribution of the finds observed in this book might somehow be representative of prehistoric cult activity; nevertheless, the number of grave sites analysed here must be understood as representing just a small proportion of the total number.

While this may explain some of the problems associated with the distribution of graves, it provides no explanation for the period during which no cult activities are observed, either Norse or Christian. A similar chronological gap has been observed in other parts of the Nordic countries as well, for instance in the south of former Denmark, now part of Germany (Eisenschmidt 2004: 294–95). Whether this gap was dominated by Christian or Norse cult activities, it is likely that the explanation differs from place to place.

In the medieval period, Norse cult was perceived by the authorities as a kind of physical action in the public sphere that could be forbidden or regulated by laws and physical force. Snorri described King Olaf Haraldsson's behaviour *c.* 1015–30 towards the 'pagans' as follows:

om det var noen som ikke ville holde opp å være hedninger, så tok han det så hardt at han rev noen ut av landet, noen lot han lemleste på hender eller føtter eller lot stikke øynene ut på dem, noen lot han henge eller halshogge, og han lot ingen være ustraffet som ikke ville tjene gud. (Snorre 1980: Olav den helliges Saga, chap. 73)

(If he found anyone who did not want to abandon heathendom, he drove him out of the land. Some he had maimed, having their hands or feet lopped off or their eyes gouged out, others he had hanged or beheaded, but left no one unchastized who refused to serve God.) (Snorri and Hollander 1967)

We know that early medieval legislation forbade the practice of any Norse cult activity centred around barrows, sacrificial meals, and so on, and the penalty for disobeying these prohibitions was harsh. Laws such as these may well have brought about the disappearance of public Norse cult activity, but the disappearance of such activities from the archaeological records does not necessarily indicate the end of people's beliefs in the Norse religion. Such changes in cult activities were also dependent upon the strength and effectiveness of the legislation and the degree to which the 'centre' — understood as the legal authority with the means to make and sustain legal decisions — had any effect on the 'periphery' — that is the normal members of the population who were subordinate to this 'centre'.

The establishment of Christianity in western Norway might superficially lend credence to Snorri's chronology. For instance, hardly any Norse graves in Sogn og Fjordane and in the northern parts of Sunnmøre have been identified from the eleventh century, and Bergljot Solberg has argued that the Norse burial tradition seems to have been eliminated and replaced by Christianity in most places in this region before 1000 (Solberg 2000: 315). This is different from other western regions such as Hordaland, where Norse cult activities were performed for longer. Yet whenever the Norse cult stopped, there is a time gap between the latest Norse cult and the first Christian cult that could be traced in most parts of the country. Indeed, most standing churches were not built before the foundation of the Nidaros archbishopric. In formulating her theory, Solberg could therefore be seen as jumping to conclusions. The high crosses have often been mentioned as belonging to the missionary stage of the Christianization process, and could have functioned as places for celebrating mass or performing other Christian rituals in an early phase of Christianity in Norway, but as we have seen, the chronology and function of these monuments are unclear.

It would have taken some time before several churches had been built and a priest drafted in to serve them. When a Christian congregation was set up, the establishment of cemeteries was one of the urgent matters to solve. In several places only Christian graves are observed, either preceding a church or located where no church is recorded at all. In the early phase of Christianization it is likely that people had to congregate at a few consecrated Christian cemeteries, and until a church was provided for their own village Christian rituals probably had to take place there as well. Peter Carelli has argued that the cemetery that preceded the later Trinitatis stone church in Lund had been a central cemetery for Christians in the whole of Skåne during the years from 994 to around 1050, that is, a necropolis for Skåne (Carelli 2004). This is also a possible function of the cemetery preceding St Clement's in Oslo (Nordeide and Gulliksen 2007; Nordeide 2007). Other churchless cemeteries or early churches may have fulfilled similar functions for a relatively high number of people across a large district.

It is likely that the Church first targeted the king and the social elite, for it was these members of society who were converted first (as we will discuss next). Until Christian congregations and churches were established more locally, these people would have had to travel to visit a Christian cult place. It could be that these are the people we have found buried at the large Christian cemeteries in Lund and Oslo. An early Christian church and cemetery could thus have attracted people to the area as well as attracting other kinds of activities such as craft and trade, which in turn contributed to the process of urbanization. In this way the needs of the king and the Church were served by towns, combining both practical and ideological purposes. However, if most of the recognized graves from the late Iron Age are to be associated with the social elite, then that leaves the graves of the majority of the population eluding us. The majority of people might still be Norse, but, as for the previous periods, we still have not found their graves.

Christianization, Kings, and Towns

Rauma and the regions which were urbanized early on the west side of Viken illustrate the fact that very different rituals were able to exist side by side within a relatively small area. The scale and character of the landscape in Rauma demonstrates in particular that ritual differences cannot be explained by people living isolated from each other. Various groups of people were grouped together by the landscape in Rauma, especially in the Romsdalen valley, where they lived in narrow pockets between high mountains. All communication from the coast to eastern Norway and which travelled through the valley would have had to follow

a narrow channel; there was nowhere that people could travel without having a fair chance of meeting and observing each other. The estimated number of people in the region leads me to believe that the inhabitants of the valley knew each other, and many were probably even related to each other. This means that they probably participated in each other's different rituals. The people of Rauma must have experienced these differences in rituals, and they must have accepted and perhaps appreciated them as a natural part of life. It is important to stress that ritual variance was probably even an important part of wider group identity.

Whether the differences we have observed in Norse burial cult can be related to major differences in religious concepts is a difficult problem. There may have been differences on the scale of the 'Great Tradition' and the 'Little Tradition', but different religions may also have existed side by side. For instance, in ancient Roman religion, cremation and inhumation were practised by different people (*gentiles*), and the association between Germanic people and the cremation rite remains a topic of scholarly debate (Williams 2002). In Iceland only one cremation has been recorded from the Viking period (Byock and others 2005), even though the island was probably populated to a large degree by individuals from various Scandinavian countries who had practised cremation before they left for Iceland. The majority of the early Icelandic graves from this period are dated to the late tenth century, and it has been suggested by Orri Vésteinsson that the uniform inhumation burial rites testify to an evolution in colonial identity. This might have been one way to show that they were unique, different from the people inhabiting the Scandinavian area from where they came.⁵

Even if the theory regarding a link between ethnicity and cremation rites has been disputed among English scholars (Williams 2002), and even if the motivation for cremation may have varied from place to place, this discussion is relevant for the situation in Norway as well. It is not clear why some bodies were cremated and others were not; nor is it possible to comprehend fully the reasons for other differences that have also been observed. A burial monument or a cemetery can be regarded as a receptacle of symbols and the bearer of a group's collective memories and identity, and the form is ascribed a certain cluster of meaning (Artelius and Kristensson 2006, Halbwachs 1992). If we focus on the perceived differences in Norse rituals, given the link between 'form' and 'religious meaning', it is almost impossible for the differences to be explained as a result of differences between a 'Great Tradition' and 'Little Tradition'. They need rather to be interpreted as different social groups playing out their particular belief systems — and possibly

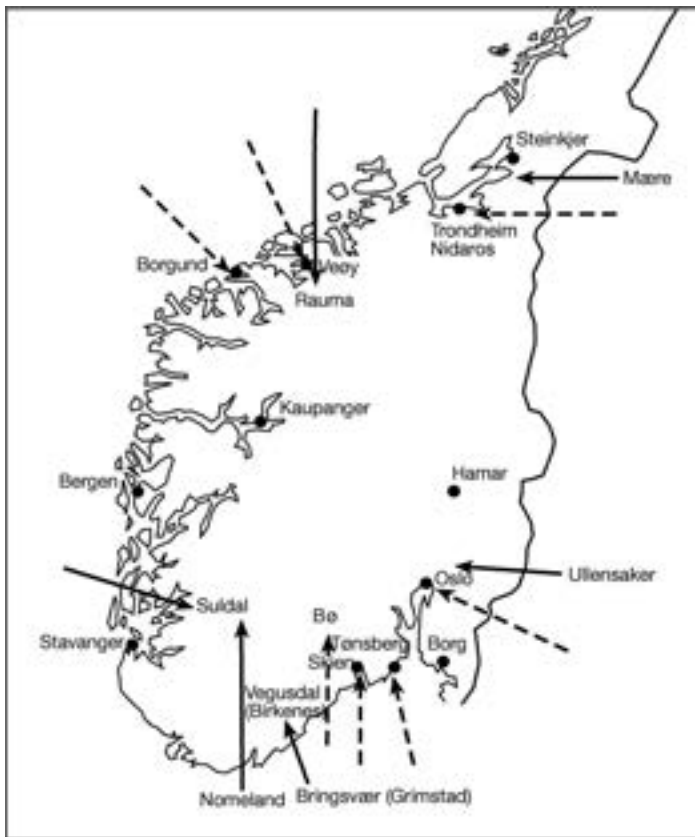
⁵ Orri Vésteinsson, personal communication, 20 October 2008.

also their identities — through their burial rituals. Consequently, these rites would mirror religious and social differences and similarities. Because the earliest Christian cult has been found at Veøy in Romsdal, the Christian inhumations may have been conceived among the locals in Rauma as yet another group — perhaps foreigners — expressing their identity in their own specific way, with a *siðr* of their own.

The fact that there were no towns in Norway before Christianity arrived, except for the short-lived Viking-Age town of Kaupang, makes the link between the location of the earliest Christian cult activities and the majority of early Norwegian towns even more significant. Some of the dateable traces of Christian activity may be contemporary with or even precede the urban settlement in Trondheim, Oslo, Tønsberg, Borgund, Skien, Stavanger, and Veøy (Map 14). In spite of large-scale excavations, archaeologists have not succeeded in proving the existence of an urban settlement in Oslo prior to the middle of the eleventh century and in Tønsberg before the end of the eleventh century. Although it is later in documentary sources, occupation layers in Borgund have been dated recently to the tenth or early eleventh century (Nordeide 2010, Nordeide and Gulliksen 2007, Eriksson 1990: 132, Larsen 2008). Veøy is mentioned as a *kaupbar* ('small town' or 'trading place') in 1162, but has been more reliably identified as a central place from around 1200 (Helle and Nedkvitne 1982: 64). Christian rituals appeared earlier than, or contemporary with, the urban settlement in all of these places, while Trondheim is an even more obvious example of the correspondence between Christianity and the emergence of towns and cities.

A similar pattern has been observed in Denmark, where no traces of churches have been found in relation to the many excavations of late Viking Age sites in the village. Prior to around 1060–70 churches probably existed only in towns and it has been suggested that up until then the people of Denmark were served by the urban churches and a number of minsters (Roesdahl 2006).

The coexistence of Thor's hammers and early Christian cult activity was examined in 'Thor's Hammer: An Antipathetic Response to Christianity?' in Chapter 5, particularly the question of whether the coming of Christianity might have contributed to the need for a Norse symbol as a response to the Christian cross. In light of this, the question is whether the Thor's hammers appeared in areas where the Christianization process was particularly aggressive, or where there were alliances or particularly good contacts with Sweden and Denmark. A comparison of Map 11 and Map 14 suggests that most of the Thor's hammers appeared in Viken, in the same region where early urbanization and Christianization



Map 14. Evidence from Table 13 and Table 14 in relation to medieval towns and central places in Norway (Nordeide 2010). Dotted lines: latest Norse cult; unbroken lines: earliest Christian cult.

is observed, but an area which is also closest to Denmark and Sweden. On the other hand, there is no similar correspondence between early Christian activities in Trøndelag and Møre and Romsdal, and the few Thor's hammers in western Norway will have to be explained in a different way.

Birkeli's argument was that conversion must have been much slower than previously thought (Birkeli 1973: 8–10; Birkeli 1995: 16–17). This contradicts Bagge's thesis of a quick conversion, his reasoning being that in the Middle Ages people were more willing to achieve their goals through more effective and perhaps more brutal methods (Bagge 2005a: 123). The results of the analysis

presented in this volume favour Bagge's view: the change of religion seems to have been quick and forceful for most parts of the country, although this occurred sooner in some places than in others. This argument assumes that there was someone — a king, the Church, or a similar organization — who had the desire and the opportunities to employ such methods in order to promote the process of Christianization.

If the concurrence of early towns and Christianity is compared with the story told in the later documentary sources, some interesting links between kings and urbanization appear. In the sagas the history of towns is closely linked to kings, who were honoured for founding and re-establishing towns. In *Heimskringla* we have the cases of King Olaf Tryggvason who founded Trondheim in 997 (Olaf Tryggvason's Saga, chap. 70), King Olaf Haraldsson who re-established Trondheim and founded Borg (Sarpsborg) (St Olaf's Saga, chaps 42 and 53), King Harald Hardrada who founded Oslo around 1050 (Harald Hardrada's Saga, chap. 58), and King Olaf kyrri who founded Bergen around 1070 (Olaf kyrri's Saga, chap. 2). According to the sagas, the kings founded a town, built churches and royal residences, marked out properties, and invited people to settle there. To understand various sides of this process we need to consider the interaction between the autonomy of individuals and the extent to which the wider social infrastructure could influence the situation (Kommisrud 1983: 47). Ownership of land, gender, and international relations with mutual interests are key to understanding who was in command of each situation (Nordeide 1999). From what has been said above, it may be assumed that the Church did not address individuals, but turned to higher authorities in order to establish itself in new polities. So each individual did not have an equal opportunity to influence the process. Contrary to what Skre suggests (Skre 2008), it is my view that the royal initiatives described in the sagas would have provided kings with the ability to control both the type and character of the activities that took place in a 'town' as well as the people living there, at least in this embryonic phase of urban settlement around 1000.

The Christianization process was also closely linked to kings. Kings brought missionaries to Norway, and they were in many ways eager to spread Christianity (Bagge 2005a, Bagge 2005b, Bagge and Nordeide 2007). Historians such as Halvdan Koht, Konrad Maurer, and Fredrik Paasche focused primarily on the role of the missionary kings in the Christianization process and at the same time concluded that the transition was a smooth one (Madsen 1998: 13). However, this is not how the saga-writers depict the deeds of these kings. Snorri's account of King Olaf's Christianization project describes many of his methods as being intentionally brutal in order to bring about a quick conversion. These methods included

killings, mutilations, and the confiscation of property (see, for instance, *Heimskringla*, Olafkyrri's Saga, chaps 60 and 107–09). The missionary kings apparently used the word as well as the sword to spread the gospel, and the 'missionary work' described occurred at the same time as the period during which they were attempting to establish their own monarchy. The kings are often honoured in the sagas for building churches and providing churches with land, and quite a few of these buildings are located in towns. In Denmark too, kings were avant-garde regarding the Christianization process; all the kings after King Gorm (who died in 958/59) were buried as Christians after the official conversion to Christianity. The rest of the Danish people followed eventually, but a high degree of religious tolerance was still observed around AD 1000 in Denmark, and the use of Thor's hammers and barrow graves continued to a certain extent into the years after the turn of the millennium (Roesdahl 2006).

Some of the early kings of Norway were raised abroad and only arrived in Norway as adults. There are several reasons for this: King Håkon the Good was, for instance, raised by the Anglo-Saxon king Athelstan (*Æpelstān*) in England, where he received a Christian upbringing. Although the story about King Olaf Tryggvason varies in different sources, the versions agree that his mother escaped with Olaf while he was a little boy. They fled to relatives, and Olaf was brought up as a refugee at the court of the mighty King Vladimir in Novgorod in ancient Rus'. Later on he was christened and he brought missionaries with him to Norway (Bagge 2005b).⁶

The kings' interest in Christianity may have something to do with the fact that the kings themselves were Christian. Yet this does not explain why the kings made such great efforts to spread Christianity and bring missionaries to Norway, if we are to believe the sagas in this respect. I would suggest that the explanation for the kings' Christianization projects can be found instead in their attempts to establish their own kingdoms. When viewed in this context, it seems that Christianity offered an ideology that would underpin leadership by a single individual, and thence a strong, centralized monarchy. Even if, at first glance, to the uninitiated Norse population, Christianity could appear to be a religion with a plurality of gods (in terms of the Holy Trinity and the multitude of saints), it was monotheistic, and the organization of the Church was even more obviously hierarchical, with one sole leader. This hypothesis is neither radical nor new. Yet it can be taken further, for the reason why kings founded towns can also be understood

⁶ Some doubts about Olaf's eventual baptism as a boy is discussed in 'Discussion: The Christianization of Trøndelag' in Chapter 4.

within this context: the king needed a firm foundation upon which he could establish a Christian congregation, serve a Christian population, and spread Christianity further afield. This was probably of particular importance for a foreign pretender to the throne; he needed physical centres where he could base his missionaries and build up a Christian congregation. Strong social networks would have been more difficult to obtain for the would-be king who approached the Norwegian coast from abroad, eager to establish his monarchy. Thus, the establishment of a Christian centre provided the king with a local, Christian base. Consequently, the driving force behind the royal foundation of the towns probably had more to do with the desire to establish a 'port of faith' rather than a 'port of trade'. The 'port of trade' concept has frequently been associated with the process of medieval urbanization since its introduction in 1956 (Arnold 1957, Chapman 1957, Polanyi 1957, Nordeide 2010). A port of trade was meant to 'serve as a meeting place for foreign traders [...] Prior to modern days, the port of trade should therefore be regarded as the main organ of long-distance commerce' (Chapman 1957: 115–16). A port of trade could also be 'an organ of administrative trade' and resolve 'some of the less obvious problems of statecraft under archaic conditions, such as military requirements and protection against undesirable culture contact' (Arnold 1957: 154).

The port of trade model does not seem to fit the embryonic phase of the medieval towns in Norway too well. In medieval towns such as Trondheim very little trade has been observed in the earliest period (Nordeide 1990a, Christophersen and Nordeide 1994: 245). This does not mean that no trade was going on at all. 'Kaupang' is both a word indicating trade and a place name also used for Trondheim in the sagas, but only describing a part of the town or as one of several names in addition to Trondheim and Nidaros (Snorri, *Heimskringla*, passim).

The royal urbanization initiative challenged the delicate balance of the relationship between the king, the landowners, and individual members of society, each looking out for their own interests. Trade and exchange together constitute only one of these interests, and this should be understood within its historical context, for craft and trade were probably organized in the same manner as the rest of society (Nordeide 1999). It appears that a king may have begun the foundation of a town as an important step in establishing a Christian institution and a royal residence, and it would have taken some time before a more autonomous, multifunctional urban settlement flourished, including independent short- and long-distance trade initiatives. A medieval city could have had more or different functions to the old Viking Age centre of Kaupang where trade and craft may have been its most important functions (Skre 2008).

Whatever motivations the kings might have had for spreading Christianity, these would have fallen into line naturally with the interests of the Church. The ultimate goal for the Church was to make all people Christian. The archbishopric in Hamburg-Bremen was founded with the specific goal in mind of converting Scandinavia (Tveito 2005). The Church could make people convert by convincing them to change their beliefs and become true Christians, but, as Birkeli argued, this took a long time (Birkeli 1973). Nevertheless, the Church offered more sophisticated ways than the king to persuade people into converting: educated people could convert people more efficiently through the 'mission of the word'; skilled craftsmen could build breathtakingly magnificent and monumental churches with the inviting scent of incense and decorative high-status artefacts of various kinds; and musicians provided glorious music and the sound of bells. But, a prerequisite for establishing the Church in foreign polities was to secure access to the region, to find land for churches and cemeteries, and properties to be used by priests and laymen. The best and quickest way to arrange this was for the Church to form alliances with the most important person in Norway, who was, in principle, the king. The king would be the optimal agent in helping the Church to spread Christianity through legislation and — if necessary — physical force, as well as building churches, providing land, and offering protection.

The Church was an excellent ally for secular leaders, both in practical matters and because of its educated members. Members of the clergy were not only trained in theological and ecclesiastical matters, but also in reading, writing, legislation, tax collecting, and various technologies central to any administration. Indeed, it has been argued that writing was invented as a tool primarily to manage urban life: the oldest form of writing has been found in the Sumerian town of Ur from the beginning of the third millennium BC, while in the town of Jemdet Nasr, dated to around 3100–2900 BC, quantities of merchandise are listed in writing, demonstrating the early use of writing as an administrative tool (Sweet 1997). There is no doubt that the art of writing was a useful tool for the royal administration and various urban activities, as well as for ecclesiastical organization. For everyone involved there were extra economic profits to be gained by a change of religion: the grave goods that were previously put in graves could be kept among the living rather than being 'lost' to the dead.

Towns were a new type of settlement in Norway. Except for seasonal market places, the Viking Age centre of Kaupang seems to be the only earlier central place of some size. Even so, throughout history the desire to establish towns has arisen for several reasons. For instance, the rule and culture of the ancient Roman Empire relied heavily on towns, and because the Iberian peninsula was not urbanized,

the Romans sought to establish towns in this area (Hedeager and Tvarnø 2001: 50–53). The organization of the Church was also rooted in towns from early on, with the bishops participating in a *civitas* (Tveito 2005: 38, Culleton 1999: 66). Both the Church and the king stood to benefit from the establishment of towns, for the central location of a town or central place eased administrative activities such as collecting food and other resources, organizing meetings, and entertainment. From his residence the king could demonstrate his qualities as a powerful leader through conspicuous consumption and the provision of meals and gifts for his followers, and in so doing contributed to the strengthening of his own network of allies. A town also attracted craft and trade, which could then be controlled more easily; additionally, many smaller commodities, such as those made of precious metal or picturing a Christian cross, were of great symbolic value, representing religious affiliation and high status.

The towns were situated relatively evenly throughout the Norwegian landscape in strategically important districts along the coast, all within easy reach of each other while also being convenient distances apart for the purpose of defence (Nordeide 2005b: 19–31). The locations of former royal farms were not always ideal for various reasons, and their locations had not been intended to fulfil the new needs of later kings. Even if for several centuries the king had to travel with his men between his royal estates, the founding of towns met several requirements, including the need to have a neutral arena that was not too closely associated with particular family residences. Several scholars have also discussed the St Clement's churches in Oslo and Trondheim as an important element in the royal–ecclesiastical power base. Even if these theories have met with criticism over the years, the underlying idea supports the strong bond between the church and the king in the early phases of the towns (see Cinthio 1968; Eide 1974, Appendix 5; Crawford 2004; Nordeide and Gulliksen 2007).

Kings at that time probably knew of the benefits of a town. As we mentioned above, the sagas state that King Olaf Tryggvason was raised in the town of Novgorod in ancient Rus', and so he was accustomed to an urban life from childhood. All the other Viking-Age kings had also travelled abroad — as documented by imports in Norway and runic inscriptions found in other countries — and thus had first-hand experience of towns. As Christians, they would have been aware of the advantages of towns as Christian centres, with churches and monasteries that could be visited by those coming from further afield. For example, Olaf Olsen has pointed to the possibility that Archbishop Ansgar's churches which, according to written sources were built in Hedeby and Ribe in the early ninth century, might have functioned as sailors' churches. A sailors' church served Christian visitors to

these first towns in what would have been, for them, a foreign, non-Christian country. In Olsen's opinion, the construction of churches may have been allowed by the king, not as a tribute to Christianity, but to attract merchants (Olsen 1999: 55–56). The king's perspective on this would have made an impression on potential international allies. Since the archbishop's seat in Hamburg (later Hamburg-Bremen) was founded with missionary work in the peripheral northern parts of Europe as its main purpose, Archbishop Ansgar must have wanted to establish churches in the area (Tveito 2005: 37–39). Ansgar, with his desire for churches, and the Danish King Harald Bluetooth, with a desire for trading centres, may have found some common interest.

The points made here do not mean that the main motivation for everyone at all times was increased power and profit in a crude sense, but improved technology and organization would have supported whatever other interests they had. In considering the background for why people in Norway changed religion, these aspects are significant: people did not eventually convert to Christianity because they needed a new religion, nor did they ask for a new eschatology or new gods to believe in. On the contrary, they would have preferred to continue practising their own traditions and customs, their own *siðr*. If this had not been so, the king would certainly not have needed to dedicate parts of the new legislation to preventing people from performing their old rituals. The rich, Norse burial cult and its seemingly abrupt end confirm the fact that there was no crisis in the Norse religion, but rather the contrary. The need for a new ideology did not exist among ordinary people; it was the new leadership that needed this in order to break down the old power structures based on familial relations that were closely linked to the old religion.

The idea that the spread of Christianity was the king's main motivation for establishing towns may be indirectly supported by some of the other patterns of finds observed in this study. Not only is there a correspondence between the earliest traces of Christian cult in Norway and the earliest towns and central places, there is also a link between the latest non-Christian cult traces and the lack of towns and royal presence in certain regions. There were no medieval towns in the far south of Norway — namely in Agder and western parts of Telemark — and royal residences were established late in this region as well. It is also in this region that the latest non-Christian graves were recorded (Map 14, Nordeide 2010). Moreover, the goods in these graves included coins, weights, and balances, which have only been found in this region and in Rauma. It seems that trade and barter — which would be expected in the new towns as elsewhere — were decentralized among the local elite and practised by both men and women in this

region. This indicates that there was a contradiction between the king's interest in establishing towns and Christianity and the interests of the local elite in some regions whose power was based on pre-existing social and economic structures as well as well-established, older religious traditions. There might also have been issues surrounding gender, as the interests of the early towns and the king appear to concentrate on men only (Nordeide 1999). The local elite would have found no advantages in having supremacy from outside their region if this supremacy were regarded as diminishing their own bases of power and influence. They would have striven instead for the status quo, one that included keeping the old religion. The genetic bond between the inhabitants of a given area and their ancestors in the barrows has been demonstrated by a study of the reuse of older monuments (Thäte 2007: 278–79). Even though there was no reuse of monuments in Agder, the general principles of this study suggest that by continuing their burial customs and cult activities at their ancestors' barrows, the local population in Agder held in high esteem their local power structures and ownership of the land.

The situation in Agder could be compared to the Slavic principality on Rügen Island from the tenth to the twelfth centuries. This has been described as a theocracy in which the local priesthood played a prominent role, while at the same time an old tribal assembly still existed. Politics and alliances were mainly based on familial and dynastic links, and Roman Zaroff states:

the pagan Slavic beliefs were of a local nature or at best had a regional impact. Therefore they could not compete with the much more sophisticated and universal concept of Christianity. Moreover, like most non-monotheistic beliefs the Slavic religion lacked the aggression and conversion zeal of medieval Christianity. Also, it looks that the pagan priests who played so important and dominant role in their politics did not have a clear and consistent political vision at all. It appears that they were ultra-conservative and interested only in preserving their own position in society and the old ways of life. As a result, the leadership of the Rugian principality often aimed at short-term goals, usually of a purely material nature without any long-term foreign policy. (Zaroff 2007: 23–24)

The earliest Christian cult is concentrated to two regions of Norway: the central belt stretching from Borgund to Trondheim and the western region of Viken. In Romsdalen and Nord-Møre in central Norway, Christianity appears to have coexisted in harmony with Norse religion for a while, but later it seems that the relationship turned hostile or became competitive. Apart from the first phase at Veøy, it appears that Christianity was established before or roughly around the same time that royal power and towns were established in these two regions.

The early Christian cemetery at Veøy is interesting for additional reasons. It seems likely that it was established at an earlier time than when the Christian missionary kings were present around Veøy, and it was clearly contemporary with

the Norse graves on the mainland. A foreign group of Christians such as British monks may have settled there, as indicated by insular finds in the graves on the mainland. If this were so, there was probably an unintended break in the Christian cult at the island at which point the Christian cult objects were stolen, demonstrating a change in attitude towards the Christians during the Viking Age. This is also reflected in the change from a period of peaceful coexistence to a more hostile relationship between the two religions. Alternatively, the cemetery may have been established for a group of Christians who settled in various places in the region, and the Christian ritual objects found in the surrounding landscape may have been stolen during Viking raids on the British Isles. People from Romsdalen might have participated in such raids or they may have obtained the objects in other ways.

At any rate, the establishment of the Christian cemetery at Veøy took place in a landscape where the greatest ritual differences between various communities have been observed in all our sample, apart from the early urbanized areas of Viken. The great variation in the types of cultic forms could be interpreted as the result of social tension, or could be an expression of a strong self-image and a powerful local community. The influx of foreign Christians in the district or the conversion of locals could have acted as a stress point, which might be one of the reasons why the people at Tingvoll switched from inhumation to cremation burial practices: they were not at ease with the Christians in their relatively close neighbourhood and demonstrated their dissatisfaction through conspicuous ritual behaviours. Some of the rich graves in Rauma could be interpreted in the same way, which could also be the explanation for the isolation of the Christian community on the island. However, even if there was a change in attitude towards Christianity during the Viking Age, its beginning seems to have been rather more positive. Ritual variation seems to have been the norm rather than the exception in Rauma throughout the late Iron Age, and it is just as likely that the Christians were able to settle in this area because they were embraced as one more variation to the established cult patterns in the religious landscape. Even if the Christians were not equally appreciated by all members of the community, they may have been welcomed generally, for the locals seem to have accepted and even appreciated ritual variation. The records and chronology are unfortunately not sufficient for us to reach a conclusion in this matter.

The methods by which the Christianization process was implemented in the rest of Norway are less clear. It has been argued that the Danes had a stronger grip on Østfold than Vestfold, and that Christianity already had a strong influence in Østfold from the ninth century due to Danish influence (Kisumu 2000: 97).

However, the Danes were not Christians this early, so the Christian influence that reached the region must have come from elsewhere. Västergötland is relatively close to Østfold, however, and in the case of Østfold it has been argued that a period of secularization during the eighth and ninth centuries was followed by Christianization during the tenth century; as Claes Theliander states, 'De flesta västgötar definierade sig själva som kristna vid 900-talets mitt' (Theliander 2005: 350).⁷ Theliander's conclusion is based on the fact that old burial customs disappeared by the middle of the tenth century, but churches did not appear before the twelfth century. Only Karleby Church is earlier, and may be from around 1000 (Theliander 2005: 334). There is therefore a similar time gap between the old burial customs and the first Christian cult in Västergötland, as at many places in Norway. This gap could be explained in various ways. Regarding the inland region of eastern Norway, we know of several medieval churches in Hallingdal, for example, but none of the existing churches were built before 1200. However, it has been suggested that a plank at the Torpo stave church must have had a predecessor from the second part of the eleventh century, since it was decorated in the Urnes style (Carlstrøm 1994). This situation seems to be the norm: none of the wooden churches which have been examined archaeologically can be dated before 1050; in fact none can be proved to be earlier than King Olaf kyrri's time (1066–93; Skre 1995: 215).

It is more likely that in most of Norway the king and the Church relied on alliances with local aristocrats who, unlike in Agder, saw some benefit in such a relationship. In the case of the inland region of eastern Norway, it has been suggested that the Church built up a network with a hierarchy of churches with associated priests who could serve a larger region, probably preceded by some provisional systems (Skre 1995). This seems likely for other parts of the country as well.

One specific case differs from all the rest: although the urban settlement at Veøy is later, the Christian community at Veøy seems to start earlier than any other places which later became towns or central places. It is very different from Kaupang, which seems to be partly contemporary with the cemetery at Veøy. Even if some Christians may have lived in Kaupang — or at least visited it — the urban character of Kaupang had ended by the middle of the tenth century (Skre 2007a). The first harbour in Kaupang was growing less functional due to the rising of the land, but this was a practical problem that could have been solved by moving or

⁷ 'Most people from Västergötland defined themselves as Christian by the middle of the tenth century.'

changing the harbour as they did in Trondheim some decades later. However, Kaupang was loaded with ‘pagan’ associations — demonstrated by the fact that it was surrounded by tumuli from whichever side one approached the town. If Christianity wished to become one of the important features of the medieval town, Kaupang would not have been suitable. Veøy on the other hand was already associated with Christianity, for it was centrally located and would have been ideal as a central place from a royal, as well as from an ecclesiastical, point of view. Even if a few tumuli were also recorded at Veøy, they were not overwhelmingly present (Solli 1996).

My next and final chapter will draw together the major lines of inquiry that have been explored throughout this and the preceding chapters, in order to reach some general conclusions regarding the evidence and analyses presented throughout this study.

CONCLUSION

Magnus inter cetera trophæorum suorum insignia inusitati ponderis malleos, quos Iouiales uocabant, apud insularum quandam prisca uirorum religione cultos, in patriam deportandos curauit. Cupiens enim antiquitas tonitruorum causas usitata rerum similitudine comprehendere, malleos, quibus coeli fragores, cieri credebat, ingenti ære complexa fuerat, aptissime tantæ sonoritatis uim fabrilium specie imitandam existimans. Magnus uero, Christianæ disciplinæ studio paganam perosus, et phanum cultu et Iouem insignibus spoliare sanctitatis loco habuit. Et adhuc quidem eum Sueones perinde ac coelestium spoliorum raptorem sacrilegum autumant (Saxo, *c.* 1200 (13.5.5), describing a military campaign in Sweden from around 1130).

(And among the conspicuous trophies he brought home were some extraordinarily heavy hammers, so-called Thor's hammers, that on one of the islands were reckoned to be sacred by the believers in the old faith. When people in the old days wanted to explain the origin of thunder, they took as their point of departure what they knew before: the roar in heaven was in their opinion caused by hammers, and therefore they had some enormous iron cast hammers produced, because they thought that such a strong rumble could be best copied by a smith's tools. But Magnus was an enthusiastic worshipper of Christianity who hated everything that was pagan and regarded it a pious action to plunder a temple for its inventory, and Thor for his insignia. Even today the Swedes remember him as a blasphemer who robbed the gods.)

This quotation from Saxo Grammaticus's *Gesta danorum* illustrates many key aspects of this study. Saxo was describing a meeting between Christians and worshippers of Thor, and even if he was describing events that took place only a few generations before him, he probably based them partly on mythical stories. He described the population as varied: some people on one of the Swedish islands believed in the power of the Thor's hammers, while others did not, and Magnus was a Christian visitor there. Further on in this passage, Saxo described the meeting as violent, but adopted an ambivalent position: Magnus regarded his actions as pious, 'the Swedes' still thought of Magnus as blasphemous,

and Saxo described this population in neutral terms — as believers of the old faith — without using the word ‘pagans’. However, without knowing more about the author himself, we cannot tell very much about the history from this single quotation, taken out of context. Saxo presents us with a glimpse of a struggle over faith, but the account is insufficient to differentiate between reality and fiction.

To counter such problems, the present study has investigated the chronology of the major changes in religion that took place in Scandinavia in the late Iron Age or early medieval period basing itself primarily on the archaeological remains of religious cult: contemporary sources that allow us to approach the topic through the eyes of the believers themselves. One challenge presented by such a methodology is that archaeological sites have been deconstructed, recorded, and to some extent reconstructed by various farmers and archaeologists throughout the last few centuries. Archaeological sources might be regarded as more neutral in many ways than written sources concerning the late Iron Age and early medieval period, because most written sources were composed centuries after the events took place, and were coloured by the authors’ motivations, ideologies, and the opinions of their contemporaries. Archaeological sources appear to be neutral because they have no author who has retold the ‘story’ with new additions reflecting more recent ideologies and motivations. However, because archaeological material has — most probably — deteriorated and decayed over time, filtered through the excavation processes and recording systems, and built up layers of scholarly interpretations over the years, archaeologists tend to be the victims of their own prejudices about how to date Christian and non-Christian remains. Consequently, archaeological sources may be as biased as documentary sources, and it is still not an easy task to interpret the material. To compensate for potential limitations of this nature, we must first recognize that the archaeological ‘facts’ represent a minimum of the material that once existed, and we must accept that most of the observations made cannot be readily explained and accounted for.

There is one particular area where such ‘minimal levels of observation’ have come close to being non-existent. The Saami population were most likely present in some of the areas that have been the focus of this investigation, but they have been neglected by the Norwegian state as well as by former archaeologists and historians. Although a lot of new information has been recently gathered in this field in the north of Norway, within the scope of this study it has not been possible to find substantial and reliable data that would allow us to study Saami cult activity as something distinct from Norse cult activity in our sample areas. This also means that some of the non-Christian data collected may be Saami as well as Norse.

Throughout this book I have followed the problems outlined in the introduction, focusing my analysis on cult activity and relating various pieces of information and case studies to their specific chronological and spatial contexts. I did not expect to find a single 'correct' answer to my questions, nor did I think that I would find the same answers in every region. What is being addressed in this study is a highly dynamic religious and social schism, which requires paying particular attention to local traditions in order to study possible instances of acculturation. Thus the question itself, the archaeological records, and the nature of the physical landscape are far too complex to expect a straightforward answer.

Focusing on the ritual context has led to changes in the interpretation of individual objects: instead of regarding Christian cult objects as incontestably Christian, the interpretation of the ritual contexts determine how we should interpret the symbolic meaning of individual artefacts. Thus any object or element can be interpreted as a symbol within a Norse religious context when found in an obviously non-Christian ritual situation.

Some of the broader conclusions drawn from this analysis are as follows:

- Minimum degrees of acculturation were observed in the selected material, in the sense that no changes in Norse rituals have been identified that resulted from adjustments to Christian rituals.
- Females were not found to be leading agents in the Christianization process.
- Non-Christian cult activity seems to have ended abruptly, although at different times in different places.

These results agree with findings from a number of previous studies, but they are also different to others. The divergences are due in part to theoretical and methodological differences, but also possibly due to the likelihood that circumstances were actually different from place to place. However, while many previous studies have focused on the continuity of cult activity, I would argue that it is equally important to look for discontinuity of cult activity. How and when the cult ended or changed at a particular cult site can reveal a lot about the historical situation in which this occurred.

No gradual changes in Norse cult in favour of Christian cult have been perceived; rather, the opposite tendency has been observed. It is likely that the appearance of Christianity at some places in the Norwegian landscape was a driving force for an increase in the intensity of non-Christian rituals. The differences between Christian and non-Christian burial monuments increased at many places during the Viking Age, and the Norse cult became even more vital for

the communities towards the end of the Viking period than before. These changes were probably intentional and can indirectly testify to the presence of Christian people in the region.

Traceable Norse cult ended between approximately 950 and 1100 but this differed from place to place. Meanwhile, it seems that the major phase of the Christianization process took place during this period. It is wise to be careful when using the word 'conversion', as it is not possible to see if people underwent a deeply felt change of mind about their beliefs regarding the old religion. Co-existence between Christianity and other belief systems also took place in parts of the selected areas some time before Christianity became well established in Norway. However, in most places it is hard to find non-Christian graves dated to after 1050. This either means that we still have not found common people's graves and therefore do not know whether they were Christian or that they believed in any other religion, or else that some kind of Christian legislation was put in place around 1050/1100, which was followed by the majority of the population whether or not they had converted.

It is not possible to say that Christianity was established earlier along the west coast than inland, or in the south before the north. Instead, Christianity was probably established with the help of kings at strategic places, as stepping stones along the landscape. These places were either founded as towns, or else the towns emerged soon afterwards. One of the most important roles of these places was to establish and spread Christianity on behalf of the Christian kings, with a beneficial ideology that served the aspirations of the monarchy. This supra-regional government also needed many of the administrative skills that came with Christianity, such as writing, taxation, legal skills, and the symbolic meaning offered by monumental buildings brought about by new construction techniques.

I would suggest the following major phases took place in the Christianization process of southern Norway:

- Phase 1, late ninth/early tenth century. Veøy seems to have been an early — but not necessarily continuous — Christian cult place from this period onwards. It is possible that non-continuous individual incidents of Christian cult activity were taking place elsewhere during this period.
- Phase 2, *c.* 990s–1050. An establishment phase, during which the king founded towns as places of continuous Christian cult at strategically selected sites across the land, set at appropriate distances from each other. The king and the Church co-operated in establishing the towns, which began with the

building of Christian churches and cemeteries, with the king providing land and resources for their building and maintenance.

- Phase 3, *c.* 990s–1070. At roughly the same time as Phase 2, Christianity was spreading to the aristocracy in the hinterlands, served by churches and/or cemeteries located in centres with associated mobile priests, organized similarly to the English minster system. There are certain exceptions to this pattern, particularly in the case of Agder, with other possible variations, including the inland region of eastern Norway. In central Norway too, the progress of Christianity and the decline of Norse cult activity seems to have been less linear; with possible examples of Norse cult places being abandoned unwillingly, and instances where Christian monuments from this period were potentially defaced and pushed over. Such oppositions and setbacks indicate that the spread of Christianity was not always readily received by the public.
- Phase 4, *c.* 1070–1150/1200. During this period Christianity spread to the lower classes, in locations including Trøndelag, the inland regions of eastern Norway, and Agder. Bishops' seats and more towns were founded, such as Bergen, Hamar, and Stavanger, and some churches were built as well.
- Phase 5, 1152/53. These years saw the foundation of the province of Nidaros and an increase in the construction of churches.

Given such a chronology for the Christianization process the key relationship with towns, I have termed the earliest Norwegian towns 'ports of faith', perhaps as a reaction to the pre-existing term 'ports of trade', introduced in a collection of articles edited by Karl Polanyi and others from 1957.¹ Trade and craft activities were not particularly important in the initial stages of these early medieval towns, Trondheim being a good example. The towns were probably meant for other purposes. One of the results that has emerged from this study is the fact that Christendom in Norway spread from these 'ports of faith', which is why the Christian cult appears earlier at these places in each region than in any other places. Trondheim is the earliest and most convincing example — already established in the late 990s — but more towns followed during the next century. However, the earliest identified Christian cult activity was on Veøy in the ninth or early tenth century, which is not known as a small town or *kaupbær* until the twelfth or early thirteenth century (Helle and Nedkvitne 1982: 64). Veøy cannot

¹ In this volume (Polanyi and others 1957), scholars agree to use this term for the purposes of their common project; see particularly the contributions by Rosemary Arnold and Anne Chapman.

be explained in the same way as the later towns. I would assert that the Christian settlement at Veøy was first started by some kind of religious community, perhaps coming from the British Isles, who established something like a monastery there, which could explain the many insular finds in the area. In the first phase of Christianization some other early, Christian initiatives may also have existed, but Farsund is the only possible example included in this study and it does not seem to have had any lasting impact on the Church.

The idea that Christianity spread in Norway from the towns as rallying points with the help of the king is indirectly supported by the fact that the latest non-Christian grave has been traced to Agder, an area distinguished by its lack of medieval towns and royal presence. The king's manors were established later in the medieval period in this region, as were the churches with which they were associated (Larsen 1978: 90, 160). One church, however, was probably built by the godson of St Olaf in Oddernes, Kristiansand. My own interpretation of the situation in Agder is that it is a reflection of the attitudes of the local elite in the region who resisted the monarchy in order to promote their own power base. Their position was probably grounded in their extended group of siblings and other relatives who controlled local resources, together with their associated dependents. They would have benefited from keeping the old belief system, using the cult to support their social and political position. The economic and social system would have easily broken down with a change of religion, unless they were willing to become subordinate to the king.

Urbanization and Christianization are thus linked to the emergence of a monarchy, and in some sense this process could also be described as a kind of colonization. The old tribal dynasties, with their religious, political, and economic power linked to the dynastic leaders, were conquered by a new religion and ideology, led by a king allied with the Church. Christianity was a similarly important part of the towns on the Baltic coast:

From the mid-9th to the early 11th century some missionary centres were established, but conversion to Christianity became only universal when it was combined with colonisation and urbanisation. (Müller 2008)

In this way both the Christianization process and urbanization became political agendas for the ruler or pretender to the throne. Yet this was not a new way of doing things; perhaps the best-known example is that of Emperor Constantine the Great who made Christianity the state religion and the only legal religion from 395. A similar picture can also be seen in Rus' regarding the Christianization process that took place between c. 800 and 1200, when non-Christian cult was

abandoned first in the cities, as witnessed in Kiev and Novgorod (Shepard 2007: 391).

Overall, the results of this investigation support Nora Berend's conclusion concerning the Christianization of Scandinavia, Central Europe, and Rus', that 'the real turning point was the ruler's conversion' (Berend 2007b: 38). In Berend's book it becomes apparent that quite a few common features linked to Christianity — such as minting and the disappearance of a traditional, local cult — appear at the same time (around AD 1000) in Scandinavia and Central Europe in areas that were still non-Christian (Berend 2007a: 30 and *passim*). This pattern of similar changes occurring in several polities within a short period of time highlights one common, external factor, namely the agenda of the Church, and that of the Latin Church in particular. One of the Church's achievements was the foundation of the archbishopric of Hamburg-Bremen, and the pattern of religious changes taking part in the aforementioned countries may have come about as a result of this and similar initiatives by the Church. Some of the results that have emerged from this present volume indicate that the influence of the German archbishopric may have been underestimated or not investigated properly, particularly in the case of the high crosses. However, in spite of general missionary strategies initiated by the Church, the people of Norway were not passive recipients of Christianity, and their responses to the new religion could vary according to differences in local organization, the time of conversion, and how the new religion was interpreted by the community. Consequently, local variations in how and when they adhered to the new religion in the ways we have observed in this volume should be expected.

The terminology used to divide people in late Iron Age Norway into Christians, Norse, and Saami represents a simplified picture of a society that was, in reality, very complex. The 'Norse religion' was a relatively heterogeneous religion, as demonstrated by surviving evidence for cult practices, and behind the blanket term may have been several groups of people with very different belief systems. Consequently, in order to understand more about when and how the Christianization process took place in this region, questions that should be addressed in future studies include: the differences between various religious groups and the ways in which they coexisted spatially; the differences between Norse and Saami cult in southern Norway; and the nature of the Christianity that was absorbed by the people in the various Scandinavian regions.

Once the archbishopric of Nidaros was established in 1152–53, no cult that was unquestionably non-Christian has been observed in the selected areas, although there are some dubious traces. In many countries — such as Sweden, Poland, Hungary, and Bohemia — there was a 'pagan revolt' after the official

conversion, that is, when the ruler of the country converted to Christianity (Berend 2007b: 23–24). This is not easily observed in the archaeological material from the regions selected for this current study, particularly due to old excavations and poor records. For instance, at present it is not possible to determine whether the late Norse cult in Agder should be characterized as a ‘pagan revolt’ or whether it was simply a peaceful continuation of the old Norse *síðr*.

Throughout this volume, possible weaknesses and biases in the archaeological sources have been alluded to, but despite these our aim has been to show how the material can advance our knowledge of this period and provide us with conclusions regarding the nature of the Christianization of Norway. We will never reach the point where these sources provide us with an entirely satisfactory and complete picture, but the body of archaeological evidence is rich, unique, and contemporary with religious life before and around the time when Christianity was established in Norway. Consequently, it can tell us a lot about cult activity and cult(ural) encounters in the past, as has been demonstrated in this book. Given the importance of religion and the impact of Christianity on modern society and international politics, we should listen carefully to what these sources can tell us about how religious changes were experienced by people in the past. The recent atrocities against Muslims in Oslo and Utøya in July 2011 underline the importance of religion and religious affiliations, and the way that Christianity relates to other world religions or belief systems, and show us the pressing need to study evidence of harmonious and disharmonious religious practice in coexisting communities both today and in the past.

CATALOGUE

In the catalogue the grave finds are listed per municipality. First comes a list of abbreviations used in the catalogue, and following the catalogue is a concordance list to find the individual museum catalogue number and origin of the find. The prefix letters indicate which museum the item belongs to: B is in Bergen, C in Oslo, N and T in Trondheim. More information will be found regarding each find at the museums, respectively, or at the web page: <<http://www.dokpro.uio.no>>.

There are no comments on the preservation of the listed objects, nor if they are only in fragments. Whether it is a fragment or a whole object is not important. Cases where there is doubt are marked with question marks.

Due to fragmentation and catalogue procedures at the museums, there is no distinction between annular and penannular brooches. Sometimes only parts of the pin are preserved, and it is not even possible to be sure of the distinction of a ringed pin from a brooch. These distinctions are thus not focused upon in the catalogue. The same applies to the swords and the seaxe, which in the catalogue are listed only as 'swords'.

Sometimes several graves are found in the same mound, or there is information that there were more than one grave. If this is the case, the number of total graves are indicated in a column of its own (>1).

Although the end of the Viking period is often dated AD 1030,¹ the chronology of objects are normally dated mid-eleventh century, which is why this date is indicated as the end of Viking Age in this catalogue, but all dates are to be understood as circa dates. The date has often been re-coded, to simplify the analyses, for

¹ See, for instance, Solberg 2000.

instance ninth century = 800–900; ‘end of the 9-hundreds’ = 975–1000; or ‘later half of the 9-hundreds’ = 950–1000.

- List 1: List of abbreviations in catalogue
- List 2: Concordance between numbers in catalogue and museum numbers
- List 3: Catalogue
- List 4: List of some bog finds, possible offerings, and hoards.

List 1
x = Some/a lot of

Weaponry		Alignment		Miscellaneous	
A	Axe	E, W	East, West	A	Animal bones
Ar	Arrow head	S, N	South, North	B	Birchbark
S	Sword, seax	Tools		C	Chain, shackle
Sh	Shield (boss)	A	Anvil	Cy	Cylinder
Sp	Spear	Aw	Awl	F	Fitting, mounts
Equestrian		C	Chisel	Fl	Flint
B	Horse bit	Cr	Crusible	H	Hook, hoop, ring
Ha	Harness (fitting)	F	File	M	Mica
Hf	Hoof fitting	Fh	Fish-hook	N	Nail
Hs	Horseshoe, nail	fH	Forging hammer	P	Pumice
R	Rattle	Fs	Forge stone	R	Rivet
S	Stirrup	G	Gouge	S	Stick, iron
Sk	Skeleton, partial	H	Hammer	Sl	Strike-a-light
Sm	Saddle mount	hW	Hanging whetstone	U	Unidentified object
Sp	Spur	K	Knife	Import	
Domestic		L	Leister	A	Arabic
B	Bucket	M	Mould	B	Byzantine
D	Drinking horn	N	Net sinker	D	German
F	Frying pan	P	Planer	E	English
G	Glass beaker	Pi	Pig iron	F	French / Carolingian
Gp	Gaming piece	R	Rasp	GB	British
H	Heckle	S	Saw	I	Irish
L	Ladle, with shaft	Sb	Spoon-bit, auger	>1	Number of graves >1
Ls	Linen-smoother	Sc	Scissors	Material	
N	Needle, for sewing	Sh	Sledgehammer	A	Amber
Nc	Needle case	T (sT)	Tongs (smith's)	Ag	Silver
Q	Quern stone	Th	Thinning hammer	Au	Gold
R	Reed, sword beater	Tw	Tweezer(s)	Cu	Copper alloy
S	Spindle	U	Unidentified tool	E	Enamel
Sh	Spinning wheel	W	Whetstone, hone	G	Glass
Sp	Smoothing plate	Wd	Wire-drawer	Gr	Garnet
Ss	Spit	Z	Adze	Pb	Lead

V	Vessel (iron, steatite, pottery)	Personal equipment		R	Rock crystal
W	Loom weight	C	Comb	Cremation / inhumation	
Jewellery		Ch	Box, chest	C	Cremation
A	Armlet	K	Key	I	Inhumation
B	Broche, buckle, various	L	Lock	Grave form	
Be	Bead	T	Set of toilet implements	B	Bridge
Bf	Belt (fitting)	Symbols of faith		C	Cairn
Bu	Button	B	Ritual hanging bowl (Chr.)	F	Flat grave
F	Finger ring	C	Christian cross	Fs	Flagstones under/over
N	Necklace, pendant	R	Reliquary (Christian)	K	Kerb stones
R	Ring brooch, annular/pennannular	S	Abbot's / bishop's staff	M	Mound
Rp	Ringed pin	Ss	Sorcerer/ess's staff	Me	Menhir
S	String	T	Thor's hammer	O	Other (see comment)
Farming		Means of exchange		SC	Cist
A	Ard	B	Balance	2.	Secondary grave
B	Bill-hook	C	Coin	Gender	
C	Celt	L	Weight	C	Child
S	Sickle	M	Medal	F	Female skeleton
Sc	Scythe	S	Steelyard	J	Jewellery dominated
		P	Leather purse	M	Male skeleton
Boat		Period		W	Weapon-dominated
x	Some / a lot of boat rivets	p.	terminus post quem		

List 2

	RAUMA	RAUMA
1	Haz.32.907	Hagen Hen
2	T2090	Veblungsnes
3	T4877	Veblungsnes
4	T19104	Setnes
5	T18198	Setnes
6	T15623	Soggebakke
7	T16395	Soggebakke 8/2
8	T16395 T19147	Soggebakke 8/2
9	T16395	Soggebakke 8/2
10	B254	Sogge, Grytten
11	B416	Sogge 9/ el. 10/
12	T11862 T11608	Soggemoen
13	T15949 T16603 T16533	Soggemoen
14	T12559	Hole matr.18
15	T18781	Hole matr.18
16	T14060	Tomberg 19/1
17	T14406	Tomberg 19/1
18	T15496	Tomberg 19/
19	T15497	Tomberg 19/
20	C5436	Devoll matr.22
21	B1134–35	Devoll matr.22
22	T14900	Mjelva 23/3
23	T17578	Høljesnes 24/
24	T19098	Åndal 26/12
25	T12962	Nesstranda 27/
26	T12998	Nesstranda 27/
27	T13050	Nesstranda 27/
28	T18194	Ness 27/4, Grytten
29	T14662	Skorga 30/1
30	T19115	Breivik Y Hen
31	C5422–23	Breivik, Hen
32	B1677–78	Breivik
33	T17133	Nyheim, Hen
34	T4340–41	Hen
35	T4342–49	Hen

36	T4350-56	Hen
37	T4410 T4469-75	Hen
38	T4740	Hen
39	T10096-10100	Hen
40	T10101-06	Hen
41	T11537b-m	Hen
42	T14356	Hen
43	T22462	Hen
44	T4886-7 T5239	Kavli y
45	T12997	Øspehjellen Kavli
46	T15454	Haugen Kavli
47	T18477	Moa Hen
48	T18153	NedreDale Hen
49	C18456-8	Marstein
50	B766-99	Stavern
51	C16759	Stavern
52	T11161	Sletta Kors
53	C5419	Alnes Kors
54	T16396	Alnes Kors
55	T18494	Alnes
56	T11315	Lynghheim Kors
57	T16143	Rønningen Lyngh
58	T14351	Indrevik Eid
59	T2083	Bøhaugen Innfj.
60	T2078-81	Skjelbosstad Voll
61	T10613-27	Nedre Hovde Voll
62	T6148 T6150 T6152-53 T6155-59 T6161-62 T6164-65	Voll Eid
63	T6331-33	Voll v.kirken Eid
64	T13202	Voll Eid
65	T16415	Voll Eid
66	T16415	Voll Eid
67	T13036	Vollset Eid
68	T6149 T6151 T6154 T6160 T6163	Raknem
69	T5523-26	Raknem
70	T2082-89	Skeie Eid
71	C12927	Gjerset Eid
72	T14045	Ora Eid

73	T14045f + h	Ora Eid
74	T14059	Frisvoll ned Eid
75	T9289–94	Mittet Holm
76	T12464	Holmen yt Holm
77	T13905	Holmen yt Holm
78	T12334	Holmen in Holm
79	T16092	Farkvam Vågstr
80	T5037	Våge Vågstr
81	Lost	Høgreiten Våge ned
82	Lost	Høgreiten Våge ned
83	T2864–65	Kornset Vågstr
	TINGVOLL	
84	T12172	Bogsaspen Straumsn
85	T18759	Einset Straumsnes
86	T13145	Flemma
87	T13146	Flemma
88	T13427	Flemma
89	T13428	Flemma
90	C5418	Gyl
91	Lost	Meløen
92	T14428	Nålsund Straumsnes
93	T9260–79	Røttingsnes
94	T9280–87	Røttingsnes
95	T2460–64	Ulset Straumsnes
	FROSTA	
96	T972f	Hjellan
97	T971f	Hjellan
98	T11788	Hjellan
99	T953	Hogsatdsveet
100	T6149 T6151 T6154 T6160 T6163	Sjursviken Island
101	T965–70	Sjursviken Island
102	T12144	Myran V Lein
103	T2049–56 Same mound as 104–05	Laberget Moksnes
104	T2507–10 Same mound as 103, 105	Laberget
105	T2911–12 Same mound as 103–04	Laberget
106	T3807–08	Laberget
107	T3807–08	Laberget
108	T17–24	Moksnes

109	T436–44	Mostadtrøen
110	T15136	Nygården
111	T4536	Revlan
112	T11825, T12145	Revlan
113	T19396	Revlan
114	T200–210, T1843	Rygg
115	T13936	Tinghaugen Rygg ned
116	T954, T1085, T6566	Valberg
117	T1083	Valberg
118	T8840	Ø Vangberg
119	T13616	Ø Vangberg
120	T12722	Mossingen ned
121	T16074	Viduaunet Åsen
122	T16655	Dulum Ø Åsen
123	T17007	Huseby lille
124	T19179	Kvitsandvik
125	T19966	Strømmen
126	T19967	Strømmen Åsen
127	T19968	Strømmen
128	T7297	Rygg
	SNÅSA	
129	T14939	Alberg Agle
130	T16407	Finsås
131	T16338	Forberg
132	T11414	Hammer
133	T1072	Hemveg N
134	C436	Sandnes
135	T11677	Sandnes
136	T12976	Vinje
137	T16216	Vinje
	RISSA	
138	T14295	Berg
139	T14587	Hårberg Rissa
140	T2282–84	Øv Ingdalen
141	T11880	Øv Ingdalen Stadsb
142	T4004–5	Grønning
143	T12007	Hasselviken
144	T14126	Fissa Penningvoll

145	T14284	Fissa Penningvoll
146	T18805	Halvspendet
	HERØY	
147	B5497	Runde
148	B10780	Josåk Leika
149	B9382	Vaulsund
150	C8029–31, Unno. 306–07	Frøistad
	SELJE	
151	B5806	Langenes Hove
152	B6327	Langenes Hove
153	B7343	Hove Hove
154	B11178	Sandvik
	JØLSTER	
155	B5795	Bolsæter
156	B5938	Syngesand
157	B6432	Helgheim
158	B6730	Kvammen
159	B6797	Hus
160	B8036	Håheim
161	B8205	Sandal
162	B8403	Bolsæter
163	B8838	Yt Årdal
164	B11413	Sanddal
	GULEN	
165	B3327	Haugland
166	B4758	a) Østgulen
167	B4758	b) Østgulen
168	B5689	Yt Oppedal
169	B5710	Arsheim
170	B6510	Hantveit
171	B6616	Hantveit
172	B6637	Brekke
173	B10426	Brekke Kyrkjebo
174	B8272	Gryten
175	B10739	Dale
176	B14206	Oppdal
177	B2671	In Opedal
178	B1433–35	Yt Opedal

	FARSUND	
179	C8892	Frestad
180	C23704	Øivold
181	C24063	Torås
182	C25780	Straumslund
183	C27269	Østhassel
184	C37648	Frestad
185	C22805	Østre Vatne
186	C25728	Vestre Hauge
187	C23669	Slevdal
188	C27149	Maberg Lista
189	No C.no.	Skeime ned
	BIRKENES	
190	C23871	Senumstad
191	C35281	Birkeland ned
192	C29684	Birkeland ned
193	C30530	Hovland
194	C26287	Hovland
195	C24652	Herefoss
196	C22234(?)	Vegusdal
197	C21922	Dovland
198	C14864–80	V Mollestad
199	C14881–83	V Mollestad
	BØ	
200	C8160	Sisjord
201	C10035	Tveten
202	C8429–30	Eriksten
203	C10359	Askilt
204	C10954	Otterhold
205	C10992–95	Otterholt
206	C11267–68	N for Ø-Li
207	C25176	Tveiten
208	C30049	Grave
209	C33574	Li N
210	C11892	Otterholt
211	C16558–16592	Erikstein
212	C17958–63	Øvrebo
213	C19335–40	Verpe

214	C8137	Langkaas
215	C10109	Eriksten
	VALLE	
216	C10887	Aakre
217	C17004	Björgum
218	C18798	Rygnestad
219	C21315	Opestog
220	C22596	Viken
221	C23013	Nordre Bø
222	C24583	Myrom
223	C24621	Uppigarden
224	C24700	Haga
225	C24955	Ormestad
226	C26268	Trydal
227	C27045	Rike
228	C27053	Åmli
229	C27462	Dale
230	C27621	Kvasaker
231	C28692	Rishaugu
232	C30537	Homme
233	C30539	Nomeland
234	C30540	Valle prestegården?
235	C34262	Viki
236	C34684	Viki Grav 2
237	C35390	Tovedalsvassd fjellf
238	C6416	Valle
239	C19071–83	Helle, Hyllest
240	C1283–85	Nomeland, Hyllest
241	C14648	Mjølhus
242	C21316	Opestog, Svalest
243	C31745a	Haugen Hovet
244	C31745b	Haugen Hovet
245	C31745c	Haugen Hovet
246	C30538	Nomeland krkgård
247	C1671	Nomeland
248	C21367b–e	Valle
249	B5207	Nomeland
	ROLLAG	
250	C31730	Fulsås
251	C35279	Skavlemstua
252	C6330–31	Mellom-Fulsås

	GRIMSTAD	
253	C10779	Bringsvær
254	C35033	Ødegård Nørholm
255	C35859	Hippen
256	C13950–59	Rokleiv Landvik
257	C1970–72	Svermevik
258	C20373	Heftevigen
259	C24104	Hestehagen Jåvoll
260	C29874	Trålum østre
261	C30492	Trålum Fjære
262	C30493	Trålum Fjære
263	C30504	Molland Landvik
264	C30505	Molland Landvik
265	C30506	Molland Landvik
266	C8238	Moi Fjære H2
267	C8239	Moi Fjære H27
268	C8241–44	Moi Fjære H28
269	C8245	Moi Fjære H29
270	C8246–50	Moi Fjære H30
271	C8254	Grevstad H39
272	C8264	Sævlid H51
273	C8265	Sævlid H56
274	C8266	Sævlid H57
275	C8267–71	Sævlid H58
276	C8272–73	Sævlid H60
277	C8277	Fjære H65
278	C8278–85	Fjære H69
279	C7785–86	Bringsv Vesterh H13
280	C7784	Bringsv Vesterh H18
281	C7787–88	Bringsv Vesterh H19
282	C7790–91	Bringsv Vesterh H23
283	C7792	Bringsv Vesterh H25
284	C7794–96	Bringsv Vesterh H29
285	C7838–44	Bringsv moen H54
286	C7845–46	Bringsv moen H56
287	C7854, C7856	Bringsv moen H61
288	No number	Vikmoen H65
289	C7816–30	Vik Fjære H52

290	C23116	Bringsvær
291	C23116	Bringsvær
292	No number	Bjerkelund
293	C6523	Bringsvær
294	No number	Groos
295	C24086	Hausland øv Fjære
296	C23410	Hausland Fjære
297	C24770	Messevold Fjære
298	C21119	Øiestad, Ned
	ULLENSAKER	
299	C20373	Børgen
300	C13174–75	Onsrud
301	C1390	Romsås
302	C14487	Ekorndrud
303	C20448, C22019	Kværner
304	C22206	Fonbæk
305	C15973–79	Algrim Fonbæk
306	C22510	Vågstad Fladbysæter
307	C22514	Fladbysæter
308	C22515	Fladbysæter
309	C22518	Ås Skinnfellholtet
310	C22519	Ås Skinnfellholtet
311	C22523	Ukkeset
312	C22525	Ukkeset
313	C22528	Skedsmo
314	C22530	Fogbæk
315	C22531	Støvre
316	C22753	Vågstad
317	C22756	Furuset
318	C22757	Furuset
319	C22758	Furuset
320	C22759	Rolstad
321	C26309a	Vågstad
322	C26309b–c	Vågstad
323	C28579	Rolstad
324	C361	Ullensaker
325	C5066	Fonnbekk
326	C5122	Kolby

327	C6784	Sundby
328	C28732	Lund, Nedre
329	C31740	Vågstad
330	C32241	Vettal
331	C34685	Skedsmo
332	C34689	Kverner Kløfta
333	C10249, C10346	Habberstad
334	C10274–75	Nesten
335	C10277	Nesten
336	C10279	Nesten
337	10280–82	Nesten
338	C1081–84	Gislevold
339	C13771–75	Ekornerud, Kisen
340	C13779	Gjestad, Trogstad
341	C13896–97	Stangerhaugen
342	C18262–64	Iskjelderengen
343	C22510	Fladbysæter H2
344	C2323–34	Forebek
345	B1361–92	Garder
346	C15916–20	Garder Hovin U
347	92/157, 92/158, 92/304	Habberstad
348	C52013	Habberstad
	LOM	
349	C21644	Aukrust
350	C22238	Nørstnes
351	C22994	Røiseim, Bøverdalen
352	C23363	Grotheim
353	C23599	Prestsetra Aukrust
354	C26875, C26945	Enersvold
355	C29908	Øygard
356	C26652	Læshø 920 m asl.
357	C14303–04	Hage
358	C3463–64	Marsten
359	C36712	Stymne seter Meadal
360	C6742–44	Blakar
361	C8059–60	Mørk Mork
362	C9975–76	Saalell sæter
363	No number	Kvaale

	RINGEBU	
364	C21097, C21098	Halstad (V+S i sm H)
365	C23007	Sylte Fåvang
366	C23008	Bjørge
367	C25784	Gildersvoll
368	C27786	Furusæter Venab
369	C30114	Nordrum Megrd
370	C19685–700	Hemrum Fåvang
371	C39276	Imsdal statsalm, 1000 m asl
	SØR-FRON	
372	C25051	Prestegården
373	C26130	Kvikstad
374	C28046	Alme Nedre
375	C30253	Kjorstad ned
376	C11550	Hundorp
377	C22724	Hundorp
378	C6419–21	Korstad
	VÅLER	
379	C25778	Myrvangen /Tangen
	VANG	
380	C4013–16, C3764	Løkkreim
381	C3978–79	Lokreim Kjos
382	C7150–53	Bø
383	C7154–70, C7599–601, C8014–15, C9195	Bø
384	C8572	Korsekren
385	C8573–74	Hermundstad
386	C17275	Belsheim
387	C17631	Kvaal, Hurum
388	C23034	Østrem
389	C23034	Fuglien / Igda
390	C23213	Berge Hurum
391	C23999	Kvåle øv Håverstad
392	C24389	Kval Hurum
393	C24811	Brustad Hurum
394	C24886	Sten nedre
395	C25676	Kjærstein Øie
396	C25712	Bygdinsundet Jotunh
397	C25775	Kvåle øvre

398	C26134	Lien nordre
399	C26296	Leine søndre
400	C26512	Jevne nordre
401	C10497–501	Hagen
402	C3911–13	Midt-Bunde, Hurum
403	C4569–71, C4573–79, UNNUM. 92–93	Kvien
404	C4668	Kongslid
405	C4668	Leirol, Vang
406	C6761–65	Høverstad
407	C7087	Skeie Skeieshaugen
408	C18108	Belsheim
409	C18648	Hæn
410	C7995	Remme
411	C9946	Hen
412	C10382	Rudi, Hurum
413	C10923	Bø
414	C10924	N Bø 'Kjørsrøysa"
415	C11290	Nygård, Hurum
416	C11347	Berge
417	C11730–31	Lensmannshaugen
418	C11763	Tørstad Hurum
419	C11812	Hen
420	C13348–51	Hemsing
421	C13976	Sølvhorn Hurum
422	C1435–42	Hen
423	C17259	Jevne
424	C17261	Bunde, Hurum
425	C18120–25	Leirol
426	C18126–32	Leine
427	C18195	Bunde, Hurum
428	C181271	Hen
429	C18502	Høverstad
430	C19058	Kvien, Hurum
431	C1435–42, C19408–15	Hen
432	C20425	Hen
433	C20609	Hermundstad
434	C21074	Remme
435	C21866	Berge Hurum

436	C22221	Jevnehagen
437	C22336	Lokreim
438	C22542	Øie
439	C23043	Hagen
440	C23045	Kvien Hurum
441	C23047	Nordre Kvam
442	C23085	skogen Ø for Rogn
443	C23179	Opdal
444	C23371	Gjerdingen Hurum
445	C23373	Hamre
446	C23374	Øyo
447	C23404	Hamre
448	C23546	Kvien Hurum
449	C23856	Jevnehagen
450	C24403	Jevnehagen
451	C24427	Sundheim Leirhol
452	C24807	Jevnehagen
453	C25038	Jevnehagen
454	C25052	Steile Grav 1
455	C25052	Steile Grav 2
456	C25881	Sæte
457	C25940	Steinde Øye
458	C25941	Bø Øye
459	C26846	Bjørklund
460	C27717	Rødningen
461	C28385	Elvetun Bø
462	C19308	Leine
463	C6279	Klokkerhaugen
464	C3127-30	Vang i Valdres

List 3

RAUMA																			
	Weaponry	Equestr	Domestic	Jewellery	Farming	Tools	Pers.	Symb.	Means of exch.	B	Miscellaneous	I	>I	Material	C/I	Grave form	Alignm.	Period	G
1	A															C		560-1050	W
2	Sp														C			560-1050	W
3	A															M		560-1050	W
4	S A	B																850-920	W
5			Sh S(?)	21Be 2B N				R S B	2W B C	x	F xR U	I E A		Cu Ag Au G A	I	F		900-950	J
6	S Sp Sh 8Ar	B	V		S	K 2W									C	F		900-1040	W
7	S Sp A	B													I	F		850-950	W
8				2B											I	F		800-900	J
9	2Sp 2A Sh	B	L		C	W F 2SW									I	F		900-1040	W
10			10Gp													M		560-1050	?
11				2B										Cu-Au		M		560-1050	J
12	S Sp 2A Ar Sh	B	Ss		S C	W					F S 2H			Cu	C	M?		800-900	W
13		B?	R H	2B RP? Bf	S	Sc	Ch					I		Cu Ag Au	I	F?		800-850	J
14	Sp A					K W H T									I			900-1050	W
15	S															?	?	800-1050	W
16			B?	B 42Be N S			Ch?		2C			G A		Cu Ag G	I	F		p.975-1000	J
17			V	B	S	Sc					Cy			Ag Cu	I	F		900-1050	J
18	S A Sh	3B?	V Sh B	RP B	S	K	R Ch?							Ag Cu	I	F		925-1050	W
19	Sp														I			950-1050	W
20	S A															M		560-1050	W
21	Sp A														I	M		560-1050	W
22	2S Sp 4-5Ar A Sh	2B			S Sc	W K H Th F Z	Ch?			?	x F R H			Cu	C	F		700-800	W
23	S A															F		900-1040	W
24	S				Sc											O		800-900	W
25	S Sh					W				x	R				I	F		850-975	W
26	S A					2W									I	F		800-1000	W
27	S														I	F O		850-950	W
28	2S Sp 2A Sh		V			W H SW Th							2			F O		950-1050	W
29	A														I	M 2.		834-950	W
30	Sp															SC		560-1050	W

31	S A				Sc										SC		560-800?	W	
32	Sp			B										Cu	M		p.928-44	J+ W	
33	A														C SC?		560-1050	W	
34	S Sp													IP	M		775-950	W	
35	S Sp A	B			Sc	2Sb Z									C		800-900	W	
36		B	V	B		Sc C					6S			Cu	C		800-900	J	
37	Sp A			2B	S	W C	N			x?	xR N			Cu	I	M	900-1000	J+ W	
38	Sp			B									2	Cu	I	M	800-850	J+ W	
39	Sp					fH sT A Fs								I	C		560-1050	W	
40	Sp	B			C	sT fH Sc				x?	xR xN			I	C		560-1050	W	
41	3S Sp A Sh Ar	B			Sc 2C	K Sb Sc F					H SI			C	M		800-1050	W	
42	S A	B	W Sh?			K 2W Wd?									M		560-800	W	
43				B xBe			C										800-1050	J	
44	S	B		Be										G			560-800?	W	
45	S Sp A	B			S Sc C	Sc								C	C		700-800	W	
46	S A Ar				S Sc	K Th					N			C	F SC	E-W	800-900	W	
47	S Ar										FI			C	F/C?		800-950	W	
48	S A Sp														Fp SC		750-850	W	
49	S A								W?						C		560-800?	W	
50	Sp Sh 4Ar				C	A T 2H C? K S + boat builder tool									M		850-950	W	
51							C								C		560-1050		
52	S Ar				Sc	H?					H			IP	F		560-1050	W	
53		B													C	M	560-1050		
54	A														C	M SC	800-1050	W	
55	S A 2Ar	B				W					H, for sledge?				C	M	560-800	W	
56	S A				B	K									I	F	560-800?	W	
57	S Sp A Sh 2Ar		V		S Sc C	K Sc W									C	F	900-1000	W	
58	S A Sh														I	M	800-1050	W	
59	Sp														C	F	560-1050	W	
60	S A				C	pointed tool									O		560-1050	W	
61	S Sp A 3Ar				C	6W H C T Fs F	Ch								I	C SC	E-W	700-800	W
62	S 2Sp 2A 2Sh xAr	B			Sc	W H Sc F				x?	2H xR U			Ag	C	M	560-1050	W	
63	Sp A	B													C		850-950	W	
64	S A	B	V												C	C	900-1000	W	

65	S			F	B Sc	2K 2W Sc	Ch				R SI				C	F		700-1050	W
66	2S Sp				S 2C	K Sb										C		700-800	W
67	S Sp A				S										C	C SC	E-W	850-975	W
68	2S Sp A				C								Ag	?	C	SC		900-1040	W
69	2Sp 2A			Be											C	C SC		800-1050	W
70	S xAr					W				F xR U				Cu	I	M		560-1050	W
71				A										Ag		M		560-1050	J
72	2S Sp 2A				S	2W		B				2		Cu	I	C		800-1050	W
73				Be		K								G	I	C		560-1050	J
74	A														C?	F?		560-1050	W
75	S Sp A Sh				S Sc										C	M		850-975	W
76	S A	B			S Sc										C	C		700-900	W
77	S	B			S	W									C	C		800-900	W
78	S A														C			850-950	W
79	S Sp				C	Sb									I	F		750-850	W
80	Sp A															MP		560-800?	W
81	Sh?					W								A	C	O Me		560-1050	W
82			V	Be B						x	xR				A			560-1050	J
83	S A														I	M+C		560-1050	W

TINGVOLL																			
	Weaponry	Equest	Domestic	Jewellery	Farming	Tools	Pers.	Symb.	Means of exch.	B	Miscellaneous	I	>I	Material	C/I	Grave form	Alignm.	Period	G
84			V F?	Be						x	xR F hinge?				IP	C		560-1050	
85	S A				Sc/S	W										C		850-920	W
86	S Sp A Sh Ar				S Sc?	K 2W Th	C				2R 3FI SI				C	C		950-1050	W
87	S A				Sc C	2W K	Ch?				xR				I	C	N-S	800-900	W
88			V Q			hW				x	FI				I	C		560-1050	
89										x	c.40R U				I	C		560-1050	
90	A															C SC		560-1050	W
91	S													Ag		C		560-1050	W
92	S Sp A 4Ar					K				x?	F 5R				I	F		560-800	W
93			Sh F H V	2B 27Be N	S C	2W Sc K	N L			x	F H U 2FI			Cu G Gr	I	C	N-S	800-900	J

94	Sh div?			Be	S	Aw	R			x	xR N F 3Fl				I	C		800- 1050	
95				2B 2Be A	S					x	xR U			Cu G	I	M		750- 850	J

FROSTA																			
	Weaponry	Equest	Domestic	Jewellery	Farming	Tools	Pers.	Symb.	Means of exch.	B	Miscellaneous	I	>1	Material	C/I	Grave form	Alignm.	Period	G
96	Sp					W										M		560- 1050	W
97				N?						x	xR			Cu	C	M		560- 1050	
98	A															M		560- 900	W
99	S														C	C		560- 1050	W
100	S Sp 2Ar	B?	13Gp	2B		K H					R					C		650- 800	W+ J
101		S R	D	B			C				H	I		Cu		M		850- 900	
102	Sp		Q		C										IP	C		560- 1050	
103	S Sp A Sh	B R				?					C H 2 iron pyrites				C	M		850- 950	W
104	S 2Ar					2K W									C	M		560- 1050	W
105	A					K W					R					M		560- 1050	W
106				B A										Cu		M		560- 800	J
107	S													Cu Ag	C	M SC2		560- 1050	W
108				9Be					C			F		Ag G	C	M		p.805/ 14	J
109	S Sp A Sh	B			S	K Sc					F			Cu	C?	C		775- 960	W
110		4B R	V F	2Be B	S	K Sc	Ch			x?	8N 12R			Cu G	C	F?		900- 1050	J
111	Sp	Sk													C			560- 1050	W
112	S					Z									IP	M?		775- 960	W
113	S														C?	M		750- 900	W
114	2S A		2Sh	2B	C	xW				x?	4R U					M		900- 1050	J+ W
115	S Sp A Ar				S		C			x	c.60R				C	M		900- 950	W
116	Sp									x?	H, R				C	M		560- 1050	W
117	2S															M?		560- 1050	W?
118				B										Cu Ag		M		560- 1050	J
119	A														C	M		900- 950	W
120	S A	Hs?			S/Sc C	K W					N F ISl				I	F	E-W	560- 800	W
121				B											C	?		900- 1050	J

122	Sp A															M		950-1050	W
123	A															M		900-1000	W
124	S															F		800-900	W
125				2B		K				x	R S 4 Fl			Cu	Ip	M	SSW-NNE	750-850	J
126	S A Sp					pointed tool				x	430R					M	N-S	750-850	W
127					S/Sc	W					xR N S					M+C		560-1050	
128	S									x						M SC		900-1050	W

SNASA																			
	Weaponry	Equestr	Domestic	Jewellery	Farming	Tools	Pers.	Symb.	Means of exch.	B	Miscellaneous	I	>1	Material	C/I	Grave form	Alignm.	Period	G
129	S														C	C		800-950	W
130				2B Eye	S	K	Be				5N	I		Ag Cu niello	I	F SC	SE-NW	800-950	F
131	S A														C			775-960	W
132	Sp, A				S										C?			800-1050	W
133	S															M		560-1050	W
134				B										Cu Ag		M		800-1050	J
135	S Sp A Sh					K W	C				Fl				C	C		800-900	W
136				Be		Sc									C	F		560-1050	J
137		Sk													C	M		560-1050	

RISSA																			
	Weaponry	Equestr	Domestic	Jewellery	Farming	Tools	Pers.	Symb.	Means of exch.	B	Miscellaneous	I	>1	Material	C/I	Grave form	Alignm.	Period	G
138	s														I			560-1050	W
139	Sp Sh									x	50-60R				I	F		900-950	W
140	Sp			2F						x	xR			Ag	Ip	M+C		560-1050	
141	S			4Be	S	H F W				x	U			Ag G	C	F		800-1050	W+J
142	S Sp													Cu		C		560-1050	W
143	S														I	F		775-960	W

161	Sp														C?	C Fs		550-650	W	
162	S Sp														C?	C		850-950	W	
163		R													C	F?		800-1050?		
164	A	B	R 2H 4Sh 10W Sp V 13Gp	2B S 3Bf	S	W	Ch			x	xU M P string 2F1 S1				Cu Ag	I	M	E-W	800-1050	J

GULEN																			
	Weaponry	Equestr	Domestic	Jewellery	Farming	Tools	Pers.	Symb.	Means of exch.	B	Miscellaneous	I	>1	Material	C/I	Grave form	Alignm.	Period	G
165	2S Sp 2A	Sk	G											Cu	C	M+C		560-1050	W
166	S Sp A														C	M+C		850-950	W
167	Sp A			2B										Ag	C	M		850-950	W+J
168	Sp		2Sh			W					a lot of slag				?	M+C		700-800	W
169	S A				S										I	F (C?)		850-950	W
170	S Sp A			B		Sb? 2W								Cu	I	M		800-900	W
171	S Ar A Sh			RP	S C	H W				x				2Cu	I			800-1050	W
172	S A		R Sh L	B	C	W						I	2	Au Cu	C	M		800-1050	W+J
173			R		C A												F	560-1050	
174	2Ar		Sh Ls			K H 6W lead ingot					N R 4FI slag			Pb G	C	F?		800-1050	
175	Sp															M		800-1050	W
176	Sp A				C	Sh H 2W					2R F FI SI			Cu Ag	?	F		850-950	W
177				B										Cu	?	M		560-1050	J
178	S Sp					Sb									?	C		560-1050	W

FARSUND																			
	Weaponry	Equestr	Domestic	Jewellery	Farming	Tools	Pers.	Symb.	Means of exch.	B	Miscellaneous	I	>1	Material	C/I	Grave form	Alignm.	Period	G
179				2Be										G		M		560-1050	
180				Be										G		M		560-1050	
181	S A Sp?															F		800-1050	W

182	A															M/C		560-800	
183	S 2Sp 3A 2Sh	B	V F Sh 3Gp	B Be R?		A 2Fs W N				x			2	Au Ag G	C	M	N-S	870-950	W+ J
184		S														M		560-1050	
185	A	B	R B (V?)	1-2Be	C S	H Sb Sc 2W Jack-knife	L Ch			x	C 3Fl				C	M 2.		560-800	W+ J
186	S Sp	B			C	3W sT K	Ch			x	150R					M	SE-NW	650-750	W
187	S															F		800-1050	
188	A			B Bu							R F U 3 round stones				I	M	E-W	900-1000	W
189	S														I	F	E-W	770-980	W?

BIRKENES

	Weaponry	Equestr	Domestic	Jewellery	Farming	Tools	Pers.	Symb.	Means of exch.	B	Miscellaneous	I	>I	Material	C/I	Grave form	Alignm.	Period	G
190	Sp													Ag		F		900-950	W
191				B										Cu		F Fs		560-1050	J
192			V													M		560-1050	
193	S Sp A 2Ar				2 Sc 2C	P Sh 6W									C	M		900-1000	W
194	A															M		850-900	W
195	S										x lost					C		925-1050	W
196						K			2C W			GB		Ag Cu	C	M		p-991/7	
197	3S A Sh Ar Sp					W									C	F?		900-1050	W
198	S A xAr			RP	2Sc C	W 2sT A C H Wd M N					2U			Cu	I	M SC	S-N	850-1050	W
199	Sp Ar				Sc	W					Fl					M SC		560-1050	W

BØ																			
	Weaponry	Equestr	Domestic	Jewellery	Farming	Tools	Pers.	Symb.	Means of exch.	B	Miscellaneous	I	>1	Material	C/I	Grave form	Alignm.	Period	G
200	Ar										F			Cu		M		560-1050	
201	Ar															M		560-1050	
202	A			Be										A		M		560-1050	W
203	Sp		wood-en cup													M		560-1050	W
204	A														C	C		560-1050	W
205			Sh	2B		K					F	IP		Cu Au		M		560-1050	J
206						K	L							Cu		M		560-1050	
207	Sp Sh 4Ar	B Sk									bell slag A				IP	M		850-950	W
208	S	B														M		910-1040	W
209	S A															M		900-1000	W
210	A															M		560-1050	
211	2S 3A 7Ar Sh	B	H W	B RP Be	4C 3S	6K 4Sc 2C	L N	Ss?			2 bells H 3S1			Cu	C	M		850-960	W+ J
212	S 12Ar 3A	2B Hf S?			S									Ag		F		800-1050	W
213	S A	B				W K Aw					R					M		850-975	W
214	A															M		1537-	W
215						H										M		1050-1537?	

VALLE																			
	Weaponry	Equestr	Domestic	Jewellery	Farming	Tools	Pers.	Symb.	Means of exch.	B	Miscellaneous	I	>I	Material	C/I	Grave form	Alignm.	Period	G
216	Sh																	560-1050	W
217	S															M		560-1050	W
218	S															M		560-1050	W
219	Sp A	B				Sb					U					M		900-1000	W
220			B R	2B A 100Be	S		Ch(?)				C F U SI3FI	GB		Cu G Au	I	M		560-800	J
221				2B Be							xN			R	C?	O		900-1000	J

222	S Sp 3A Sh 12Ar	2B	R 2Sh H	4B xBe	C S	Sh 2K 2W Fh				xH		2?	Cu G Ag Au	C?	F		800- 1050	J+ W
223	S														O	grave ?	800- 1050	
225			Sh	2B	S		N			U			Cu Au		M?		800- 1050	J
226	Sp													C?	O K		800- 1050	W
227	S 12Ar 2Sh														M	NE- SW	560- 800	W
228	A					Sc									M		800- 1050	W
229	A														M?	grave ?	800- 1050	
230	S Sp A					Sc				U					M?		900- 950	W
231			2 V F							U					C		800- 1050	
232				R						3R			Cu		M		800- 1050	J
233	A	Ha		40Be 7Bf			C T	21W 5C	Cu- stick	GB DK			Ag Cu		M		p.1065 /80	J
234									F	I			Cu Au				800- 1050	
235	S A					K W		4W C P?	SI Fl				Ag	C	F		1000- 1100	W
236	3Ar	Sk (?)	2Sh G	6Be	C? S?	W	Ch?	2W	10Fl SI Cy U				Pb G A Cu	C	F		800- 1050?	W
237					S (?)	2K U								C?	F?		800- 1050	W
238	S																560- 1050	W
239	2A Sp		SP		2B 2C	P W								I	O	grave ?	560- 1050	
240				3B xBe									Ag Cu G		M		560- 1050	J
241				B									Cu		M		800- 1050	J
242			R												M		560- 1050	
243	S A Sp			2B 17Be						2H			Cu G Au Ag		F	NE- SW	800- 1050	W+ J
244				RP						2R					F	NE- SW	800- 1050	
245	S	2B													F	NE- SW	800- 1050	W
246	S Ar	3B				W									F?	grave ?	800- 950	W
247			Sh	xBe									G				560- 1050	J
248	A	Ha	hand- le		A?										M		800- 1050	W
249	3S 3Sp 3A 2Sh	3B			S	3K 2W		2W 4C?	U pitch ball Fl		3				M	N-S	560- 1050	W

ROLLAG																			
	Weaponry	Equestr	Domestic	Jewellery	Farming	Tools	Pers.	Symb.	Means of exch.	B	Miscellaneous	I	>1	Material	C/I	Grave form	Alignm.	Period	G
250	S A Ar				C	L										F		900-1040	W
251	2S 3Ar	B				K					Fl St				I	F		850-950	W
252	A Sp Sh xAr														C	C		800-1050	W

GRIMSTAD																			
	Weaponry	Equestr	Domestic	Jewellery	Farming	Tools	Pers.	Symb.	Means of exch.	B	Miscellaneous	I	>1	Material	C/I	Grave form	Alignm.	Period	G
253			V													SC		560-1050	
254	S Sp															M	N-S?	850-975	W
255		B												Au Ag/Cu?		C 2.		800-1050	
256	S A 2Sp Sh		D			A H T F 3W	L		B					Cu		M		800-1050	W
257			R(?)	2B 2A 3Be										Cu A		M		560-1050	J
258	S Sp 2A					W					round stone					M SC		800-960	W
259	S Sp															F		800-1050	W
260				2B												C	F	800-1050	J
261	S															I	M Fs	800-950	W
262	S																M	850-950	W
263	S Sp A													Ag				900-1000	W
264			Sh	2A 6Be R??		W						I/G B		Cu G E				800-1050	J
265	S 2Sp 5A					sT				x?	H U xR					M		950-1025	W
266	Sp									x?	xR					M		560-1050	W
267	Sp															C	M	560-1050	W
268	S		3V		S/ Sc						U					C	M+C	560-1050	W
269			V							x?	xR (many)					M		560-1050	
270	Sh				Sc S	2K					R Fl					C	M	560-1050	
271						K										C	C	560-1050	
272							N				F?					C	M	WSW-ENE 560-1050	

273			V													C	M B		560-1050	
274			V													C	M		560-1050	
275	S A Sp					K W										C	M		560-1050	W
276									B 8W							C	M B	E-W	560-1050	
277								C								C	M B	SW-NE	560-1050	
278	S A Sh			RN	S	W K			B		xR					C	M+C		560-1050	W
279			V H			Sc											M B		560-1050	
280		Sk	V													C	M	E-W	560-1050	
281						W					Wax U FI						M		560-1050	
282		Sk				2W											M		560-1050	
283			V													C	M	E-W	560-1050	
284			Sh V			W Sb?										C	M B	E-W	560-1050	
285					S	2K H Aw Cr?			2W P		FI					C	M		560-1050	
286					S(?)	Sc										C	M	N-S	560-1050	
287			V Sh		S	Sc										C	M	E-W	560-1050	
288		Sk								x?	c.50R					C	M B		560-1050	
289	S A xAr				S	Fs M W A H T xF			4W=2 C		4FI H	E		Ag Cu	C	M	N-S	p.808-840	W	
290	A					K	C		B 6W C P		FI Plum stone	G?		Ag Cu	I	O SC	SSW-NNE	p.983/1002	M	
291													2		I	F SC	SSW-NNE	800-1050	C	
292	Sp 2A xAr			xBu B		K			P						I	M		800-1050	W	
293		Sk	V	B		2W									C	M		560-1050	J	
294	S Sp A Sh										8U				C			950-1050	W	
295	Sp A 5Ar			xBe	C	K Sb	Ch				xR (small) U 3FI			G	C	F?		560-1050	W	
296	Sp															SC?		800-1050	W	
297	Sp		L							x	8R				I	F O		900-950	W	
298						A T										M		560-1050		

ULLENSAKER																			
	Weaponry	Equestr	Domestic	Jewellery	Farming	Tools	Pers.	Symb.	Means of exch.	B	Miscellaneous	I	>1	Material	C/I	Grave form	Alignm.	Period	G
299	s														M			560-1050	W
300	A					Sc									M			560-1050	W
301				2B										Cu	M			900-1000	J
302	A			Be											?			560-1050	
303	S Sh A P														M			900-1050	W
304	S Sh 2A Sp	R			B/S	hook								Ag				800-1050	W
305	S Sp A 4Ar	B 2Sp				Sc									M			850-950	W
306			2V	2B A		Sc 2K					U H F S			Cu	C	M	SE-NW	800-1050	J
307			W?			K					N				C	M		800-1050	
308		Sk	2Sh N	Be							F U			Cu G	C	M	N-S	800-1050	J
309		Hs	2N	Bu		2K	Ch				5H R N FI			Cu	C	M		800-1050	
310	Ar		V H	B		Sc K W	Ch 2N L				U F			Cu	C	M		800-950	J
311			Ls	Be		K Sc	L				N U			G	C	M	SW-NE	800-1050	Jp
312			Sh	2B							N			Cu	C	M	SW-NE	800-1050	J
313	S Sp A Sh Ar	Sk B	V			K W					2R H slag B				I	M	N-S	850-950	W
314	S Sp	B													C	M		800-1050	W
315	S A															M?		800-1050	W
316			B			Sc					F H B				C	M		800-1050	
317			Ls								4U				C	M		800-1050?	
318							Ch? N				Cy				C	M		800-1050	
319			2Sh			W					U 2N			Cu	C	M		800-1050	
320	A														C	M		900-1050	W
321				B										Cu		M		800-1050	J
322	S A															M		800-1050	W
323			L	B 2Be										Cu				800-1050	J
324			V															560-1050	
325	Sp													Ag		M		560-1050	W
326	S															M		560-1050	W
327			V 2Gp			W					xR (small)				C	M		560-1050	
328	S Sp A															F		910-1030	W

329	Sh A		V Nc	R		W 3K	Ch?			U				C	M		750-800	W	
330	A Sp Sh Ar	B				K S											900-1030	W	
331	2S 2Sp 2Ar		V											C	M		900-1030	W	
332			Gp? V	3B		K								Cu	I	F(?)	900-1000	J	
333			V	4B		2K Sc	N C							Cu	C	M	560-1050	J	
334	Sp A	B													M		560-1050	W	
335		B	V			2K									M		560-1050		
336	Sp														M		560-1050	W	
337	Sp					2Sc	N								M		560-1050	W	
338	S A			3B											M		560-1050	W+ J	
339	Sp Sh		V			K	N								M		900-1050	W	
340	S			F										Cu	M		1050-1537	W	
341	fxAr		F V							H U					M		560-1050		
342	S A Ar	Ha			S										M		800-960	W	
343			2V	2B A		Sc 2K				xF xS U				C	M		800-1050	J	
344	S 2A Sp xAr Sh	B	V	2B R		Sc 4K	N			F 2R xH xU				Cu	M		560-1050	W+ J	
345	S 2Sp A 11Ar	B 2Sp Sm				Sc Sb K F Aw hW S Tw		2C?		SI				Ag	C	M	560-1050	W	
346	S Sp A Sh?	B 4S													C	M	950-1000	W	
347	S Sh									FISI R N					I	M	E-W?	1000-1060	M
348			V Nc				N Ch L			26R F N H U					C	M?	800-1050	F	

LOM																			
	Weaponry	Equestr	Domestic	Jewellery	Farming	Tools	Pers.	Symb.	Means of exch.	B	Miscellaneous	I	>I	Material	C/I	Grave form	Alignm.	Period	G
349							C				2R wood				I	M	N-S	800-1050?	
350	3S Sp A 7Ar Sh				S	K					SI					C		800-900	W
351	S Sh A 12Ar	B			S	H K P Sb					F 3N H				C			800-900	W
352	S 2Sp Sh Ar	B			2C	F 2K W +uncert.					F H 2N 2R A				C			800-1050	W
353				8Be							H			Cu	C	M		800-1050?	J
354	S A	B Sk	R												C	M		850-950	W
355	S A Sh Ar			R	S	W F G									C	C O		900-950	W
356	S Sp A 12Ar			Bf		K F								Ag Cu	C	F		950-1050	W

357				2B		K									C		875-975	J
358	4Ar										SI				C		560-1050	
359		4Hs				K									M SC		560-1050	
360				2B 2N							xU			Cu	MP		800-1050	J
361	Ar			Pin										Cu	M		560-1050	
362	Ar					K									O	grave ?	800-1050	
363	S Sp A Ar Sh	B		B	Sc	K W Sb								Cu	C		560-1050	W

RINGEBU

	Weaponry	Equestr	Domestic	Jewellery	Farming	Tools	Pers.	Symb.	Means of exch.	B	Miscellaneous	I	>I	Material	C/I	Grave form	Alignm.	Period	G
364	S Sp A			BA	3Sc S B	C Sc								Cu	I	M	SW-NE	800-900	W+ J
365	2A															O Fs	grave ?	560-1050	
366	2A															O Fs	grave ?	560-1050	
367						Sb Sc									C	F		800-1050	
368	Sp A														C	F		950-1050	W
369	A					Wedge?										F		800-900	W
370	2S A 7Ar	R 2B 2Hs			Sc C	Sc					2H 3F N R H				C	M		800-950	W
371	S															C K		560-800	W

SØR-FRON

	Weaponry	Equestr	Domestic	Jewellery	Farming	Tools	Pers.	Symb.	Means of exch.	B	Miscellaneous	I	>I	Material	C/I	Grave form	Alignm.	Period	G
372	S	B		2B										Cu	I	C		800-1050	W+ J
373	5Ar															F	grave ?	800-1050	
374	A															M		900-950	W
375	Sp															M		850-950	W
376	S																	560-1050	W
377	S Sp	B		4B 3Be	Sc	Sc					U			Cu Ag Au G	I	F		800-900	W+ J
378	3Ar				S						SL					M		560-1050	

VÄLER																			
	Weaponry	Equestr	Domestic	Jewellery	Farming	Tools	Pers.	Symb.	Means of exch.	B	Miscellaneous	I	>I	Material	C/I	Grave form	Alignm.	Period	G
379	A															F?	grave ?	800-1050	

VANG																			
	Weaponry	Equestr	Domestic	Jewellery	Farming	Tools	Pers.	Symb.	Means of exch.	B	Miscellaneous	I	>I	Material	C/I	Grave form	Alignm.	Period	G
380	S				S Sc	Sc										C		560-1050	W
381	S A Sp															C		560-800	W
382	S A				S	K									C	M SC		560-800	W
383	S Sp A Ar	2B		3B 2Be	3S 2A Sc B	B 2K P Sb					C 3U SI					M		560-800	W
384	S															M		560-1050	W
385	S A xAr														C	M		560-1050	W
386	Ar															M		560-1050	
387	Sp															M		550-650	W
388	S Sp	B R			Sc 3S B	2K 2Sc K	2N Ch				SI				C	M Fs		560-800	W
389	S A	B	V	B		W								Ag Cu		M		800-1050	W+ J
390	S					Sc									C	M		560-800	W
391	S Sp															M		560-1537	W
392	S				S										C	O		560-800	W
393	A					C									C	F		560-800	W
394	Sp Sh 4Ar				S Sc	K									C	F		560-850	W
395	Sp															M		800-1050	W
396	S A 14Ar					F R								G	I	M		560-800	W
397	Ar	B	R 13W	4Be	3S	3K Sc					2F			G	C	F		560-800?	J
398				B A										Cu		F		560-800	J
399					S											C		560-1050	
400	Ar		R		S	Sc K	N				H				C	C		560-800?	

401		2Hs	R				N				Bell				M		560-1050		
402	S Ar		V	B										Cu	M		560-1050	W+ J	
403		B R	H Sh	B Pin	S C	Sc K	2N Ch				2H handle				I	O	800-1050	J	
404	Sp														M		560-1050	W	
405	Ar														M		560-1050		
406	3Sp					W									I	C	560-1050	W	
407	Sp															M SC 2.	560-1050	W	
408	10Ar														C		560-1050		
409	3Ar														C		560-1050		
410	2Ar															M	560-1050		
411	S															M	560-1050	W	
412				A										Cu		M	560-1050	J	
413	A															M	560-1050	W	
414	Sh															C	560-1050		
415	2A S 2Ar		V													M	560-1050	W	
416						K										M	560-1050		
417	Sp A															M	560-1050	W	
418	Sp															M	850-950	W	
419	S															C	775-950	W	
420	A		R			K	N									M	560-1050		
421	Sh															M	800-850		
422	Sh A Ar	2B Hf			2S C	F H K	Ch				F R			G	I	M	560-1050	W	
423	2Ar															M	800-1050		
424	Ar															M	800-1050		
425						2K	Ch N				2H xU SI					C	560-1050		
426	2Ar	Ha	H	Be		2K	Ch N				H R SI			G		M	560-1050		
427		Sk				K									I	M	800-1050		
428							Ch									C	560-1050		
429				R										Cu		M	560-1050		
430	Ar														C	M	560-1050		
431	Sh A Ar	2B Hf	F		B C 2S	F H K	Ch				F R 2U					M	800-1050		
432	5Ar		Ss?	Be		3K					SI			G	I	F	560-1050		
433	Sp														C	M	800-950	W	
434	S		frying grate		A										I?		grave ?	560-800	W
435	A Sh				B	Sc F									C?	F?		800-950	W

436		B Hs			4K							C	grave ?	800- 1050	
437			R		K Sc	N						F?		800- 1050	
438	S		R									C F Fs		W	
439	?				Sc 2K?							C	grave ?	800- 1050	
440	2Ar			S?	2K				3NH S SP			F	grave ?	800- 1050	
441	Sp A				Th							F		560- 700	W
442	S			C								C M		560- 1050	W
443	S											C		800- 1050	W
444					K							C O		800- 1050	
445					Sb							C F		800- 1050	
446		B			K							F	grave ?	800- 1050	
447				C A	sTa sSc				H			C F		800- 1050	
448	S				Sb							C F		800- 1050	W
449				2S	K Aw							C C		800- 1050	
450		R										n C	grave ?	800- 1050	
451	S Ar	Ha			H F K Pi	Ch			N F 2 kila spurs			C? F	grave ?	800- 1050	W
452		B			C?	Ch			S F			F	grave ?	800- 1050	
453	Ar											C		800- 1050	
454	S 2Sp A.Ar			Sc	K							C M? 2.		900- 1000	W
455	S Sp A Sh Ar	B R		S Sc	W							C M 2;?		900- 1000	W
456				Sc 2S	L							C C		800- 1050	
458	S A											C		560- 800	W
459				S	Sc							C? F		800- 1050	
460	A											F Fs	grave ?	800- 1050	W
461	Ar											M		800- 1050	
462	Ar											C M		800- 1050	
463		?			K				A			I M		560- 1050	
464	Sp 2Ar			S	2K				F					560- 1050	W

List 4

Herøy: bog finds		Period	
B7600	Kvalsund	620–760	Four boats offered and destroyed
B6979	Kopperstad	560–1050	Front part of boat, decorated, pine
B9384	Leikanger	560–1050	2 concentric circles of pointed pine sticks, d= 40 and 175 cm
B9399–400	Leikanger	560–1050	Celt and tool similar to knife, pine
B9402	Yt Bø	400–1050	Pine sword (peat knife?)
B10279	Kvalsund	560–1050	Pine cramp / boat part?
B12589	Remøy	560–1050	Two bog sticks
Selje: bog finds		Period	
B6613	Aarsheim Hove	800–1050	12 glass beads and 2 gilded bronze fittings of Irish origin
Gulen: offer (?), bog finds		Period	
B9056	Mjømna	c. 800–900	An axe wedged in a cliff
B7234	Byrknes, Byrknesøy	800–1050	13 glass beads, found 2 m deep in bog
B10221	Revurholmen, Byrknesøy		20 pointed sticks, found 1.5 m deep in bog, all pointed ends stuck together, like a fan
Farsund		Period	
C6752	Sigersvold	560–1050	2 oval buckles forming a box with a bone wrapped in textile.
Rollag: Hoard/offer		Period	
C21858	Traaen	p.991	746.8 g silver, including buckles and jewellery, a cross pendant or Tor's hammer, ingot, 128 coins and objects of Byzantine, Arabic, German, Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian origin
unnumbered	Berg Ulstad	560–1050	1 or 2 axes wedged in a cliff
Grimstad		Period	
C26673	Skiftenes østre	800–1050	Two armlets, c. 250 g silver, wrapped in birchbark
C36000	Slemmedal	pp. 915/920	A hoard with 2111 kg of gold and silver items, including jewellery, decorated fittings, hack gold, coins of Arabic, English and Carolingian origin
Sør-Fron: hoard/offer?		Period	
C30051	N.Dalsegg	800–1050	4 scythes, a bill-hook, 3 celts, and 2 ards found in a cairn, all of iron

C30254	Kjorstad	560–1050	2 axes
Våler: hoard		Period	
C24133	Lillehaugen	800–1050	c. 60 iron bars
Vang: hoard/offer		Period	
C7675	Opdal	560–1050	2 adzes

GLOSSARY

<i>Bauta</i>	a menhir; a free-standing, upright stone
<i>Celta</i>	kind of iron adze
<i>Cooking pit</i>	a pit filled with charcoal and fire-cracked stones, normally from AD 0–600, but may be later as well as earlier
<i>Cult</i>	religious practice in a wide sense, including rite and ritual
<i>Early Middle Ages</i>	<i>c.</i> AD 1030/50–1250
<i>Fylke</i>	county, province
<i>Gullgubber</i>	golden foil upon which are stamped the images of one or two human figures, from late Iron Age
<i>Kaupang</i>	early marketplace
<i>Kirke, kyrkje</i>	church
<i>Kjøpstad</i>	early marketplace
<i>Kors, kross</i>	cross
<i>Late Iron Age</i>	<i>c.</i> AD 560–1030/50
<i>Merovingian period</i>	<i>c.</i> AD 560–800
<i>Myr</i>	bog, mire
<i>Thing site</i>	assembly site
<i>Vidje</i>	width; a twig tied into a ring
<i>Viking period</i>	<i>c.</i> AD 800–1030/1050

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Amundsen, B. H. 1999. *Østnorske enkle kors og hjulkors i stein fra middelalderen: En studie av form og spredning* (unpublished master's thesis (Hovedfag), Universitetet i Oslo)
- Andersen, P. S. 1977. *Samlingen av Norge og kristningen av landet: 800–1130*, Handbok i Norges historie, Scandinavian University Books, 2 (Bergen: Universitetsforlaget)
- Andersson, T., and H. Görtberg. 1986. *Olavskirkens kirkegård: Humanosteologisk analyse og faseinndeling*, Fortiden i Trondheim bygrunn: Folkebibliotekstomten. Meddelelser, 2 (Trondheim: Riksantikvaren)
- Andrén, A. 2000. 'Ad sanctos — de dödas plats under medeltiden', *Hikuin*, 27: 7–26
- Andrén, A., L. Ersgård, and J. Wienberg (eds). 2001. *Från stad till land: En medeltidsarkeologisk resa tillägnad Hans Andersson*, Lund Studies in Medieval Archaeology, 29 (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell)
- Andrén, A., K. Jennbert, and C. Raudvere (eds). 2006. *Old Norse Religion in Long-Term Perspectives: Origins, Changes, and Interactions*, Vågar till Midgård, 8 (Lund: Nordic Academic Press)
- Andrén, A., K. Jennbert, and C. Raudvere. 2006. 'Old Norse Religion: Some Problems and Prospects', in *Old Norse Religion in Long-Term Perspectives: Origins, Changes, and Interactions*, ed. by A. Andrén, K. Jennbert, and C. Raudvere, Vågar till Midgård, 8 (Lund: Nordic Academic Press), pp. 11–14
- Antweiler, A. 1961. 'Religion als Spiel', *Numen*, 8: 199–235
- Arcini, C. 1992. 'Skillnader i ålders — och könsfördelning i populationen på medeltida kyrkogårdar i Skåne', *Meta: Medeltidsarkeologisk tidskrift*, for 1992: 44–61
- Arcini, C., and G. Tagesson. 2005. 'Kroppen som materiell kultur: Gravar och människor i Linköping genom 700 år', in *Liunga-kaupinga: Kulturhistoria och arkeologi i Liköpingsbygden, Arkeologiska undersökningar*, ed. by A. Kaliff and G. Tagesson (Stockholm: Riksantikvarieämbetet), pp. 283–319
- Are, D. F. 1963 (orig. 1122–33). 'Islendingboka', in *Dikt og prosa*, ed. by H. Magerøy, O. Nordland, and P. Tylden, Den norrøne litteraturen, 6 (Oslo: Det norske samlaget), pp. 45–62
- Arnold, R. 1957. 'A Port of Trade: Whydah on the Guinea Coast', in *Trade and Market in the Early Empires: Economies in History and Theory*, ed. by K. Polanyi, C. M. Arensberg, and H. W. Pearson (New York: Free), pp. 154–76
- Artelius, T., and A. Kristensson. 2006. 'The Universe Container: Projections of Religious Meaning in a Viking Age Burial-Ground in Northern Småland', in *Old Norse Religion in Long-*

- Term Perspectives: Origins, Changes, and Interactions*, ed. by A. Andrén, K. Jennbert, and C. Raudvere, *Vägar till Midgård*, 8 (Lund: Nordic Academic Press), pp. 147–52
- Asplund, H. 2005. 'The Bear and the Female: Bear-Tooth Pendants in Late Iron Age Finland', in *Rituals and Relations: Studies on the Society and Material Culture of the Baltic Finns*, ed. by S. Mäntylä, *Annales Academiae Scientiarum Fennicae Humaniora*, 336 (Helsinki: Finnish Academy of Science and Letters, and the Finnish Society of Science and Letters), pp. 13–30
- Bagge, S. 1991. *Society and Politics in Snorri Sturluson's Heimskringla* (Berkeley: University of California Press)
- , 2004. *Europa tar form: År 300 til 1350*, 2nd edn (Oslo: Cappelen)
- , 2005a. 'Christianization and State Formation in Early Medieval Norway', *Scandinavian Journal of History*, 30: 107–34
- , 2005b. 'The Making of a Missionary King: The Medieval Accounts of Olaf Tryggvason and the Conversion of Norway', *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, 105: 474–513
- Bagge, S., and S. W. Nordeide. 2007. 'The Kingdom of Norway', in *Christianization and the Rise of Christian Monarchy: Scandinavia, Central Europe and Rus' c. 900–1200*, ed. by N. Berend (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 121–66
- Bell, C. 1997. *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions* (Oxford: Oxford University Press)
- Berend, N. (ed.) 2007a. *Christianization and the Rise of Christian Monarchy: Scandinavia, Central Europe and Rus' c. 900–1200* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press)
- , 2007b. 'Introduction', in *Christianization and the Rise of Christian Monarchy: Scandinavia, Central Europe and Rus' c. 900–1200*, ed. by N. Berend (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 1–46
- Berend, N., J. Laszlovszky, and B. Z. Szakács. 2007. 'The Kingdom of Hungary', in *Christianization and the Rise of Christian Monarchy: Scandinavia, Central Europe and Rus' c. 900–1200*, ed. by N. Berend (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 319–68
- Berger, P. L. 1973. *The Social Reality of Religion*, Penguin University Books (Harmondsworth: Penguin)
- Bergstøl, J. 2008. *Samer i Østerdalen? En studie av etnisitet i jernalderen og middelalderen i det nordøstre Hedmark. Theses for dr.art*, *Acta humaniora*, 325 (Oslo: Det humanistiske fakultet, Universitetet i Oslo)
- Birkeli, F. 1973. *Norske steinkors i tidlig middelalder: Et bidrag til belysning av overgangen fra norrøn religion til kristendom*, Skrifter utgitt av Det Norske Videnskaps-Akademi i Oslo, II: Hist.-Filos. Klasse, n.s., 10 (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget)
- , 1995. *Tolv vintre hadde kristendommen vært i Norge* (Oslo: Verbum)
- Bjerknes, K., and H. E. Lidén. 1975. *The Stave Churches of Kaupanger: The Present Church and its Predecessors*, *Norwegian Antiquarian Bulletin*, 1 (Oslo: Fabritius)
- Blindheim, C. 1982. 'Slemmedal-skatten', *Viking*, 1981: 5–31
- Blindheim, M. 1986. 'A House-Shaped Irish-Scots Reliquary in Bologna, and its Place among the Other Reliquaries', *Acta Archaeologica*, 55, 1984: 1–53
- Blom, P. 1896. *Beskrivelse over Valle prestegjeld i Setersdalen: Med dets pretehistorie og sagn* (Gjøvik: Oplædingens trykkeri)
- Boldsen, J. 1992. 'Dateringen af ødekirkegården i Løddeköpinge', *Meta: Medeltidsarkeologisk tidskrift*, for 1992: 21–27
- Bonde, N. 1994. 'De norske vikingeskibsgaves alder: Et vellykket norsk-dansk forskningsprosjekt', *Nationalmuseets Arbejdsmark*: 128–47

- Bonde, N., and A. E. Christensen. 1993. 'Dendrochronological Dating of the Viking Age Ship Burials at Oseberg, Gokstad and Tune, Norway', *Antiquity*, 67: 575–83
- Bradley, R. 2005. *Ritual and Domestic Life in Prehistoric Europe* (London: Routledge)
- Brendalsmo, A. J. 1989. *Peterskirken, dens kirkegård og det eldste Tønsberg*, Arkeologiske rapporter fra Tønsberg, 2 (Tønsberg: Riksantikvaren, Utgravningskontoret for Tønsberg)
- Brendalsmo, A. J., and E.-A. Stylegar. 2001. *Kirkested i 1000 år: Grend, gård og grav i Liknes*, NIKU Publikasjoner, 111 (Oslo: Norsk institutt for kulturminneforskning)
- Brink, S. 1996a. 'Kristnande och kyrklig organisation i Jämtland', in *Jämtlands kristnande*, ed. by Brink, pp. 155–88
- , 1996b. 'Problemet "Jämtlands kristnande" i ett tvärvetenskapligt perspektiv: Slutbeaktelse och syntes', in *Jämtlands kristnande*, ed. by S. Brink, Prosjektet Sveriges kristnande, 4 (Uppsala: University of Uppsala, Department of Theology), pp. 201–12
- Brink, S. (ed.). 1996c. *Jämtlands kristnande*, Prosjektet Sveriges kristnande, 4 (Uppsala: University of Uppsala, Department of Theology)
- Brown, G. B. 1915. *Saxon Art and Industry in the Pagan Period*, The Arts in Early England, 4 (London: Murray)
- Brøgger, A. W. 1937. 'Gullalder', *Viking*, 1: 137–95
- Brøgger, A. W., H. Falk, and H. Shetelig (eds). 1917. *Osebergfundet*, 5 vols (Kristiania: Den Norske Stat/Universitetets Oldsaksamling, 1917–2006), 1
- Braathen, H. 1989. *Ryttergraver: Politiske strukturer i eldre rikssamlingstid*, Varia, 19 (Oslo: Universitetets oldsaksamling)
- Bull, E. 1912. *Folk og kirke i middelalderen: Studier til Norges historie* (Kristiania: Gyldendal)
- , 1918. 'Om oprindelsen til Oslo og de andre gamle norske byene', *St Hallvard*, 4: 65–80
- Byock, J., and others. 2005. 'A Viking-Age Valley in Iceland: The Mosfell Archaeological Project', *Medieval Archaeology*, 49: 195–218
- Bødal, S. M. 1998. *Vik i Sogn 750–1030: Lokalsamfunn med overregionale kontakter* (unpublished master's thesis (Hovedfag), Universitetet i Bergen)
- Bøe, A. 1963. 'Kirkegård', in *Kulturbistorisk leksikon for nordisk middelalder fra vikingetid til reformationstid: Danmark*, ed. by A. Karker, 22 vols (København: Rosenkilde og Bagger), VIII: *Judas-Konfiskation* (1963), 396–99
- Campbell, J. 2000. *The Anglo-Saxon State* (London: Hambledon)
- Carelli, P. 1992. 'Inför döden är inte alla lika: Profana gravar i medeltidens Lund', *Meta: Medeltidsarkeologisk tidskrift*, for 1992: 62–83
- , 2004. 'Lunds äldsta kyrkogård och förekomsten av ett senvikingatida danskt parochialsystem', in *Kristendommen i Danmark før 1050*, ed. by N. Lund (Roskilde: Roskilde Museum), pp. 253–58
- Carlström, S. 1994. *Hallingdal: Kult of kulturminner i folkelig tradisjon* (unpublished master's thesis (Hovedfag), Universitetet i Oslo)
- Carver, M. (ed.) 2003. *The Cross Goes North: Processes of Conversion in Northern Europe, AD 300–1300* (Woodbridge: York Medieval Press)
- , 2005. *Sutton Hoo: A Seventh-Century Princely Burial Ground and its Context*, Reports of the Research Committee of the Society of Antiquaries of London, 69 (London: British Museum)
- Chapman, A. C. 1957. 'Port of Trade Enclaves in Aztec and Maya Civilizations', in *Trade and Market in the Early Empires: Economies in History and Theory*, ed. by K. Polanyi, C. M. Arensberg, and H. W. Pearson (New York: Free), pp. 114–53

- Christensen, A. E. 1984. 'Uten båt - ingen bosetting', in *Sunnmøres forhistorie: Fra de første fotefar*, ed. by S. Indrelid and S. Ugelvik Larsen (Ålesund: Sunnmørsposten), pp. 128–33
- , 1993. 'Skaft, runebommehammer, "kjøttkniv" eller uidentifisert gjenstand?', *Spor*: 46
- Christie, H. 1978. 'Lom kirke', in *Lom stavkirke forteller*, vol. LXV: *Fortidsminner* (Oslo: Foreningen til norske Fortidsminnesmerkers Bevaring), pp. 101–12
- Christophersen, A., and S. W. Nordeide. 1994. *Kaupangen ved Nidelva*, Riksantikvarens Skrifter, 7 (Trondheim: Riksantikvaren)
- Cinthio, E. 1968. 'The Churches of St Clemens in Scandinavia', in *Res mediaevales: Ragnar Blomqvist kal. Mai. MCMLXVIII oblata*, ed. by A. W. Mårtensson, Archaeologica Lundensia, 3 (Lund: Kulturhistoriska Museet), pp. 103–16
- Cinthio, M. 1992. 'Några daterings- och tolkningsproblem aktualiserade i samband med bearbetningen av gravar och kyrkogård tillhörande Trinitatiskyrkorna i Lund', *Meta: Medeltids-arkelogisk tidskrift*, for 1992: 30–39
- Cleve, N. 1972. 'Steinkors: Finland', in *Kulturhistorisk leksikon for nordisk middelalder fra vikingetid til reformationstid: Norge*, ed. by F. Hødnebo, 22 vols (Oslo: Gyldendal, 1956–78), XVII: *Stadskole-Såtesgård* (1972), pp. 127–28
- Connolly, M., and F. Coyne. 2005. *Underworld: Death and Burial in Cloghermore Cave, Co. Kerry* (Dublin: Wordwell)
- Cramp, R. 1988. 'General Introduction', in *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture*, 9 vols to date (Oxford: British Academy/Oxford University Press, 1984–), II, iii–li
- Crawford, B. E. 2004. 'The Churches Dedicated to St Clement in Norway: A Discussion of their Origin and Function', *Collegium Medievale*, 17: 100–31
- Crumlin-Pedersen, O., and B. M. Thye (eds). *The Ship as Symbol in Prehistoric and Medieval Scandinavia*, Publications from the National Museum, Studies in Archaeology and History, 1 (København: National Museum of Denmark)
- Culleton, E. 1999. *Celtic and Early Christian Wexford AD 400 to 1166* (Dublin: Four Courts)
- De Vingo, P. 2007. 'A Reinterpretation of the Cemeteries in Central-Southern Piedmont between Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages: The Social Dynamics of the Population between Old Conquerors and New Germanic Dominators', in *Medieval Europe, Paris 2007* (Paris: Institut national d'histoire de l'art, Université Paris–1 Panthéon-Sorbonne)
- de Vries, J. 1956–57. *Altgermanische Religionsgeschichte*, Grundriss der germanischen Philologie, 1–2 (Berlin: de Gruyter)
- Det Nye Testamente*. 1978. (Oslo: Det norske bibelselskap)
- Dickinson, T. M. 2002. 'Review article: What's new in early medieval burial archaeology?', *Early Medieval Europe*, 2: 71–87
- DGK. *Danmarks gamle Købstadslovgivning*, ed. by Erik Kroman, 5 vols (København: Det danske Sprog- og Litteraturselskab, Rosenkilde og Bagger, 1951–61), III: *Sjælland, Lolland, Falster, Møn, Fyn og langeland* (1955), p. 1
- DN. 1847–1995. *Diplomatarium Norvegicum: Oldbreve til Kundskab om Norges indre og ydre Forhold, Sprog, Slegter, Sæder, Lovgivning og Rettergang i Middelalderen* (Christiania: Mallings)
- Drew, K. F. 1973. *The Lombard Laws* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press)
- Dunfjeld-Aagård, L. 2005. *Sørsamiske kystområder: Tolkning av fortidig samisk tilstedeværelse i Ytre Namdal* (unpublished master's thesis (Hovedfag), Universitetet i Tromsø)
- Durkheim, E. 1915. *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life: A Study in Religious Sociology* (London: Allen & Unwin)

- Eide, O. E. 1974. *De toskipede kirker i Oslo: Et forsøk på redatering og opphavsbestemmelse med utgangspunkt i de siste utgravningene i Clemenskirken* (unpublished master's thesis (Magistergrad Stensil Forfatterens utgivelse), Universitetet i Bergen)
- , 1975. 'Herøy og Ulstein: To middelalderkirker på Sunnmøre', *Nicolay*, 20: 32–39
- , 2007. 'Om muremåter og kirkedateringer i 1100-tallets Oslo', *Collegium Mediaevale*, 20: 137–68
- Eisenschmidt, S. 2004. *Grabfunde des 8. bis 11. Jahrhunderts zwischen Kongeå und Eider: Zur Bestattungssitte der Wikingerzeit im südlichen Altdänemark*, Studien zur Siedlungsgeschichte und Archäologie der Ostseegebiete, 5 (Neumünster: Wachholz)
- Eldorhagen, M. 2001. 'Ovale spenner i Nord-Norge og Trøndelag: Stil og symbolisme i sosial sammenheng' (unpublished master's thesis (Hovedfag), Universitetet i Tromsø)
- Eliade, M. 1974 [1958]. *Patterns in Comparative Religion* (New York: New American Library)
- , 1975. *Rites and Symbols of Initiation: The Mysteries of Birth and Rebirth* (New York: Harper)
- , 1976. *Det hellige og det profane. Gyldendals fakkel-bøker* (Oslo: Gyldendal)
- Engelstad, E. S. 1927. 'Hedenskap og kristendom 1. Sen vikingetid i indlandsbygdene i Norge', *Bergens museums aarbok. Hist.antikv. Rekke*, 1: 87
- , (ed.). 1929. *Hedenskap og kristendom. 2: Trekk av Vikingtidens kultur i Østnorge*, Universitetets Oldsaksamlings Skrifter, 2 (Oslo: Oldsaksamlingen)
- Eriksson, J. E. G. 1990. *De arkeologiske undersøkelsene i Storgaten 47, Tønsberg 1971*, Arkeologiske rapporter fra Tønsberg, 5 (Tønsberg: Riksantikvaren, Utgravningskontoret for Tønsberg)
- Eskeland, T. 1994. 'Fra Diggasborrå til Diggasbekken: Finske stedsnavn på de norske finnskogene' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Universitetet i Oslo)
- Farbrege, O. 1971. 'Gravfeltet på Horgheim', *Romsdal Sogelags Årsskrift*, 9–13
- , 1986a. 'Hove i Åsen. Kultstad og bygdesentrum', *Spor*, 2: 42–46, 50–51
- , 1986b. 'Kongsmakt, kristning og Frostatinget. Gravfunn på Hernes, Frosta', *Spor*, 2: 38–41, 51
- Fett, E. 1968. 'Førhistorien i Etne', in *Frå dei eldste tider til 1660 Etne-soga*, ed. by S. Dyrvik (Bergen: Etne bygdeboknemnd), pp. 124–56
- Fett, P. 1951. *Herøy prestegjeld*, Førhistoriske minne på Sunnmøre, 3 (Bergen: Universitetet i Bergen, Historisk museum)
- Fischer, G. 1934. *Undersøkelse av fremgravete fundamentrester på Hegranes i Jølster, 6–9 oktober 1934* (Bergen: Bergen Museum/Riksantikvaren)
- , 1950. *Oslo under Eikaberg* (Oslo: Oslo kommune)
- , 1965. *Domkirken i Trondheim: Nidaros erkebispesetol og bispesete 1153–1953*, 1–2 (Oslo: Riksantikvaren)
- Fisher, I. 2001. *Early Medieval Sculpture in the West Highlands and Islands*, Monograph Series, 1 (Edinburgh: Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland, Society of Antiquaries of Scotland)
- Fjellheim, S. 1992. 'Runebommehammeren fra Rendalen', *Spor*, 1: 46–48
- Forseth, L. 1993. 'Vikingetid i Østfold og Vestfold: En kildekritisk granskning av regionale forskjeller i gravfunnene' (unpublished master's thesis (Magistergrad), Universitetet i Oslo)
- Fuglestad, I. 1997. 'Mellom hedendom og kristendom, mellom ættesamfunn og kongerike: Bruken av monumentale anlegg i en brytningstid', in *Konflikt i forhistorien*, ed. by B. Myhre and I. Fuglestad, AmS-Varia, 30 (Stavanger: Arkeologisk museum i Stavanger)

- Fuglestad, I., and P. Hernæs. 1996. 'Rituell kommunikasjon i yngre jernalder: Forslag til modell for forståelse av storhauger og steinkors i brytningstiden mellom hedendom og kristendom', in *Nordsjøen: Handel, religion og politikk, Karmøyseminaret 1994 og 1995*, ed. by J. F. Krøger and H.-R. Naley (Stavanger: Vikingfestivalen, Karmøy kommune, Dreyer), pp. 140–50
- Gabrielsen, K. H. 2002. 'Vestlandets steinkors: Monumentalisme i brytningen mellom hedendom og kristendom' (unpublished master's thesis (Hovedfag, Universitetet i Bergen))
- Gansum, T. 1995a. *Haugar og Haugating: Rikssamlingen og det eldste Tønsberg* (Tønsberg: Media)
- , 1995b. 'Jernaldergravskikk i Slagendalen: Oseberghaugen og storhaugene i Vestfold — lokale eller regionale symboler? En landskapsarkeologisk undersøkelse' (unpublished master's thesis (Magistergrad), Universitetet i Oslo)
- , 2004. *Hauger som konstruksjoner: arkeologiske forventninger gjennom 200 år*, Gotars Serie B: Gothenburg Archaeological Thesis, 33 (Sollentuna: Göteborgs Universitet/Riksantikvarieämbetet)
- Gellein, K. 1997. 'Kristen innflytelse i hedensk tid? En analyse med utgangspunkt i graver fra yngre jernalder i Hordaland' (unpublished master's thesis (Hovedfag), Universitetet i Bergen)
- Gelting, M. H. 2007. 'The Kingdom of Denmark', in *Christianization and the Rise of Christian Monarchy: Scandinavia, Central Europe and Rus' c. 900–1200*, ed. by N. Berend (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 73–120
- Gennep, A. van. 1973 (orig. 1910). 'On the Method to be Followed in the Study of Rites and Myths', in *Classical Approaches to the Study of Religion: Aims, Methods and Theories of Research*, ed. by J. Waardenburg, Religion and Reason, 3, 2 vols (The Hague: Mouton, 1973–74), 1, 287–300
- Gerhardsson, B. 1993. *En Bok om Nya Testamentet*, 5th edn (Malmö: Liber)
- Geyh, M. A. 2001. 'Bomb Radiocarbon Dating of Animal Tissues and Hair', *Radiocarbon*, 43: 723–30
- Gilchrist, R., and B. Sloane. 2005. *Requiem: The Medieval Monastic Cemetery in Britain* (London: Museum of London Archaeology Service)
- Gittos, H. 2002. 'Creating the Sacred: Anglo-Saxon Rites for Consecrating Cemeteries', in *Burial in Early Medieval England and Wales*, ed. by S. Lucy and A. Reynolds, Society for Medieval Archaeology Monograph Series, 17 (London: Society for Medieval Archaeology), pp. 195–208
- Gjerpe, L. E. (ed.). 2005. *Gravfeltet på Gulli. E 18-prosjektet Vestfold*, Varia, 1 (Oslo: Kulturhistorisk museum Fornminneseksjonen)
- Gjessing, H. 1923. 'Aust-Agder i forhistorisk tid', in *Arendal fra fortid til nutid* (Kristiania: Gyldendalske bokhandel), pp. 1–56
- Glasenapp, H. von. 1973. *De fem världsreligionerna*, trans. by M. Edgardh Aldusserien, 132, 3rd edn (Stockholm: Aldus/Bonnier)
- Graham-Campbell, G. 1980. *Vikingenes verden* (Oslo: Tiden Norsk)
- Gräslund, A.-S. 1980. *The Burial Customs: A Study of the Graves on Björkö*, Birka Untersuchungen und Studien, 4 (Uppsala: K. Vitterhets Historie och Antikvitets Akademien / Almqvist & Wiksell International)
- , 1987. 'Pagan and Christians in the Age of Conversion', in *Proceedings of the Tenth Viking Congress, Larkollen, Norway 1985*, Universitetets Oldsaksamlings Skrifter. Ny rekke, ed. by J. E. Knirk (Oslo: Universitetets Oldsaksamling), pp. 81–94

- 1996. 'Arkeologin och kristnandet', in *Kristnandet i Sverige: Gamla källor och nya perspektiv*, ed. by B. Nilsson, Projektet Sveriges Kristnande/Publikationer, 5 (Uppsala: Department of Theology, Uppsala University), pp. 19–44
- , 2002. *Ideologi och Mentalitet: Om religionsskiftet i Skandinavien från en arkeologisk horisont*, 2nd edn, OPIA, 29 (Uppsala: Institutionen för arkeologi och antik historia)
- Gullbekk, S. H. 1997. 'Renovation monetæ i Norge i middelalderen', *Nordisk numismatisk årsskrift*, 1992–93: 52–87
- , 2003. *Pengevesenets fremvekst og fall i Norge i middelalderen*, *Acta humaniora*, 157 (Oslo: Det humanistiske fakultet, Universitetet i Oslo)
- Gunnes, E. 1976. *Rikssamling og kristning 800–1177*, Norges Historie, 2 (Oslo: Cappelen)
- Hadley, D. M. 2002. 'Burial Practices in Northern England in the Later Anglo-Saxon Period', in *Burial in Early Medieval England and Wales*, ed. by S. Lucy and A. Reynolds, Society for Medieval Archaeology Monograph Series, 17 (London: Society for Medieval Archaeology), pp. 209–28
- Hagland, J. R., and J. Sandnes. 1994. *Frostatingslova: Norrøne Bokverk* (Oslo: Det Norske Samlaget)
- Halbwachs, M. 1992. *On Collective Memory: The Heritage of Sociology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press)
- Hamlin, A., and C. Foley. 1983. 'A Woman's Graveyard at Carrickmore, County Tyrone, and the Separate Burial of Women', *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*, 46: 41–46
- Hansen, L. I., and B. Olsen. 2004. *Fram til 1750*, Samenes historie, 1 (Oslo: Cappelen)
- Harbison, P. 1992. *The High Crosses of Ireland: An Iconographical and Photographic Survey*, Monographien, 17 (Bonn: Römisch-Germanisches Zentralmuseum, Forschungsinstitut für Vor- und Frühgeschichte)
- Hassenpflug, E. 1999. *Das Laienbegräbnis in der Kirche: Historisch-archäologische Studien zu Alemannien im frühen Mittelalter*, Freiburger Beiträge zur Archäologie und Geschichte des ersten Jahrtausend, 1 (Rahden: Leidorf)
- Hedeager, L., and H. Tvarnø. 2001. *Tusen års Europa-historie: Romere, germanere og nordboere* (Oslo: Pax)
- Heggstad, L. 1962. *Egilssoga: Soga om Gisle Sursson*, Den norrøne litteraturen, Ættesoger, 3 (Oslo: Det norske Samlaget)
- Heide, E. 2006. 'Spinning seiðr', in *Old Norse Religion in Long-Term Perspectives: Origins, Changes, and Interactions*, ed. by A. Andrén, K. Jennbert, and C. Raudvere, *Vågar till Midgård*, 8 (Lund: Nordic Academic Press), pp. 164–70
- Heimskringla*, see Snorre 1980
- Helle, K. 1997. 'Det første bispedømmet på Vestlandet', in *Selja — heilag stad i 1000 år*, ed. by M. Rindal (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget), pp. 240–51
- , 2001. *Gulatinget og Gulatingslova* (Leikanger: Skald)
- Helle, K., and A. Nedkvitne. 1982. 'Norge: Sentrumsdannelser og byutvikling i norsk middelalder', in *Urbaniseringsprosessen i Norden. Del 1: Middelaldersteder. Bidragene fra Island og Norge*, ed. by G. A. Blom, 3 vols (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1977), I, 37–126
- Hernæs, P. 1985. 'De østnorske sverdfunn fra yngre jernalder: En geografisk analyse' (unpublished master's thesis (Magistergrad), Universitetet i Oslo)
- , 1995. 'Kristen innflytelse i Rogalands vikingtid', in *Møtet mellom hedendom og kristendom i Norge*, ed. by Lidén, pp. 80–120

- Herrin, J. 1987. *The Formation of Christendom* (Oxford: Blackwell)
- Herstad, A. 2007. 'Båten i grava — en gårdstradisjon i yngre jernalder? En arkeologisk analyse fra Midt-Norge' (unpublished master's thesis, Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Trondheim)
- Herteig, A. E. 1957. 'Kaupangen på Borgund', in *Borgund og Giske*, 4 vols (Bergen: Borgund og Giske bygdeboknemnd, 1957–73), I, 421–72
- Hodder, I. 1982. *Symbols in Action: Ethnoarchaeological Studies of Material Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press)
- , 1991. *Reading the Past*, 2nd edn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press)
- Hoffmann, A. 1935. *Die mittelalterlichen Steinkreuze, Kreuz- und Denksteine in Niedersachsen*, Quellen und Darstellungen zur Geschichte Niedersachsens, 42 (Hildesheim: Lax)
- Holck, P. 1970a. *Ein Bericht über die Untersuchung der ausgegrabenen Skelette aus der Kirche auf Mære*, Det Norske Videnskaps-Akademi Skrifter. I: Mat.-Naturv. Klasse, n.s., 28 (Oslo: Det Norske Videnskaps-Akademi i Oslo/Universitetsforlaget)
- , 1970b. 'Skjelettfunnene fra Mære kirke', *Nord-Trøndelag Historielag Årbok*, 47: 45–55
- Holm, I. 2002. 'Solør — nyoppgdaget kulturhistorie i gammel skog', *Arkeologiske skrifter fra Universitetet i Bergen*, 11: 23–58
- Holmberg, R. 1990. *Kyrkobyggnad, kult och samhälle: Landskyrkan i Lunds forna ärkestift genom tiderna*, Lund Studies in Medieval Archaeology (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell)
- Hommedal, A. T. 1997. 'Bakgrunnen for helgenanlegget på Selja og staden si rolle i den tidlige kristninga av Vest-Noreg', in *Selja — heilag stad i 1000 år*, ed. by M. Rindal (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget), pp. 43–46
- Hultgård, A. 1992. 'Religiøs förändring, kontinuitet och ackulturation/synkretism i vikingatidens och medeltidens skandinaviska religion', in *Kontinuitet i kult och tro från vikingatid till medeltid*, ed. by B. Nilsson, Prosjekter Sveriges Kristnande/Publikationer, 1 (Uppsala: Lunne), pp. 49–103
- Hvass, S. 2003. 'Anne-Sofie Gräslund, *Ideologi och mentalitet: Om religionsskiftet i Skandinavien från en arkeologisk horisont*, OPIA 29, 2001. Recension', *Fornvännen*, 98: 60–62
- Hyldahl, N. 1993. *Den ældste kristendoms historie* (København: Københavns Universitet / Museum Tusculanum)
- Hyldbakk, H. 1963. *Gards- og attesoge for Tingvoll*, 3 vols (Tingvoll: Tingvoll sogelag, 1961–65), II
- Haarstad, K. 1992. 'Runebommehammeren fra Rendalen', *Spor*, 2: 42–43, 47
- Imsen, S. (ed.). 2005. *Grenser og grannelag i Nordens historie* (Oslo: Cappelen)
- Ingstad, A. S. 1982. 'Osebergdronningen — hvem var hun?', *Viking*, 1981: 49–65
- , 1995. 'The Interpretation of the Oseberg-Find', in *The Ship as Symbol in Prehistoric and Medieval Scandinavia*, ed. by O. Crumlin-Pedersen and B. M. Thye, Publications from the National Museum, Studies in Archaeology and History, 1 (København: National Museum of Denmark), pp. 139–48
- Jansen, L. B., and A. Rynningen. 1994. *Kultursoge Valle kommune* (Valle: Valle kommune)
- Jarockis, R. 2001. 'Christianization and Monetization: Coins from 14th–17th Century Burials in Lithuania', in *Från stad till land: En medeltidsarkeologisk resa tillägnad Hans Andersson*, ed. by A. Andrén, L. Ersgård, and J. Wienberg, Lund Studies in Medieval Archaeology, 29 (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell), pp. 263–66
- Jonsson, K. 2003. 'Tidigmedeltida gravar i England og Wales: Referat, refleksjon, recension', *Meta: Medeltidsarkeologisk tidskrift*, for 2003, 3: 49–60

- Jørgensen, L. 2002. 'Kongsgård – kultsted – marked: Overvejelser omkring Tissøkompleksets struktur og funktion', in *Plats och praxis: Studier av nordisk förkristen ritual*, ed. by K. Jennbert, A. Andrén, and C. Raudvere, Vågar till Midgård, 2 (Lund: Nordic Academic Press), pp. 215–47
- Jåma, M., and S. Fjellheim. 1993. *Samiske kulturminner i Låarten sijte: Arealer i kommunene Snåsa, Lierne og Grong* (Steinkjer: Saemien sijte)
- Kaliff, A., and O. Sundqvist. 2004. *Oden och Mithraskulten: Religiös ackulturation under romersk järnålder och folkvandringstid*, Occasional Papers in Archaeology, 35 (Uppsala: Department of Archaeology and Ancient History, Uppsala University)
- Keller, C. 1989. 'The Eastern Settlement Reconsidered: Some Analyses of Norse Medieval Greenland' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Universitetet i Oslo)
- Keyser, R. 1856–58. *Den norske Kirkes Historie under Katholicismen* (Christiania: Tønsbergs)
- Kieffer-Olsen, J. 1993. 'Grav og gravskik i det middelalderlige Danmark: 8 kirkegårdsudgravninger' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Århus Universitet)
- , 2000. 'Gravskik og kirkegårde i middelalderen', in *Osteologisk materiale som historisk kilde*, ed. by A. Dybdahl, Senter for middelalderstudier Skrifter, 11 (Trondheim: Senter for middelalderstudier, NTNU), pp. 111–27
- Kilbride, W. G. 2000. 'Why I Feel Cheated by the Term "Christianisation"', *Archaeological Review from Cambridge*, 17: 1–17
- Kisuule, A. E. 2000. 'De regionale forskjellene i gravmaterialet fra Østfold og Vestfold i vikingtiden: Et uttrykk for tidlig kristen påvirkning samt maktpolitiske forhold i Viken' (unpublished master's thesis, Universitetet i Oslo)
- Kloster, R. 1957. 'Borgund kirke og Giske kapell', in *Borgund og Giske*, 4 vols (Bergen: Borgund og Giske, 1957–73), I, 353–420
- Klüwer, L. D. 1960 (1823). *Norske Mindesmerker, aftegnede paa en Reise igjennem en del av det Nordenfjeldske*, Facsimile (Trondheim: det Kongelige Norske Videnskabers Selskab)
- Knirk, J. E. 1996. "'Tolv vintrer hadde kristendommen vært i Norge': Norske runesteiner forteller om kristningen', in *Fra bedendom til kristendom: Perspektiver på religionsskiftet i Norge*, ed. by M. Rindal (Oslo: Gyldendal), pp. 43–53
- Knudsen, T. 1958. 'Eidsivatingsloven', in *Kulturbistorisk leksikon for nordisk middelalder fra vikingetid til reformationstid: Norge*, ed. by F. Hødnebo, 22 vols (Oslo: Gyldendal, 1956–78), III: *Datering-Epiphanian* (1958), 526–28
- Koch, H. D. 2000. 'Rosenkrans i grave: Gravskikkens baggrund, datering og perspektiver', *Hikuin*, 27: 107–36
- Kommisrud, A. 1983. 'Orsaker till variation i europeisk utveckling: Stein Rokkans makrohistoriska modell', *Häften för kritiska studier*, 3: 38–62
- Kristensen, H. K. 1987. *Middelalderbyen Viborg*, Projekt Middelalderbyen, 4 (København: Centrum)
- Lager, L. 2002. *Den Synliga Tron: Runstensors som en spegling av kristnandet i Sverige*, OPIA, 31 (Uppsala: Institutionen för arkeologi och antik historia, Uppsala universitet)
- , 2003. 'Runestones and the Conversion of Sweden', in *The Cross Goes North: Processes of Conversion in Northern Europe, AD 300–1300*, ed. by M. Carver (Woodbridge: York Medieval Press), pp. 497–507
- Laing, L. 2006. *The Archaeology of Celtic Britain and Ireland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press)

- Lamvik, M. 1977. *Kyrkje og skule*, Bygdehistorie for Tingvoll og Straumsnes, 3 vols (Tingvoll: Tingvoll sogelag og Straumsnes bygdeboknemnd, 1961–65)
- Landro, T. 2005. 'Dei eldste norske kristenrettane', Innhald og opphav (unpublished master's thesis (Hovedfag), Universitetet i Bergen)
- Lange, B. C. 1955. 'Østnorske gravmonumenter fra tidlig middelalder', *Viking*, 19: 121–46
- Larsen, A. J. 1999. 'De døde under "Auduns borg"', *Arkeologiske skrifter fra Universitetet i Bergen*, 10: 84–101
- , 2008. 'Borgund på Sunnmøre', in *De første 200 årene: Nytt blikk på 27 skandinaviske middelalderbyer*, ed. by H. Andersson, G. Hansen, and I. Øye, UBAS Nordisk, 5 (Bergen: Universitetet i Bergen), pp. 41–56
- Larsen, J. H. 1978. 'Utskyldrikt: Arkeologisk drøfting av en historisk hypotese' (unpublished master's thesis (Magistergrad), Universitetet i Oslo)
- Larsson, L. 2006. 'Rum, rymd och areal: Ett kulthus och dess närmiljö ur ett ceremoniellt perspektiv', *Bebyggelsehistorisk tidskrift*, 52: 7–19
- Lia, Ø. 2001. 'Det rituelle rom: En fortolkende analyse av vikingtidens graver og landskap på Kaupang' (unpublished master's thesis (Hovedfag), Universitetet i Oslo)
- Lidén, H. E. 1968. *Imberetning om undersøkelsene i Mære kirke, 1966–1967* (unpublished archive report, Riksantikvaren)
- , 1969. 'From Pagan Sanctuary to Christian Church: The Excavation of Mære Church in Trøndelag', *Norwegian Archaeological Review*, 2: 3–21
- , (ed.). *Møtet mellom hedendom og kristendom i Norge* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget)
- , 1999. 'Undersøkelsene i Mære kirke', in *En gullgubbe*, ed. by A. M. Hoff and A. T. Hommedal (Bergen: Alvheim & Eide), pp. 1–64
- , 2000. *Mariakirken i Bergen* (Bergen: Mangschou)
- Liestøl, A. 1954. 'Stavanger III', in *Norges innskrifter med de yngre runer*, ed. by M. Olsen, 5 vols (Oslo: Norsk historisk kjeldeskrift-institutt, 1941–80), III, 245–58
- , 1957. 'Kuli', in *Norges innskrifter med de yngre runer*, ed. by M. Olsen, 5 vols (Oslo: Norsk historisk kjeldeskrift-institutt, 1941–80), IV, 280–88
- , 1982. 'Runene i Slemmedal-skatten', *Viking*, 1981: 44–48
- Lucy, S. 1998. *The Early Anglo-Saxon Cemeteries of East Yorkshire: An Analysis and Reinterpretation*, British Archaeological Reports, British Series, 272 (Oxford: Archaeopress)
- Lucy, S., and A. Reynolds (eds). 2002a. *Burial in Early Medieval England and Wales*, Society for Medieval Archaeology Monographs, 17 (London: Society for Medieval Archaeology)
- , 2002b. 'Burial in Early Medieval England and Wales: Past, Present and Future', in *Burial in Early Medieval England and Wales*, ed. by S. Lucy and A. Reynolds, Society for Medieval Archaeology Monographs, 17 (London: Society for Medieval Archaeology), pp. 1–23
- Lunde, Ø. 1977. *Trondheims fortid i bygrunnen*, Riksantikvarens Skrifter, 2, 7 vols (Trondheim: Adresseavisens, 1975–94), II
- Lysaker, T. 1992. *Den gåtefulle kongestol på Domkirkegården*, Småskriftserien, 3 (Trondheim: Nidaros Domkirkes Restaureringsarbeiders)
- Løken, T., and H. Jacobsen. 2004. 'Stavanger bys alder', in *Stavanger Aftenblad*, Brev til kulturen, 15 January 2004
- Låg, T. 1999. *Agders historie 800–1350*, 7 vols (Kristiansand: Agder historielag, 1991–2007), I
- Madsen, O. 1998. 'Fra Tor til Kristus. Overgangen fra hedendom til kristendom, belyst utfra det arkeologiske materialet fra Etne i Sunnhordland' (unpublished master's thesis (Hovedfag), Universitetet i Bergen)

- Mandt, G. 1996. 'Material Culture and Myth: Snake Symbolism in Nordic Prehistory', *Kvinner i arkeologi i Norge*, 21: 33–50
- Manker, E. 1935. 'En lapptriumstolkning från Silbojokk 1642', in *Norrbottnens museum årsbok* (Norrbotten: Norrbottens läns hembygdsförening och Norrbottens museum), pp. 90–105
- Marstrand, S. 1963. 'Et nytt vikingtidsfunn fra Romsdal med vesteuropeiske importsaker', *Viking*, 26, 1962: 123–59
- Maurer, K. 1893. 'Nogle Bemærkninger til Norges Kirkehistorie', *Norsk Historisk Tidsskrift*, 3, ser. 3: 113
- Meistad, T. 2000. *Kristendommens historie: En innføring* (Kristiansand: Høyskoleforlaget)
- Molaug, P., and S. Nordeide (eds). 1999. *NIKU Strategisk instituttprogram 1996–2000. Norske middelalderbyer: Registre ved bygravninger*, NIKU Temahefte, 28 (Oslo: Norsk institutt for kulturminneforskning)
- Molland, E. 1968. 'Primsigning', in *Kulturbistorisk leksikon for nordisk middelalder fra vikingetid til reformationstid: Norge*, ed. by F. Hødnebo, 22 vols (Oslo: Gyldendal, 1956–78), XIII: *Ormer–Regnbue*, (1968) 439–44
- Moltke, E. 1972. 'Steinkors, Danmark', in *Kulturbistorisk leksikon for nordisk middelalder fra vikingetid til reformationstid: Norge*, ed. by F. Hødnebo, 22 vols (Oslo: Gyldendal, 1956–78), XVII: *Stadsskole–Såtesgård* (1972), 124
- Moore, G. F. 1965. *History of Religions*, International Theological Library, 1, 3rd edn (Edinburgh: Clark)
- Munch, G. S. 1982. 'Bautastener og vei', *Viking*, 45: 105–16
- Munch, P. A. 1851. 'Undersøgelser om de ældste kirkelige Forhold i Norge', *Norsk Tidsskrift for Historie og Literatur*, 5: 1–45
- Mundal, E. (ed.). 1990. *The Position of the Individual Gods and Goddesses in Various Types of Sources, with Special Reference to the Female Divinities*, Scripta Instituti Donneriani Aboensis, 13 (Åbo [Turku]: Donner Institute)
- , 2006. 'For Hålogaland av 1313 og andre kjelder til kristninga av samane i mellomalderen', in *Sápmi Y1K — Livet i samernas bosättningsområde för ett tusen år sedan*, *Samiska studier*, ed. by A. Amft and M. Svonni (Umeå: Umeå universitet), pp. 97–114
- , 2007. 'Kristninga av samane i lærebooks og faglitteratur — og kva kjeldene frå mellomalderen seier', in *Om sørsamisk historie: Foredrag fra seminar på Røros 2006 og Trondheim 2007*, ed. by S. Lyngman (Snåsa: Saemien Sijte), pp. 110–25
- Myhre, B. 1980. 'Ny datering av våre eldste båter', *Arkeo*, 1980: 27–30
- Myking, M. 2001. *Vart Noreg kristna frå England? Ein gjennomgang av norsk forskning med utgangspunkt i Absalons Tarangers avhandling Den angelsaksiske kirkes indflytelse paa den norske (1890)*, Occasional Papers, Skriftserie, 1 (Oslo: Senter for studier i vikingtid og nordisk middelalder)
- Müller-Wille, M. (ed.). 1997. *Rom und Byzanz im Norden: Mission und Glaubenswechsel im Ostseeraum während des 8.–14. Jahrhunderts*, Abhandlungen der Geistes- und Sozialwissenschaftlichen Klasse, Jahrgang 1997, 3, 11th edn (Mainz: Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur)
- , 2007. 'Auf der Suche nach den Kirchen Ansgars: Ein archäologischer Beitrag zur karolingischen Mission im nördlichen Europa', *Quaestiones Medii Aevi Novae*, 12: 253–91
- Müller, I. H. V. 1991. 'Fra ættefellesskap til sognefellesskap: Om overgangen fra hedensk til kristen gravskikk', in *Nordisk hedendom: Et symposium*, ed. by G. Steinsland, J. Pentikäinen, and P. M. Sørensen (Odense: Odense Universitetsforlag), pp. 359–72

- Müller, U. 2008. 'Case Study 3: Trading Centres — Hanseatic Towns at the Southern Baltic Coast: Structural Continuity or Restart?' *Trade and Communication Networks of the First Millennium AD in the Northern Part of Central Europe: Central Places, Beach Markets, Landing Places and Trading Centres* (Hannover: Niedersächsisches Landesmuseum)
- Müller, W., and G. E. H. Baumann. 1988. *Kreuzsteine und Steinkreuze in Niedersachsen, Bremen und Hamburg: Vorhandene und verlorengegangene Rechtsdenkmale und Memorialsteine*, Forschung der Denkmalpflege in Niedersachsen, 5 (Hameln: Niemeyer)
- Myrvoll, S. 1992. *Handelstorget in Skien: A Study of Activity on an Early Medieval Site*, Nytt fra Utgravningskontoret i Bergen, 2 (Bergen: Riksantikvaren Utgravningskontoret i Bergen)
- Narmo, L. E. 1996. 'Kokekameratene på Leikvin: Kult og kokegrop', *Viking*, 59: 79–100
- Nicolaysen, N. 1876. 'Udgravninger i Fjære 1876', *Foreningen til norske Fortidsmindesterkers Bevaring Aarsberetning*, 1987: 117–39
- Nilsen, R. H. L. 1997. 'Båtgravskikk? Om berettigelsen av å opprettholde begrepet "Båtgravskikk" som analytisk kildekategori i arkeologien' (unpublished master's thesis (Hovedfag), Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Trondheim)
- Nilsson, B. 1996a. 'Från gravfält till kyrkogård: Förändringar och variation i gravskicket', in *Kristnandet i Sverige: Gamla källor och nya perspektiv*, ed. by B. Nilsson, Projektet Sveriges Kristnande/Publikationer, 5 (Uppsala: Department of Theology, Uppsala University), pp. 347–85
- , (ed.). 1996b. *Kristnandet i Sverige: Gamla källor och nya perspektiv*, Projektet Sveriges Kristnande/Publikationer, 5 (Uppsala: Department of Theology, Uppsala University)
- Nordeide, S. W. 1983. 'Tegl i Tønsberg i middelalderen — produksjon og produksjonsforhold' (unpublished master's thesis (Magistergrad), Universitetet i Oslo)
- , 1989. '... De beste Bønder i Kiøbstæden ...': *En funksjons- og aktivitetsanalyse baseret på gjenstandsmaterialet*, Fortiden i Trondheim bygrunn: Folkebibliotekstomten, 20 (Trondheim: Riksantikvaren)
- , 1990a. 'Activity in an Urban Community: Functional Aspects of Artefact Material in Trondheim from c. AD 1000 to AD 1600', *Acta Archaeologica*, 60: 130–50
- , 1990b. 'Studier over en avgrunn', *Spor*, 2: 42–44
- , 1993. 'Kirkegården under Hovedpostkontoret', *Spor*, 1: 40–41
- , 1997a. 'Mennesket og maktene på Nidarneset', *Onsdagskvelder i Bryggens Museum*, 12: 52–68
- , 1997b. 'St. Olavs by. Om kirker og klostre i middelalderens Trondheim', in *Fra Nidarnes til Trondheim: Vandringer i et bylandskap*, ed. by A. Christophersen (Trondheim: NINA-NIKU), pp. 48–59
- , 1998. 'Databaser og databasegrunnlag ved bygravninger', *NIKU Temahefte*, 27: 27–31
- , 1999. 'Urbaniseringsprosessen — på kvinners vilkår?', in *NIKU 1994–1999 Kulturminneforskningens mangfold*, ed. by G. Gundhus, E. Seip, and E. Ulriksen, NIKU Temahefte, 31 (Oslo: Norsk institutt for kulturminneforskning), pp. 44–48
- , 2003. *Erkebispegården i Trondheim: Beste tomte i by'n* (Trondheim: Norsk institutt for kulturminneforskning)
- , 2005a. 'Fra Odin til Kvitekrist', *Spor*, 1: 18–21
- , (ed.). 2005b. *Fra vernesone til risikosone: Studier i middelalderbyene Bergen og Tønsbergs randsoner*, NIKU Tema, 14 (Oslo: Norsk institutt for kulturminneforskning)

- , 2006. 'Thor's Hammer in Norway: A Symbol of Reaction against the Christian Cross?', in *Old Norse Religion in Long-Term Perspectives: Origins, Changes, and Interactions*, ed. by A. Andrén, K. Jennbert, and C. Raudvere, Vågar till Midgård, 8 (Lund: Nordic Academic Press), pp. 218–23
- , 2007. 'Reply to Jes Wienberg and Petter B. Molaug', *Norwegian Archaeological Review*, 40: 194–98
- , 2010a. 'Cross Monuments in North-Western Europe', *Zeitschrift für Archäologie des Mittelalters*, 37, 2009: 163–78
- , 2010b. 'Urbanism and Christianity in Norway', in *The Viking Age: Ireland and the West: Proceedings of the XVth Viking Congress, Cork, 18–27 August 2005*, ed. by J. Sheehan and D. Ó Corráin (Dublin: Four Courts), pp. 248–57
- , in press. 'Late Iron Age Boat Rituals and Ritual Boats', in forthcoming volume, ed. by J. Barrett, Society for Medieval Archaeology Monographs (London: Society for Medieval Archaeology)
- Nordeide, S. W., and S. Gulliksen. 2007. 'First Generation Christians, Second Generation Radio-carbon Dates: The Cemetery at St Clement's in Oslo', *Norwegian Archaeological Review*, 40: 1–25
- Nordmann, A.-M. 1989. *De arkeologiske undersøkelsene i Storgaten 18 og Conrads gate 5/7, Tønsberg 1987 og 1988. Del 1 og 2* (Tønsberg: Riksantikvaren, Utgravingskontoret for Tønsberg)
- Noreen, E. 1922. *Studier i Fornvästnordisk diktning — ännu en gång: Andra samlingen*, Uppsala Universitets Årsskrift, 1922: Filosofi, Språkvetenskap och Historiska vetenskaper, 4 (Uppsala: Uppsala Universitet)
- Næss, J.-R. 1969. 'Grav i båt eller båt i grav', *Stavanger Museums Årbok*, 1969: 57–76
- , 1970. 'The Significance of Orientation Elements in Iron Age Burial Customs at Voss: A Tentative Interpretation', *Norwegian Archaeological Review*, 3: 73–83
- , 1972. 'Some Reflections on the Study of Iron Age Burial Customs in Norway', *Norwegian Archaeological Review*, 5: 23–27
- , 1996. *Undersøkelser i jernalderens gravskikk på Voss*, AmS-Rapport, 7 (Stavanger: Arkeologiske museum i Stavanger)
- Odd, S. M. 1977. *Soga om Olav Tryggvason*, Norrøne bokverk, 46 (Oslo: Det Norske Samlaget)
- Olafson, T. 1914a. *Ældre Borgartingslov* (Kristiania: Soelberg)
- , 1914b. *Ældre Eidsivatings lov: Kristenrette, tillikemed et opbevaret brudstykke av den vedslige lov* (Kristiania: Soelberg)
- Olsen, M. 1915. *Hedenske kultminder i norske stedsnavne*. Skrifter. Historisk-filosofisk klasse, vol. 1914, 4 (Kristiania: Videnskabsselskapet i Kristiania)
- , 1978 [1926]. *Ættegård og helligdom* (Bergen, Oslo, Tromsø: Universitetsforlaget)
- Olsen, O. 1966. 'Hørg, hov og kirke: historiske og arkæologiske vikingetidsstudier' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Københavns universitet)
- , 1969. 'Comments' (to H.-E. Lidén), *Norwegian Archaeological Review*, 2: 25–27
- , 1978. 'Byarkeologi og byhistorie' *Heimen*, 1978: 613–20
- , 1999. *Da Danmark blev til, Seks radioforedrag* (København: Fremad)
- Opedal, A. 1998. *De glemte skipsgravene: Makt og myter på Avaldsnes*, AmS-Småtrykk, 47 (Stavanger: Arkeologisk museum i Stavanger)
- , 2005. *Kongens død i et førstetlig rike: Skipsritualer i Avaldsnes-området og aspekter ved konstituering av kongemakt og kongerike 700–950 e.Kr.*, Acta humaniora, 228 (Oslo: Det humanistiske fakultet, Universitetet i Oslo)

- Padberg, L. E. von. 2006. *Christianisierung im Mittelalter* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft)
- Peirce, I. 2002. *Swords of the Viking Age* (Woodbridge: Boydell)
- Petersen, J. 1919. *De norske vikingesverd: En typologisk-kronologisk studie over vikingetidens vaaben*, Skrifter, 2, Historisk-filosofisk klasse (Kristiania: Videnskabselskapet i Kristiania)
- , 1928. *Vikingetidens smykker: Stavanger museums skrifter* (Stavanger: Arkeologiske museum i Stavanger)
- , 1951. *Vikingetidens redskaper*, Skrifter, 2, Historisk-filosofisk klasse, vol. 1951,4 (Oslo: Det Norske videnskaps-akademi i Oslo)
- Petersen, T. 1959. 'Tresfjord i oldtiden', in *Bygdebok for Tresfjord*, ed. by A. Skeidsvoll (Bergen: L/L), pp. 28–57
- Petts, D. 2002. 'Cemeteries and Boundaries in Western Britain', in *Burial in Early Medieval England and Wales*, ed. by S. Lucy and A. Reynolds, Society for Medieval Archaeology Monographs, 17 (London: Society for Medieval Archaeology), pp. 24–46
- Pilø, L. 2007. 'The Settlement: Extent and Dating', in *Kaupang in Skiringssal*, ed. by D. Skre, Kaupang Excavation Project Publication Series, 1 (Oslo: Aarhus University Press), pp. 161–78
- Polanyi, K. 1957. 'The Economy as Instituted Process', in *Trade and Market in the Early Empires: Economies in History and Theory*, ed. by K. Polanyi, C. M. Arensberg, and H. W. Pearson (New York: Free), pp. 243–70
- Polanyi, K., C. M. Arensberg, and H. W. Pearson (eds). *Trade and Market in the Early Empires: Economies in History and Theory* (New York: Free)
- Price, N. S. 2002. *The Viking Way: Religion and War in Late Iron Age Scandinavia*, Aun, 31 (Uppsala: Department of Archaeology and Ancient History, University of Uppsala)
- , 2004. 'What's in a Name? An Archaeological Identity Crisis for the Norse Gods (and Some of their Friends)', in *Old Norse Religion in Long-Term Perspectives: Origins, Changes, and Interactions*, ed. by A. Andrén, K. Jennbert, and C. Raudvere, Vågar till Midgård, 8 (Lund: Nordic Academic Press), pp. 179–83
- Paasche, F. 1948. *Hedenskap og kristendom: Studier i norrøn middelalder* (Oslo: Aschehoug)
- Ramseyer, V. 2006. *The Transformation of a Religious Landscape: Medieval Southern Italy 850–1150* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press)
- Ramstad, S. 2002. '“Gregoriuskirka”: rekonstruksjon og funksjonell analyse' (unpublished master's thesis (Hovedfag), Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Trondheim)
- Raudvere, C., A. Andrén, and K. Jennbert (eds). 2005. *Hedendomen i historiens spegel: Bilder av det förkristna Norden*, Vågar till Midgård, 6 (Lund: Nordic Academic Press)
- Redin, L. 1976. *Lagmanshejdan: Ett gravfält som spegling av sociala strukturer i Skanör*, Acta Archaeologica Lundensia, 10 (Lund: Universitetet i Lund)
- Redknapp, M. 1996. 'Early Christianity and its Monuments', in *The Celtic World*, ed. by M. Green (London: Routledge) pp. 737–78
- Reitan, G. 2006. 'Faret i Skien: En kristen gravplass fra vikingtid og nye innblikk i tidlig kirkearkitektur', *Viking*, 69 (2006): 251–74
- Richards, J. 2002. 'The Case of the Missing Vikings: Scandinavian Burial in the Danelaw', in *Burial in Early Medieval England and Wales*, ed. by S. Lucy and A. Reynolds, Society for Medieval Archaeology Monographs, 17 (London: Society for Medieval Archaeology), pp. 156–70

- Rindal, M. (ed.). 1996. *Fra hedendom til kristendom: Perspektiver på religionsskiftet i Norge* (Oslo: Gyldendal)
- , (ed.). 1997. *Selja — heilag stad i 1000 år* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget)
- Robberstad, K. 1969. *Gulatingsslovi*, Norrøne Bokverk, 33, 3rd edn (Oslo: Det Norske Samlaget)
- Roesdahl, E. (ed.). 1992. *Viking og hvidekrist: Norden og Europa 800–1200* (København: Nordisk Ministerråd, Europarådet)
- , 1994. 'Dendrochronology and Viking Studies in Denmark, with a Note on the Beginning of the Viking Age', in *Developments around the Baltic and the North Sea in the Viking Age/The Twelfth Viking Congress*, ed. by B. Ambrosiania and H. Clarke, Birka Studies, 3 (Stockholm: Birka Project for Riksantikvarieämbetet and Statens Historiska Museer), pp. 106–16
- , 2006. 'Aristocratic Burial in Late Viking Age Denmark. Custom, Regionality, Conversion', in *Herrschaft, Tod, Bestattung: Zu den vor- und frühgeschichtlichen Prunkgräbern als archäologisch-historische Quelle*, ed. by C. von Carnap-Borheim, D. Krausse, and A. Wesse, Universitätsforschungen zur prähistorischen Archäologie aus dem Institut für Ur- und Frühgeschichte der Universität Kiel, 139 (Bonn: Institut für Ur- und Frühgeschichte der Universität Kiel/Habelt), pp. 169–83
- Rolsen, P. 1981. 'Den siste hedning på Agder', *Viking*, 44: 112–28
- Ros, J. 2001. *Sigtuna: Staden, kyrkorna och den kyrkliga organisationen*, Occasional Papers in Archaeology (Uppsala: Uppsala Universitet)
- Rundberget, B. (ed.). 2007. *Jernvinna i Gråffellområdet*, Varia, 1 (Oslo: Kulturhistorisk museum Fornminneseksjonen)
- Rydbeck, M. 1972. 'Steinkors, Sverige', in *Kulturhistorisk leksikon for nordisk middelalder fra vikingetid til reformationstid: Norge*, ed. by F. Hødnebo, 22 vols (Oslo: Gyldendal, 1956–78), XVII: *Stadsskole–Såtesgård* (1972), 123
- Rydving, H. 1990. 'Ortnamn som religionshistoriskt källmaterial', *Namn och Bygd*, 78: 167–77
- , 1991. 'The Saami Drums and the Religious Encounter in the 17th and 18th Centuries', in *The Saami Shaman Drum*, ed. by T. A. J. Bergman (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell), pp. 28–51
- , 1993. *The End of Drum-Time: Religious Change among the Lule Saami 1670s–1740s*, Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, Historia Religionum, 12 (Uppsala: Uppsala Universitet)
- Rygh, O. 1885. *Norske Oldsager: Ordnete og forklarede* (Christiania: Cammermeyer)
- , 1897–1936. *Norske Gaardnavne: Oplysninger samlede til brug ved Matrikelens Revision* (Kristiania: Fabritius)
- Røskoft, M. 2003. *Maktens landskap: Sentralgårder i Trøndelag ved overgangen fra vikingetid til kristen middelalder, ca. 800–1200*, Skriftserie fra Historisk institutt, 39 (Trondheim: Norges teknisk-naturvitenskapelige universitet)
- Røthe, G. 1994. 'Osebergfunnet — en religionshistorisk tolkning' (unpublished master's thesis (Hovedfag), Universitetet i Oslo)
- Saler, B. 2000. *Conceptualizing Religion: Immanent Anthropologists, Transcendent Natives, and Unbounded Categories* (New York: Bergham)
- Salvesen, A., and E. Gunnes. 1971. *Gammel norsk homiliebok* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget)
- Sandnes, J. 1964. 'Gno: Horgr i gardsnavn', *Maal og Minne*, 3–4: 113–20
- , 1977. 'Øreting', in *Kulturhistorisk leksikon for nordisk middelalder fra vikingetid til reformationstid: Norge*, ed. by F. Hødnebo, 22 vols (Oslo: Gyldendal, 1956–78), XXI: *Øremerke–øreting* (1977), 11, 12

- , 1997. 'Olav den hellige — myter og virkelighet', in *Helgonet i Nidaros: Olavskulten och kristnande i Norden*, ed. by L. Rumar (Stockholm: Riksarkivet), pp. 13–25
- Sandvik, P. U. 2006. 'Under overflata i mellomalderbyen Stavanger', *Frå haug og heidni*, 3: 9–12
- Sars, J. E. 1873. *Udsigt over den norske historie*, 4 vols (Christiania: Cammermeyer, 1873–91), 1
- Schanche, A. 2000. *Graver i ur og berg: Samisk gravskikk og religion fra forhistorisk til nyere tid* (Karasjok: Girji)
- Schanche, A., and B. Olsen. 1985. 'Var de alle Nordmenn? En etnopolitisk kritikk av norsk arkeologi', *Kontaktstensil*, 22–23 (1983): 115–46 (rev. version in *Arkeologi og etnisitet*, ed. by J. R. Næss, AmS-Varia 15, Stavanger: Arkeologisk museum i Stavanger)
- Schia, E. 1989. 'Urban Oslo: Evolution from a Royal Stronghold and Administrative Centre', in *Archaeology and the Urban Economy: Festschrift to Asbjørn E. Herteig*, ed. by S. Myrvoll, Arkeologiske Skrifter Historisk Museum, 5 (Bergen: Historisk Museum, Universitetet i Bergen), pp. 51–72
- , 1991. *Oslo innerst i Viken* (Oslo: Aschehoug)
- Schjødt, J. P. 1995. 'The Ship in Old Norse Mythology and Religion', in *The Ship as Symbol in Prehistoric and Medieval Scandinavia*, ed. by O. Crumlin-Pedersen and B. M. Thye, Publications from the National Museum, Studies in Archaeology and History, 1 (København: National Museum of Denmark), pp. 20–24
- Schøning, G. 1910–26 (orig. 1773–75). *Reise som giennem en Deel af Norge i de aar 1773, 1774, 1775*, (Trondhjem: Det Kongelige Norske Videnskabers Selskab i Trondhjem)
- Sellevoold, B. 1999. 'Skjelettrestene fra "Auduns borg", Hegrenes, Jølster, Sogn og Fjordane', *Arkeologiske skrifter fra Universitetet i Bergen*, 10: 102–11
- , 2001. *From Death to Life in Medieval Hamar: Skeletons and Graves as Historical Source Material*, Acta humaniora, 109 (Oslo: Det humanistiske fakultet, Universitetet i Oslo)
- Sellevoold, B. J., U. L. Hansen, and J. B. Jørgensen. 1984. *Iron Age Man in Denmark*, Prehistoric Man in Denmark, 3; Nordiske Fortidsminder, ser. B, 8 (København: Det kongelige nordiske Oldskriftselskab)
- Shepard, J. 2007. 'Rus', in *Christianization and the Rise of Christian Monarchy: Scandinavia, Central Europe and Rus' c. 900–1200*, ed. by N. Berend (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 369–416
- Shepherd, D. J. 1999. *Funerary Ritual and Symbolism: An Interdisciplinary Interpretation of Burial Practices in Late Iron Age Finland*, British Archaeological Reports, International Series, 808 (Oxford: Hedges)
- Shetelig, H. 1912. *Vestlandske graver fra jernalder*, Bergens museums skrifter, Ny række, 2, 1 (Bergen: Grieg)
- , 1930. *Fra oldtiden til omkring 1000 e. Kr. Det norske folks liv og historie gjennom tidende* (Oslo: Aschehoug)
- Shetelig, H., and F. Johannessen. 1929. *Kvalsundfundet og andre norske myrfund av fartoier*, Bergen Museums Skrifter, n.s., 2 (Bergen: Grieg)
- Sigurdsson, J. V., M. Myking, and M. Rindal (eds). 2004. *Religionsskiftet i Norden: Brytinger mellom nordisk og europeisk kultur 800–1200 e. Kr.*, Occasional Papers, 6 (Oslo: Centre for Viking and Medieval Studies)
- Skarsaune, O. 1987. *Fra Jerusalem til Rom og Byzants*, Kristendommen i Europa, 1 (Oslo: Tano)
- Skjølsvold, A. 1951. 'Et eiendommelig smedgravfunn fra Mysen', *Universitetets Oldsaksamling Årbok*, 1949–50: 34–48

- Skre, D. 1987. *Innberetning fra Riksantikvarens bygningsarkeologiske undersøkelser i Bø gamle kirke 1985* (unpublished report for the Riksantikvaren (The Directorate for Cultural Heritage))
- , 1995. 'Kirken før sognet: Den tidligste kirkeordningen i Norge', in *Møtet mellom heden- dom og kristendom i Norge*, ed. by H. E. Lidén (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget), pp. 170–233
- , 1996. 'Herredømmet: Bosetning og besittelse på Romerike 200–1350 E. Kr' (unpub- lished doctoral thesis, Universitetet i Oslo)
- , (ed.). 2007a. *Kaupang in Skiringssal*, Kaupang Excavation Project Publication Series, 1 (Oslo: Aarhus University Press)
- , 2007b. 'The Skiringssal Cemetery', in *Kaupang in Skiringssal*, ed. by D. Skre, Kaupang Excavation Project Publication Series, 1 (Oslo: Aarhus University Press), pp. 363–83
- , 2008. 'Post-Substantivist Towns and Trade', in *Means of Exchange*, ed. by D. Skre, Norske Oldfunn, 23 (Århus: Aarhus University Press/Kaupang Excavation Project), pp. 327–41
- Skre, D., and F.-A. Stylegar. 2004. *Kaupang Vikingbyen: Kaupang-utstillingen ved UKM 2004–2005* (Oslo: Universitetet i Oslo, Universitetets kulturhistoriske museer)
- Skaare, K. 1976. *Coins and Coinage in Viking-Age Norway: The Establishment of a National Coinage in Norway in the XI Century, with a Survey of the Preceding Currency History* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget)
- , 1978. 'Myntene fra Lom kirke', *Fortidsminner*, 65: 113–30
- , 1982. 'Myntene i Slemmedals-skatten', *Viking*, 1981: 32–43
- , 1995. *Norges mynthistorie*, 2 vols (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1995), 1
- Snorre, S. 1980. *Kongesagaer* (Oslo: Gyldendal)
- Snorri, S., and L. M. Hollander. 1967. *Heimskringla: History of the Kings of Norway* (Austin, TX: American–Scandinavian Foundation)
- Solberg, B. 1984. 'Norwegian Spear-Heads from the Merovingian and Viking Periods' (unpub- lished doctoral thesis, Universitetet i Bergen)
- , 2000. *Jernalderen i Norge. Ca. 500 f.Kr.–1030 e.Kr.* (Oslo: Cappelen)
- Solli, B. 1996. *Narratives of Veøy: An Investigation into the Poetics and Scientifics of Archaeology*, Universitetets Oldsaksamlings Skrifter, n.s., 19 (Oslo: Universitetet i Oslo)
- , 2002. *Seid* (Oslo: Pax)
- Staecker, J. 1999. *Rex regum et dominus dominorum: Die wikingzeitlichen Kreuz- und Kruzi- fixanhänger als Ausdruck der Mission in Altdänemark und Schweden*, Lund Studies in Medieval Archaeology, 23 (Lund: Almqvist & Wiksell)
- , 2003. Recensionen: Anne-Sofie Gräslund, *Ideologi och mentalitet. Om religionsskiftet i Skandinavien från en arkeologisk horisont*. OPIA 29, Uppsala 2001. *Fornvännen*, 98: 60–62
- , 2005. 'The Concepts of *imitatio* and *translatio*: Perceptions of a Viking-Age Past', *Norwegian Archaeological Review*, 38: 3–28
- Steenstrup, J. 1929. 'Hammer og Kors', *Arkiv för Nordisk filologi: Studier tillägnade Axel Kock*, Tillägsband till band XL ny följd: 44–61
- Steinsland, G. 2000. *Den hellige kongen: Om religion og herskermakt fra vikingtid til middelalder* (Oslo: Pax)
- , 2005. *Norrøn religion* (Oslo: Pax)
- Steinsland, G., and P. M. Sørensen. 1994. *Menneske og makter i vikingenes verden* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget)
- , 1999. *Völuspå* (Oslo: Pax)

- Stene, K. 2004. *Gråfjellprosjektet: Arkeologiske utgravninger i Gråfjellområdet, Åmot kommune, Hedmark, Årsrapport 2003* (Oslo: Universitetets kulturhistoriske museer, Universitetet i Oslo)
- , 2005. *Gråfjellprosjektet: Arkeologiske utgravninger i Gråfjellområdet og ved Rana elv, Åmot kommune, Hedmark, Årsrapport 2004* (Oslo: Universitetets kulturhistoriske museer, Universitetet i Oslo)
- Stevenson, J. 1992. 'Christianity in Sixth- and Seventh-Century Southumbria', in *Sutton Hoo: A Seventh-Century Princely Burial Ground and its Context*, ed. by M. Carver, Reports of the Research Committee of the Society of Antiquaries of London, 69 (London: British Museum), pp. 175–83
- Stigell, A.-L. 1974. *Kyrkans tecken och årets gång: Tideräkning och Finlands primitiva medeltidsmålningar*, Finska fornminnesföreningens tidskrift / Suomen muinaismuistoyhdistyksen aikakauskirja, 77 (Helsinki: Suomen muinaismuistoyhdistys)
- Stoklund, B. 1963. 'Kirkegård', in *Kulturhistorisk leksikon for nordisk middelalder fra vikingetid til reformationstid: Danmark*, ed. by A. Karker (København: Rosenkilde og Bagger, 1956–78), VIII: *Judas-Konfiskation* (1963), 391–92
- Stoodley, N. 1999. *The Spindle and the Spear: A Critical Enquiry into the Construction and Meaning of Gender in the Early Anglo-Saxon Burial Rite*, British Archaeological Reports, British Series, 288 (Oxford: Archaeopress)
- Stylegar, F.-A. 2005. 'Kammergraver fra vikingtiden i Vestfold', *Fornvænnen*, 100: 161–77
- , 2007. 'The Kaupang Cemeteries Revisited', in *Kaupang in Skiringssal*, ed. by D. Skre, Kaupang Excavation Project Publication Series, 1 (Oslo: Aarhus University Press), pp. 65–128
- Störzner, F. 1984. *Steinkreuze in Thüringen. Teil [1]: Katalog Bezirk Erfurt*, Weimar Monographien zur Ur- und Frühgeschichte, 10 (Weimar: Museum für Ur- und Frühgeschichte Thüringens)
- , 1988. *Steinkreuze in Thüringen. Teil: [2]: Katalog der Bezirke Gera und Suhl*, Weimar Monographien zur Ur- und Frühgeschichte, 21 (Weimar: Museum für Ur- und Frühgeschichte Thüringens)
- Svanberg, F. 2003. *Decolonizing the Viking Age*, Acta Archaeologica Lundensia, 2 vols (Lund: Almqvist & Wiksell)
- Svestad, A., and S. Barlindhaug. 2003. *Samiske Kirkegårder: Registrering av automatisk freda samiske kirkegårder i Nord Troms og Finnmark*, NIKU Rapport, 4 (Oslo: Norsk institutt for kulturminneforskning)
- Sweet, R. 1997. 'Writing as a Factor in the Rise of Urbanism', in *Urbanism in Antiquity: From Mesopotamia to Crete*, ed. by W. E. Aufrecht, N. A. Mirau, and S. W. Gauley, Journal for the Study of the Old Testament, s.s., 244 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press), pp. 35–49
- Sørensen, P. M. 1993. *Saga and Society: An Introduction to Old Norse Literature*, Studia Borealia/Nordic Studies, 1 (Odense: Odense University Press)
- Sørheim, H. 2004. 'Lead Mortuary Crosses Found in Christian and Heathen Graves in Norway', *Mediaeval Scandinavia*, 14: 195–227
- Taranger, A. 1890. *Den angelsaksiske kirkes indflydelse paa den norske* (Kristiania: Den Norske Historiske Forening)
- Theliander, C. 2005. *Västergötlands kristnande: Religionsskifte och gravskikets förändring 700–1200*, GOTARC Series B: Gothenburg Archaeological Theses, 41 (Göteborg: Institutionen för arkeologi, Göteborgs universitet)

- Thompson, V. 2002. 'Constructing Salvation: A Homiletic and Penitential Context for Late Anglo-Saxon Burial Practice', in *Burial in Early Medieval England and Wales*, ed. by S. Lucy and A. Reynolds, Society for Medieval Archaeology Monographs, 17 (London: Society for Medieval Archaeology), 229–40
- Thuesen, N. P. 1976. *De eldste norske byer: forhistorie, oppkomst og tidlig utvikling / tekst, kilder og oppgaver* (Oslo: Fabritius)
- Thun, T. 2002. 'Dendrochronological Constructions of Norwegian Conifer Chronologies Providing Dating of Historical Material' (Trondheim: Department of Biology, Faculty of Natural Sciences and Technology, Norwegian University of Science and Technology)
- Thäte, E. S. 2007. *Monuments and Minds: Monument Re-use in Scandinavia in the Second Half of the First Millennium AD*, Acta archaeologica Lundensia, Series in 4°, 27 (Lund: Gleerup)
- Tierney, J. J., and L. Bieler (eds). 1967. *Decuili: Liber de mensura orbis terrae*, Scriptores Latini Hiberniae, 6 (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies)
- Tveito, O. 2005. *Ad fines orbis terrae, like til jordens ender: En studie i primer trosformidling i nordisk kristningskontekst*, Acta humaniora, 209 (Oslo: Det humanistiske fakultet, Universitetet i Oslo)
- Urbanczyk, P., and S. Rosik. 2007. 'Poland', in *Christianization and the Rise of Christian Monarchy: Scandinavia, Central Europe and Rus' c. 900–1200*, ed. by N. Berend (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 263–318
- Vretemark, M. 1992. 'Den könssegregerade kyrkogården — ett utslag av Mariakult?', *Meta: Medeltidsarkeologisk tidskrift*, for 1992: 120–28
- Wamers, E. 1994. 'Hammer und Kreuz: Typologische Aspekte einer nordeuropäischen Amulettsitte aus der Zeit des Glaubenswechsels', *Rom und Byzanz im Norden: Mission und Glaubenswechsel im Ostseeraum während des 8.–14. Jahrhunderts*, Mainz, 1994, Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur/Abhandlungen der Geistes- und Sozialwissenschaftlichen Klasse (Stuttgart: Steiner), pp. 83–107
- Wellendorf, J. 2006. 'Kristelig visionslitteratur i norrøn tradition' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Universitetet i Bergen)
- Wickholm, A. 2006. "Stay Where You Have Been Put!" The Use of Spears as Coffin Nails in Late Iron Age Finland', in *Etnos ja kultuur: Uurimusi Silvia Laulu auks, Muinasaja Teadus*, ed. by H. Valk (Tartu: Tartu Ülikooli arheoloogia õppetool), pp. 193–207
- , 2008. 'Reuse in Finnish Cremation Cemeteries under Level Ground: Examples of Collective Memory', in *The Materiality of Death: Bodies, Burials, Beliefs*, ed. by F. Fahlander and T. Østigård, British Archaeological Reports, International Series (Oxford: Archaeopress), pp. 89–97
- Widengren, G. 1971. *Religionens värld* (Stockholm: Alqvist & Wiksell)
- Williams, H. 1996. 'Runjämtskan på Frösöstenen och Östmans bro', in *Jämtlands Kristnande*, ed. by S. Brink, Projektet Sveriges kristnande, 4 (Uppsala: University of Uppsala, Department of Theology), pp. 45–63
- , 2002. 'Remains of Pagan Saxondom? The Study of Anglo-Saxon Cremation Rites', in *Burial in Early Medieval England and Wales*, ed. by S. Lucy and A. Reynolds, Society for Medieval Archaeology Monographs, 17 (London: Society for Medieval Archaeology), pp. 47–71
- Wisløff, C. F. 1966. *Norsk kirkehistorie*, 3 vols (Oslo: Lutherstiftelsen, 1966–71), I

- Ystgaard, I. 2005. *Rapport arkeologisk utgravning: Graver fra vikingtid. Skeime Nedre 25/152, Farsund, Vest-Agder* (unpublished report for Universitetets kulturhistoriske museer in Oslo)
- Zachrisson, I., and others (eds). 1997. *Möten i gränsland: Samer och germaner i Mellanskandinavien*, Monographs, 4 (Stockholm: Statens historiska museum)
- Zachrisson, T. 2004. 'The Holiness of Helgö', in *Exotic and Sacral Finds from Helgö*, ed. by H. Clarke and K. Lamm, Excavations at Helgö, 16 (Stockholm: Kungl. Vitterhets Historie och Antikvitets Akademien), pp. 143–75
- Zaroff, R. 2007. 'Politics and Priests in a Pagan Slavic Principality', *Collegium Medievale*, 20: 3–28
- Zeeberg, P. 2000. *Saxos Danmarkshistorie*, 2 vols (København: Det Danske Sprog- og Litteraturselskab, 2000)

INDEX

- abbots, 132, 134, 152, 246, 301, 330
 absolution, 278
 acculturation, 41, 42, 44, 81, 238, 291, 293–5, 297, 321
 Adam of Bremen (Adamus Bremensis), chronicler (pre-1050–81/85), 80
Æsir (Norse gods), 60
 Africa, 72
Ágrip, early kings' saga, 147
 Ál, Buskerud, Norway, 86
 Alban, brother of, 163 *see also* Sunneva
 Alfild, Queen of Norway, member of the Yngling dynasty, (late 8th–early 9th century), 62
 Ålhus, Jølster, Sogn & Fjordane, Norway, 168, 172, 300
 Alstadhaug, Nord-Trøndelag, Norway, 86
 Anglo-Saxon, burial customs, 24; coins, 83, 147, 181, 190, 362; graves, 23, 53, 54, 79, 115; influence, 7; king, 310; mission, 6; period, 77; territories, 14
 animal bones, 64, 105, 108, 109, 329
 Ansgar, Archbishop of Bremen (801–65), 79–81, 313, 314
 anvils, 180, 187, 200, 329
 Apostolic period (AD 33–70), 70
 Arabic, 107; coins, 215, 281, 362; countries, 71, 329
 archbishoprics, 325
 architecture, 7, 18
 Ari Porgilsson (*Ari hinn fróði* [the wise]), Icelandic chronicler (1067–1148), 124, 159
 aristocracy, 12, 77, 323
 arm-rings, 53, 186, 187
 Åsen, Nord-Trøndelag, Norway, 65, 104, 106, 109, 128
 Asgard (*Ásgarðr*), home of the gods in Norse cosmology, 59, 61
 Asia Minor, 71
 Ask (*Askr*), the first male, according to Norse mythology, 61
 Astrid Olofsdotter, Queen Consort of King Olav II of Norway (d. 1035), 124
 Athelstan (*Æþelstān*), King of England (c. 893–939), 310
 Audun Hugleiksson, baron (1240?–1302), 168, 169
 Augustinian monastery, 151
 Avaldsnes, Rogaland, Norway, 43, 48, 250, 251
 Awls, 129, 166, 329
 balances, pair of scales, 135, 186, 189, 263, 314, 330
 Balder (Baldr), Norse god, 62
 Baltic, 75, 324
bautas (see the Glossary), 136
 beads, 46, 53–5, 93, 100, 129, 135, 157, 162, 177, 186, 200, 227, 228, 248, 330, 362
 bear claws, 107
 bellows, 200, 264
 Benedictine monastery, 163; nunnery, 206
 Bergen, Hordaland, Norway, 163, 164, 301, 309, 323

- birchbark, 67, 187, 196, 197, 213, 225, 299, 329, 362
 Birka, Ekerö, Sweden, 79, 81, 116, 204, 213
 bishops, 72, 74, 77, 78, 82, 124, 132, 134, 246, 300, 301, 313, 330; bishops' seats, 9, 162, 164, 233, 272, 301, 323
blot, Norse ritual, 20, 238
 Bø, Telemark, Norway, 47, 84, 191, 193–8, 213, 215, 216, 115, 237, 246, 280–2, 299, 300, 302, 336
 boats, 44, 46–9, 96, 97, 99, 100, 125, 129, 131, 135, 150, 154, 156–60, 163–5, 170, 174, 186, 193, 195, 200, 201, 203, 204, 246, 248–52, 288, 330, 362
 bog, 108, 147, 217, 365; finds 156, 157, 162, 248–52, 362; sacrifices 154, 157, 249
 Bohemia, 75, 325
 Bohuslän, Sweden, 209, 253
 bonfires, 107, 138, 256
 Borg, Lofoten, Norway, 111
 Borg (Sarpsborg), Østfold, Norway, 209, 309
 Borgarting assembly, 55, 112, 222
 Borgund, Sunnmøre, Norway, 84, 127, 140, 147, 151, 282, 302, 307, 315
 boxes, 135, 166, 177, 200, 213, 263, 330, 362
 bracteates, 111
 Bremen, Germany, 268, 276; archbishopric, 79
 bridges, 184, 256, 330
 Bringsvær, Vest-Agder, Norway, 64, 263, 338, 339
 British Isles, 10, 64, 75–7, 79, 80, 87, 132, 151, 153, 172, 189, 265, 268, 270, 272–4, 276, 277, 291, 300, 301, 316, 324
 Byzantine, 75, 329, 362

 candles, 64
 canon law, 87
 Carolingian, 97, 103, 329, 362
 Celtic monks, 74; society, 74, 78
 Central Europe, 74, 75, 325
 chancels, 84, 86, 108, 112, 117, 122, 209
 charcoals, 44, 50, 51, 77, 81, 95, 104, 105, 108, 109, 128, 138, 147, 160, 166, 174, 188, 208, 223, 230, 232, 233, 256, 295
 Charlemagne (Charles the Great), King of the Franks and Roman emperor (c. 742–814), 75, 103
 Charon, ferryman of Hades in ancient Greek mythology, 75
 chieftains, 6
 Christ, 10, 16, 42, 71–4, 147, 220, 271, 293
 Christian cemetery, 44, 81, 109, 113, 121, 147, 149, 152, 169, 170, 174, 203, 208, 315, 316
 Christmas, 73
 Cilicia, 71
 Cistercian order, 18
civitas, 313
 Clement, St, 117, 124, 209–14, 216, 300, 305, 313
 Cnut the Great (*Knútr inn ríki*), King of England, Denmark and Norway (c. 995–1035), 117
 collective memory, 306
 congregations, 72, 145, 152, 195, 216, 233, 301, 305, 311
 Constantine, Roman emperor (306–37), 73, 324
 Constantinople, 72, 75
 convents, 69, 74, 207, 208
 cooking pits (see the Glossary), 104, 105, 128, 203, 207
 crafts, 38, 97, 160, 177, 206, 244, 305, 311–13, 323
 criminals, 76, 87, 170, 300
 cross, pendants, 36, 43, 52, 81, 120, 187, 190, 239, 246, 362; slabs, 39, 126, 265, 270, 271, 274, 275, 296, 299
 crucibles, 121
 crucifix, 120, 277
 crucifixion, 73
 cult, ancestors', 22, 36, 82, 253, 315; buildings, 58, 59, 82, 107, 109, 113, 123, 128, 203–5, 215, 256; continuity, 112, 321; discontinuity, 321; fertility, 105
 dendrochronology, 32, 33, 274, 281
 depots, 100, 177, 217, 227
 Diaspora, 72
 dirhams, 83, 281

- ditches, 78, 108, 128, 184, 188, 203, 204, 207, 208, 251, 253, 256, 292
- dogs, 44, 200, 201, 251
- drinking horns, 97, 184, 186, 329
- East Anglia (Anglo-Saxon kingdom), 76
- Easter, 73
- Ebo, Archbishop of Rheims (816–35, and again 840–41), 79
- Ecclesia Triumphans*, 123
- Edda*, *Poetic* (*Elder*, *Semundar*), collection of poems (13th century), 59; *Prose*, Snorri Sturluson (c. 1220), 59
- education, 18
- egg-shaped stones, 220
- Egill Skalla-Grímsson, Icelandic poet (c. 910–90), 43
- Eidsborg, Telemark, Norway, 206
- Eidsivating assembly, 86, 87, 112, 145, 222
- Embla, the first female, according to Norse mythology, 61
- encolpions, 121, 125
- Estonia, 88
- ethnicity, 51, 69, 71, 95, 306
- Etne, Hordaland, Norway, 8, 48, 65, 262, 290, 297
- Eucharist, 73
- Euchumenical Patriarch, 72
- execution cemeteries, 79
- exogamic groups, 151
- exorcism, 187, 278
- Faret, 191, 195, 206–8, 216, 295, 300; *see also* Skien
- Farsund, Vest-Agder, Norway, 47, 172–6, 191, 248, 257, 259, 262, 263, 280, 281, 295, 324, 336, 362
- Ferns diocese, Ireland, 74, 276
- Finland, 75, 81, 82, 265
- Finno-Ugric, 222
- Finnmark, Norway, 69
- Finns, 75
- Finnskogen, Hedmark, Norway, 222
- Finsås, 93–5, 334; *see also* Snåsa
- fire steels, 97, 129, 201
- fireplaces, 105
- fishing hooks, 200
- Fjære, 186, 187, 189, 246, 278, 338, 339; *see also* Grimstad
- Flatmark, 146, 271; *see also* Rauma
- flood, mythical, 256
- Folkebibliotekstomten site, 118, 120, 121, 278; *see also* Trondheim
- forn siðr* ('the ancient tradition'), 17
- fostering (of children), 291
- Franks, 74
- Franciscan monastery, 118
- Frey (*Freyr*), Norse god, 58, 59, 61
- Freyja, Norse goddess, 61, 62
- Friday, 73
- Frösö, 274, 275; *see also* Jämtland
- Frosta, Nord-Trøndelag, Norway, 28, 31, 47, 91, 96–100, 103–4, 113–16, 123–4, 129, 136, 244, 248, 257, 262, 264, 280, 282, 296, 300
- Frostating assembly, 20, 96, 124, 125
- Galteland, Aust-Agder, Norway, 189
- gaming pieces, 166, 220, 329
- Gaul, now France, 74
- Gerd (*Gerðr*), Norse goddess and wife of Freyr, 59
- German empire, 82, 253
- Germanic people, 74, 306
- Germany, 5, 6, 79, 132, 270, 273, 276, 299, 301, 303
- giant (*jötunn*), often opposed to the gods in Norse mythology, 59–61
- Gimsøy, 206, 208; *see also* Skien
- Ginnungagap, in Norse cosmology term used to describe the state before the creation of the Universe, 60
- Glomma, river in Norway, 8, 63, 289
- Gokstad, Vestfold, Norway, 11, 32, 191, 290
- Gorm (*Gormr*), King of Denmark (c. mid-10th century), 80, 310
- Gotland, Sweden, 187, 239, 265
- graves: arm positions, 88, 197, 198, 213; chambers, 32, 48, 131, 136, 138, 173, 183, 200, 203, 204, 251, 257; cists, 64, 93, 94, 99, 154, 159, 166, 180, 184, 263, 330; double, 97, 100, 103,

- 165, 166, 172, 176, 192, 218; headstones, 44, 115, 299; hogback coffins, with carved stone, 77; hollowed trunk coffins, 196, 197, 212, 213, 299
- Gråfjell, Hedmark, Norway, 222
- Greek Church, 4, 15, 16, 69, 73
- Gregory, St, 117
- Grimkell, Anglo-Saxon bishop, 11th century, 274
- Grimstad, Aust-Agder, Norway, 31, 47, 182–8, 190, 191, 193, 244, 246, 248, 252, 253, 256, 259, 260, 263, 280, 295, 296, 338, 362
- Grytten, 136, 138, 331; *see also* Rauma
- Gudbrandsdalen, Oppland, Norway, 63, 223, 234, 289
- Gulating assembly, in Gulen, Norway, 20, 86, 159, 170, 172, 300
- Gullgubber* (see the Glossary), 108, 109, 112
- Gulli, Vestfold, Norway, 48, 191, 203–5, 215, 256, 257, 279, 292, 303
- Gunnhild, 8
- Gylfaginning*, part of the *Edda* of Snorri Sturluson, 59
- Habberstad, 220, 233, 263, 340; *see also* Ullensaker
- Håkon the Good (*Håkon inn góði*), King of Norway (r. c. 935–60), 11, 39, 65, 238, 274, 310
- Håkon Sigurdsson Herdebrei (*Håkon herðibreiðr Sigurðarson*), King of Norway (1147–62), 141, 154
- Halden, Østfold, Norway, 83, 84
- Hallingdal, Buskerud, Norway, 63, 317
- halls, 109, 111, 204
- Hamar, Hedmark, Norway, 233, 323
- Hamburg, Germany, 79, 268, 276; archbishop's seat, 314
- Hamburg-Bremen, archbishopric, 6, 79, 80, 277, 312, 325
- hanging bowls, 132, 134, 246, 330
- Harald Bluetooth (*Haraldr blátǫnn*), King of Denmark (c. 930–86), 8, 80, 213, 275, 314
- Harald Fairhair (*Haraldr inn hárfagri*), King of Norway (c. 848–933), 159, 199
- Harald Hardrada (*Haraldr inn harðráði*), King of Norway (1046–66), 83, 84, 121, 125, 309
- Haugar, 199; *see also* Tønsberg
- Haugating assembly, 199; *see also* Tønsberg
- Hávamál*, Norse poem, part of the Poetic Edda, 59
- hazel wands, 196, 197, 201, 202, 207, 212, 213, 299
- heathens, 15, 16, 20, 70, 304
- Heaven, 61, 71, 75, 78, 163, 319
- Hebrew, 71
- Heddal, Telemark, Norway, 86
- Hedrum, Vestfold, Norway, 270
- Heiðinn dómr* (Heathendom), 15, 304
- Heimskringla*, History of the Kings of Norway, attributed to Snorri Sturluson, 39, 59, 123, 124, 154, 164, 209, 309–11
- Hel, Norse mythological figure presiding over Helheim, a realm of the dead, 48
- Helgeland, Nordland, Norway, 48
- Helgheim, 168, 335
- Hellenistic, 71
- Helsingborg, 213; *see also* Skåne
- Hernes, 113–15, 123, 299, 300; *see also* Frosta
- Herøy, Møre & Romsdal, Norway, 28, 47, 147, 153–9, 162, 244, 249, 257, 263, 280, 335, 362
- Hiberno-Scandinavian, 76
- Hinduism, 292
- hoards, 30, 83, 112, 119, 121, 187, 190, 198, 217, 222, 246, 281, 301, 362, 363
- Hof, 127, 128; *see also* Sunndalen
- Hofgyðja*, Norse priestess, 62
- Høgreiten, 138, 333; *see also* Rauma
- Holbæk, Denmark, 267
- holy: springs, 122; stones, 226
- Horágallis, Saami god, 67
- borg*, *harg*, Norse name for cult site, stone formation, or both, 20, 58, 59, 128
- Horgheim, 128; *see also* Rauma
- horses, 103, 108, 204, 220, 232, 251, 292, 329; bits, 135, 136, 166, 174, 228, 329; platforms, 203, 204; rattles, 63, 228, 329; skeletons, 184, 220, 329
- hov*, *hof*, Norse name for cult site, 58, 104
- Hove, 65, 104–7, 109, 123, 125, 126, 128, 281, 296; *see also* Åsen

- Hungary, 75, 325
 Hustad, Nord-Trøndelag, Norway, 39, 126, 270–2, 296
- Iberian peninsula, 312
 Ibn Fadlan, Arabic traveller and chronicler (10th century), 107
 Iceland, 16, 55, 59, 70, 306
 Icelandic, 87, 117, 237, 306
 identity, 13, 51, 52, 68, 71, 72, 79, 94, 150, 151, 215, 306, 307
 Inderøy, Nord-Trøndelag, Norway, 24, 242, 243, 270
 India, 72
 ingots, 160, 162, 181, 217, 222, 362
 Iran, 72, 74
 Ireland, 74–6, 78, 97, 103, 124, 140, 152, 153, 212, 253, 272, 276, 291, 295, 302
 Irish, 65, 74, 76, 93, 95, 97, 140, 151, 152, 157, 160, 182, 248, 262, 291, 329, 362
 Islam, 17, 292
 Italy, 16, 49
- Jábmehkká*, Saami goddess presiding over a realm of the dead, 67
 James, the brother of Jesus, 71
 Jämtland, Sweden (part of Norway in the Middle Ages), 88, 274, 275
 Jelling, Denmark, 220, 275
 Jerusalem, Palestine, 70–2
 Jesus, 38, 41, 42, 61, 70, 71, 73
 Jewish, 70, 71, 73, 256
 Judaism, 17, 71, 72
 jugs, 78
Juhksáhká, Saami female spirit, 67
- Karleby Church, Västergötland, Sweden, 317
 Karmøy, Rogaland, Norway, 43, 48
kaupang (see the Glossary), 171, 189
 Kaupang, Vestfold, Norway, 48, 63, 64, 116, 164, 191, 202, 203, 206, 215, 216, 240, 256, 257, 280, 281, 295, 307, 311, 312, 317, 318
 Kaupanger, Sogn & Fjordane, Norway, 84, 87, 165, 171, 172, 300
 keys, 54, 192, 193, 263, 330
 Kinsarvik, Hordaland, Norway, 84
 Kløfta, 220, 233, 340; *see also* Ullensaker
 Kors, 140, 146, 151, 271; *see also* Rauma *kristinn dómr*, Christianity, 15
 Krøkla Mountain, Oppland, Norway, 224, 226, 233
 Krossgarden, 96; *see also* Snåsa
 Kufic, 83
 Kvalsund, 156–8, 249, 251, 252, 362; *see also* Herøy
 Kvitøy, Rogaland, Norway, 272
- Lade, Sør-Trøndelag, Norway, 116
 landowners, 170, 272, 311
 landownership, 49, 290
 Latin, 4, 14–17, 72, 73, 108, 325
 law, 49, 55, 56, 71, 87, 96, 123, 142, 145, 170, 172, 300
 lay: clients, 78; community, 78
 laymen, 312
 legislation, 14, 20, 43, 49, 73, 75, 80, 87, 125, 145, 267, 296, 300, 304, 312, 314, 322
 Leikanger, 156, 248, 362; *see also* Herøy
 Leikvin, 127, 128, 281; *see also* Sunndalen
 Liknes, Vest-Agder, Norway, 188, 295
 Linköping, Sweden, 212
 Lithuania, 75
 Little Tradition, 294, 306
 Löddeköping, Sweden, 80
 Lödöse, Sweden, 187
 Logtu, 96, 115; *see also* Frosta
 Loki, Norse god, 60
 Lombards, 49
lund, grove 58
 Lund, Sweden (part of Denmark in the Middle Ages), 80, 115, 116, 216, 300, 305
 Lutheran, 5, 9
- Macedonia, 71
 Madagascar, 9, 11
 Mære, Nord-Trøndelag, 84, 87, 107, 109–12, 123, 124, 126, 196, 226, 241, 279, 280, 297, 299, 300
 Magnus Barefoot (*Magnús berfættr*), King of Norway (1073–1103), 117

- Mälaren, lake, Sweden, 241, 272
 Maltese cross, 266
 manuscripts, 18, 20
 Margaret, St, 147
 marriage alliances, 65, 124, 291
 Mary, St, 209
 Mass, 35, 82, 267, 304
 Mediterranean, 74
 memorials, 265, 273
 merchants, 43, 151, 314
 Messiah, 70
 Middle East, 17, 124, 236
 Midgard (*Miðgarðr*), home of human beings in Norse cosmology, 59, 60
Miðgarðsorm, the world serpent in Norse mythology, 60
 Mímir, associated with a well of wisdom in Norse mythology, 60
 minster, 78, 216, 307, 323
 minting, 14, 125, 208, 325
 mission, 6, 8, 10, 64, 79–81, 191, 301, 312
 missionary kings, 6, 8, 11, 124, 145, 289, 309, 310, 315
 Mithras cult, 74
 monarchy, 6, 14, 18, 125, 310, 311, 322, 324
 monasteries, 73, 117, 118, 146, 151, 152, 163, 199, 200, 301, 324
 monastic, 78, 115, 212
 monasticism, 73
 monks, 74, 78, 152, 316
 monotheistic, 310, 315
 Moravia, 75
 mortuary crosses, 187, 277–9
 Moster, Hordaland, Norway, 274
 moulds, 13, 42, 135, 181, 187, 203, 235, 238, 329
 music, 18, 312
 Muslim, 23, 215, 291, 326
 mythological, 48, 59–61, 66, 204, 256, 319
 myths, 12, 17, 23, 55, 38, 40, 44, 48, 163, 256

 Namdalen, Nord-Trøndelag, Norway, 48, 69
 national borders, 12, 26
 naves, 85, 86, 108, 112, 117, 196, 213
 necklaces, 135, 166, 187, 198, 330

 Nedstrand, Rogaland, Norway, 84
 needles, 54, 177, 263, 329
 Nero, Roman emperor, 71
 Nesstranda, 50, 331; *see also* Rauma
 Nicæa, Council of (in 325), 72
 Nidarholm, 117; *see also* Trondheim
 Nidaros: archbishop's palace, 208, 278; archbishopric, 21, 123, 304, 325; archbishops, 23; cathedral, 38, 84, 122, 123, 125, 154; town, Norway, *see* Trondheim
 Niedersachsen, Germany, 268, 276
 Niflheim, cold part of Ginnungagap in Norse cosmology, 60
 Njörd (*Njörðr*), Norse god, 61; *see also* *Vanir*
 Nolby, Västergötland, Sweden, 300
 Nord-Møre, Møre & Romsdal, Norway, 127, 253, 274, 281, 297, 315
 Nord-Trøndelag, Norway, 24, 39, 65, 84, 104, 106, 107, 127, 132, 242, 243, 265, 270, 279, 281, 296
 Nordfjord, Sogn & Fjordane, Norway, 48, 65, 154, 241, 291
 Nore, Buskerud, Norway, 87, 300
 Novgorod, Russia, 124, 310, 313, 325
 Numedal, Buskerud, Norway, 198, 268, 298
 nunneries, 84, 206, 208

 oars, 46, 47, 249, 250
 Oddernes, Vest-Agder, Norway, 188, 189, 191, 282, 324
 Oddr Snorrason, chronicler (12th century), 116
 Odin (*Óðinn*), Norse god, 10, 39, 59–62, 67, 74, 82, 126, 238, 270, 271
 offerings, 30, 83, 109, 157, 162, 217, 312, 328
 ogham / ogam, 272, 273
 Olaf, St, 117, 122, 124, 125, 188, 199, 200, 268, 272, 275, 324
 Olaf Haraldsson (*Óláfr inn helgi* (the holy) *Haraldsson*), King of Norway and patron Saint (1015–30), 6, 7, 9, 117, 123–5, 127, 209, 210, 274, 304, 309
 Olaf kyrri (*Óláfr kyrri* (the peaceful) *Haraldsson*), King of Norway (1066–93), 84, 121, 122, 125, 164, 301, 309, 310, 317

- Olaf Tryggvason (*Óláfr Tryggvason*), King of Norway (995–1000), 9, 11, 83, 116, 123–5, 127, 241, 309, 310, 313
- Ordericus Vitalis, chronicler (c. 1075–1142), 206
- Øreting assembly, 96, 116, 124, 125; *see also* Trondheim
- Orthodox Church, 69
- Os, 84; *see also* Halden
- Oseberg, Vestfold, Norway, 11, 24, 32, 49, 62, 191, 251, 252, 290
- Oslofjord, Norway, 5, 8, 23, 55, 63, 191, 253, 289, 302
- osteological analysis, 52, 200, 220, 236
- Østre Vatne, 172, 336; *see also* Farsund
- Øvre Rendalen, Hedmark, Norway, 68
- Pactus Alamannorum*, early medeival law code, 46
- pagan: revolts, 325, 326; temples, *see* cult buildings
- Palestine, 71, 72
- Palladius, first bishop of Ireland (first half of 5th century), 74
- Pantheon, of gods, 14, 41, 42, 61, 292, 293
- parishioners, 79
- Passover, Jewish rituals, 73
- patron saints, 75, 122, 123, 163
- Paul, the Evangelist, 71, 72
- pendants, 121, 135, 182, 187, 190, 231, 235, 237–9, 242, 277, 282, 330, 362; *see also* cross pendants
- pennies, 147, 181, 190, 279
- Peter, the apostle, 70, 71, 75
- Peter, St, 54, 75, 141, 142, 147, 201, 202, 210, 300
- Pharisees, 70
- pilgrims, 122, 125, 267, 268
- place names, 8, 10, 12, 14, 58, 96, 108, 171, 217, 240, 241, 265, 269, 311
- pruned branches, 249; sticks, 156, 248, 251, 362
- Poland, 270, 325
- Pomeranian, 75
- ports, 311
- post-burial rites, 45
- Premonstratensian order, 200
- presbyters, Christian leaders, 72
- priests, priestesses, 6, 11, 20, 62, 87, 187, 216, 272, 305, 312, 315, 317, 323
- primsigning* (*primesigning*), 42, 43
- private church (*Egenkirke*, *Eigenkirche*), 271
- purses, 181, 186, 263, 330
- quartz, 78, 184
- quern stones, 97, 329
- Ragnarök, the final battle between the gods and giants in Norse mythology, 61
- Ratatösk, a squirrel and messenger in Norse mythology, 60
- Rathbreasail, Synod of (in 1111), 74
- Rauland, Telemark, Norway, 84
- Rauma, Møre & Romsdal, Norway, 31, 47, 50, 127–8, 132, 133, 135–41, 146, 150–1, 154, 184, 190, 193, 215, 244, 246, 248, 252–3, 256–7, 261, 265, 271, 279–81, 289, 296, 300, 301, 305–7, 314, 316, 331
- Reformatsen*, 16th century, documentary record, 146
- Rein nunnery, Sør-Trøndelag, Norway, 84
- religion als Spiel*, 36
- religious: change, 10, 38, 41, 43, 66, 70, 79, 259, 325, 326; dualism, 293
- reliquaries, 122, 125, 132, 134, 135, 140, 152, 246, 296, 330
- resurrection, 72, 73, 107
- Rhine, Germany, 74
- riding equipment, 44, 53, 97, 103, 136
- ring crosses, 266, 299
- Ringerike, Buskerud, Norway, 63, 301
- ritual objects, 132, 151, 152, 296, 301, 316
- rituals: annual, 105; baptism, 11, 42, 43, 73, 80, 124, 310; Christian, 21, 86, 123, 124, 151, 187, 304, 305, 307, 321; collective, 32, 36; communion, 30, 73; individual, 36; meals, 22; seasonal, 22
- rock crystals, 64, 189, 298, 330
- Rol, Nord-Trøndelag, Norway, 126, 242, 243, 271, 296
- Røldal, Hordaland, Norway, 29

- Roman: empire, 72, 74, 312; period, 47, 81, 105, 207
 Romanesque style 122
 Rome, Italy, 15, 71–3
 Romsdal, region, part of Møre & Romsdal, Norway, 127, 141, 147, 150–4, 253, 279, 297, 301, 302, 307, 308
 Romsdalen, valley in Møre & Romsdal, Norway, 128, 132, 138, 146, 150, 154, 271, 305, 306
 Rothair's Edict, 49
 royal: dynasty, 253; estates, 96, 108, 113, 313; residences, 8, 125, 309, 311, 314
 Rügen Island, Slavic principality, Germany, 315
 rune-stones, 9, 191, 272, 273, 276, 277
 runic inscriptions, 58, 62, 129, 187, 189, 256, 173–275, 289, 313
 Rus', 310, 313, 324, 325
 Russia, 75, 82, 107, 220, 261, 290
- Saami: drums, 66, 69; population, 4, 28, 57, 67–9, 94, 95, 226, 320; religion, 57, 66–8, 115, 295
 sacral kingship, 11
 Sadducees, ancient group of Jews, 70
 Sæmundr the Wise, Icelandic chronicler (1056–1133), 124
 St Matheus' / Mathias' Church, 147
 Saltfjellet, Nordland, Norway, 69
 Samaritans, ethno-religious group in the Middle East, 70
 Sandnes, Rogaland, Norway, 93, 94, 334
 Sântorp Snickaregården, Västergötland, Sweden, 300
 Sáráhká, Saami goddess, 67
 Sarpsborg, 209, 309; *see also* Borg
 Saul of Tarsus, also Paul the Apostle (c. AD 5–c. 67), 71
 Saxon Art, 177
 Scotland, United Kingdom, 78, 271, 272, 276
 sects, 78
 Selja, island, 162–4, 301; *see also* Selje
 Selje, municipality, Møre & Romsdal, Norway, 47, 154–7, 159, 162, 164, 244, 248, 249, 257, 264, 280, 335, 362
 sepulchral urns, 50, 168, 184, 193, 218, 241, 256
 Setesdal, Vest-Agder, Norway, 64, 172, 177, 189, 279
 Setnes, 47, 134, 140, 152, 265, 301, 331; *see also* Rauma
 ships, 11, 24, 32, 43, 46–9, 76, 157, 191, 250, 251, 290, 191
 shrines, 122, 163, 164
Síðaskipti ('change of traditions'), 12, 17
siðr (tradition), 17, 18, 293, 307, 314, 326
 Sigurd Woolstring (Sigurd Ullstreng), one of the king's men in Norway (1030–1100), 117
 sinkers, 200, 329
 Skåne, Sweden (part of Denmark in the Middle Ages), 12, 59, 80, 216, 305
 Skeime, 172, 174, 336; *see also* Farsund
 Skien, Telemark, Norway, 28, 191, 195, 206, 215, 216, 237, 256, 264, 282, 295, 300, 302, 307
 Skiringssal, 203; *see also* Kaupang
Skírnismál, Norse poem, part of the Poetic Edda, 59
 slaves, 87, 170, 291
 Slavs, 66
 Slemmedal, 187, 190, 246, 362; *see also* Grimstad
 Snåsa, Nord-Trøndelag, Norway, 28, 47, 88, 89, 91–6, 102–4, 129, 136, 261, 262, 264, 280, 334
 Sogn, Sogn & Fjordane, Norway, 8, 65, 171, 290, 291
 Sognefjorden, Sogn & Fjordane, Norway, 48, 159
 Solør-Odal, Hedmark, Norway, 63
 spindle whorls, 53–55, 68, 157, 162, 165, 186
 spits, 329
 spurs, 329
staf, pole, stave (may include a cultic figure), 107
 staffs, 62, 132, 134, 152, 154, 181, 212, 246, 301, 330
stafgarðr, a fence/construction of poles/staves (may be associated with a cult site), 107, 109
 Stange, Hedmark, Norway, 84
 Stavanger, Rogaland, Norway, 278, 282, 301, 307, 323

- Stein, Buskerud, Norway, 83, 84, 301
 Steinkjer, Nord-Trøndelag, Norway, 48
 Stiklestad, Nord-Trøndelag, Norway, 13, 126, 127
 stone crosses, 126, 146, 242, 265, 266, 268, 271, 273–5, 298
 Storhaug, 43, 48, 250; *see also* Avaldsnes
 summer solstice, 107
 sun crosses, 38
 Sunday, 73
 Sunndalen, Møre & Romsdal, Norway, 127, 128
 Sunneva (*Sunnifá*), legendary Christian saint and princess, 162–4
 Sunnmøre, Møre & Romsdal, Norway, 65, 127, 132, 147, 153, 154, 265, 291, 304
 Sutton Hoo, Suffolk, England, United Kingdom, 47, 76
 Sverri Sigurdsson (*Sverrir Sigurðarson*), King of Norway (1177–1202), 111, 145, 154
 synagogue, Jewish cult house, 70, 71
 syncretism, 41, 42, 238
 Syria, 71

 taboos, 19
 taxes, 18, 312, 322
 T-crosses, 237
 temples, 6, 72, 107, 109, 241, 292, 319
 theocracy, 315
 theoforic, 58, 241
 thing, assembly, 28, 66, 70, 96, 123–5, 128, 129, 159, 160, 164, 172, 184, 199, 253, 267, 274, 365
 Thomas, the disciple, 72
 Thomas Christians, 72
 Thor (*Þórr*), Norse god, 10, 38, 39, 58, 61, 62, 67, 239–42, 281, 296, 319; hammer rings, 235, 239, 241, 242
 Tingstad, 96; *see also* Frosta
 Tingvoll, Møre & Romsdal, Norway, 28, 46, 47, 127–32, 140, 150, 244, 248, 252, 253, 257, 259, 261, 264, 280, 296, 302, 316, 333
 Tissø, Sjælland, Denmark, 59
 Tønsberg, Vestfold, Norway, 28, 191–9, 201–3, 210, 215, 216, 237, 256, 257, 264, 282, 300, 302, 307
 toponymic evidence, 12, 58, 115, 241
 Toten-Hadeland, Oppland, Norway, 63
 Tråen, 237; *see also* Rol
 Trendgården, Denmark, 42, 238
 Tresfjord, Møre & Romsdal, Norway, 146, 149
 Trinity, 292, 310
 Trondheim, Sør-Trøndelag, Norway, 21, 23, 25, 28, 32, 55, 84, 91, 94, 96, 116–26, 132, 151, 154, 213, 278, 281, 282, 298–9, 301–2, 307, 309, 311, 313, 315, 318, 323
 Trondheimsfjorden, Sør- and Nord-Trøndelag, Norway, 100, 124
 trú ('belief'), 17, 18
 Tune, Østfold, Norway, 32, 191
 Ty (*Týr*), Norse god, 58
 typology, 33, 273, 300

 Ull (*Ullr*), Norse god, 58
 Ullensaker, Akershus, Norway, 31, 47, 216–21, 232, 233, 244, 259, 263, 264, 279–81, 295, 339
 Unni, archbishop of Hamburg-Bremen (916–36), 79
 Uppåkra, Skåne, Sweden (in Denmark in the Middle Ages), 59, 204
 Uppsala, Sweden, 275
 urbanization, 4, 8, 9, 14, 208, 215, 216, 305, 307, 309, 311, 324
 Urd (*Urðr*), Norse goddess, one of the three Norns, 60
 Urnes, Sogn & Fjordane, Norway, 84–6, 171, 172, 317
 Urgard (*Útgardr*), home of the giants and undesirables, 59
 Uvdal, Buskerud, Norway 86

 Værnes, Nord-Trøndelag, Norway, 83, 84
 Vågå, Oppland, Norway, 270
 Valdres, Oppland, Norway, 8, 63, 250, 289, 343
 Väler, 28, 31, 68, 216, 217, 222, 223, 264, 341, 363; *see also* Finnskogen
 Valhall, realm of the dead in Norse mythology, 48
 vang (meadow), 58

- Vang, 31, 47, 104, 216, 217, 227–34, 244, 252, 253, 257, 259, 263, 280, 281, 341–3, 363; *see also* Valdres
- Vanir*, group of fertility gods in Norse mythology, 60, 61
- Västergötland, Sweden, 81, 88, 209, 278, 300, 317
- Vendel, Uppland, Sweden, 47
- Veøy, Møre & Romsdal, Norway, 132, 140–5, 147, 151–3, 259, 282, 301, 302, 307, 315–18, 322–4
- Viborg, Denmark, 210
- Vik, Sogn & Fjordane, Norway, 65, 290, 291
- Viken, Oslo fjord region, Norway, 5, 8, 23, 48, 55, 87, 191–3, 209, 215, 216, 237, 256, 264, 287, 290, 302, 305, 307, 315, 316
- Villa, 140, 146–51, 300; *see also* Tresfjord
- Vinje, 95, 96, 334; *see also* Snåsa
- Vita Ansgarii*, biography of Ansgar, archbishop of Hamburg-Bremen (written *c.* 875), 80
- Vivalen, Härjedalen, Sweden (in the Middle Ages: Norway), 197
- Vladimir, king in Novgorod (980–1015), 310
- Völuspá*, Norse poem, part of the Poetic Edda, 59
- völva (*vǫlva*), priestess in Norse mythology, 62
- Voss, Hordaland, Norway, 51
- votive offerings, 109
- Wales, United Kingdom, 78, 79
- weaving swords, 165, 186
- Wednesday, 73
- weights: for balance, 179, 181, 186, 187, 189, 263, 282, 314, 330; for fishing, 38; for loom, 135, 157, 165, 192, 227, 330
- wheel crosses, 266
- wire-drawers, 181, 200, 329
- withes, 212
- wrap, 44, 67, 81, 187, 197, 213, 299, 362
- Yggdrasil*, World tree in Norse cosmology, 60, 61
- Ygggr*, one of the names for Óðinn in Norse mythology, 60
- Yngling dynasty, Scandinavian ruling dynasty with mythological origin, 59, 62