



Mental Maps and Sacred Spaces: An Empirical Analysis of Late Medieval Towns of the Baltic Sea Region, 1420–1520

Anna-Stina Hägglund, Piotr Kołodziejczak & Marko Lamberg

To cite this article: Anna-Stina Hägglund, Piotr Kołodziejczak & Marko Lamberg (24 Mar 2025): Mental Maps and Sacred Spaces: An Empirical Analysis of Late Medieval Towns of the Baltic Sea Region, 1420–1520, Scandinavian Journal of History, DOI: [10.1080/03468755.2025.2474997](https://doi.org/10.1080/03468755.2025.2474997)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/03468755.2025.2474997>



© 2025 The Authors. Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group on behalf of the Historical Associations of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden.



Published online: 24 Mar 2025.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



Article views: 55



View related articles [↗](#)



View Crossmark data [↗](#)

Mental Maps and Sacred Spaces: An Empirical Analysis of Late Medieval Towns of the Baltic Sea Region, 1420–1520

Anna-Stina Hägglund ^a, Piotr Kołodziejczak ^b and Marko Lamberg ^c

^aCultural History, University of Turku, Turku, Finland; ^bDepartment of the History of Pomerania, Tadeusz Manteuffel Institute of History, Polish Academy of Sciences, Toruń, Poland; ^cChurch history, Faculty of Theology, University of Helsinki, Helsinki, Finland

ABSTRACT

This article analyses how and to what extent medieval men and women utilized religious elements when they thought of the local physical space around themselves. Urban spaces usually contained plenty of physical elements connected to Christian faith, even if only bearing names related to it. This article seeks to clarify what kind of significance these nominally religious physical landmarks had for the mental landscapes of medieval town dwellers and the role of religious elements in their daily lives. We undertook such an endeavour by analysing how locations in urban space were described in written sources from the medieval towns of Åbo (Fin. Turku), Reval (Est. Tallinn), Stockholm, Stralsund and the two towns of Thorn (Pol. Toruń) in the period between 1420 and 1520. Our results indicate several local differences, but also highlight a common feature in terms of a practical emphasis on the visibility of landmarks.

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received 9 October 2023
Revised 9 January 2025
Accepted 4 February 2025

KEYWORDS

Late middle ages; Baltic Sea region; towns; space; mental landscapes; lived religion

Introduction

This article analyses how and to what extent medieval persons utilized religious elements when they discussed their surrounding physical space. In recent years the focus in historical studies on religion has increasingly shifted from the history of the Church and theological ideas to the actual religiosity of common people and how they practised it in their everyday lives.¹ During this time, researchers have re-evaluated the traditional view of medieval Western societies as dominated by the Church and its doctrines, recognizing the multifaceted and dynamic ways religion was expressed. As early as 1968, Antonius Gerardus Weiler challenged the notion that Christian faith permeated every aspect of society and people's lives.² In the same vein, John Arnold and Graeme Smith identified attitudes of disbelief or indifference towards Christian norms and a wide variety of lifestyles in medieval societies. Although ecclesiastical buildings were ubiquitous in medieval towns, their impact on people's views regarding religion and faith varied.³

CONTACT Marko Lamberg  marko.lamberg@abo.fi

© 2025 The Authors. Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group on behalf of the Historical Associations of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden.

This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited. The terms on which this article has been published allow the posting of the Accepted Manuscript in a repository by the author(s) or with their consent.

Researchers now agree that Christian beliefs were expressed in a myriad of ways and to varying degrees. Sari Katajala-Peltomaa and Raisa Toivo have demonstrated in their studies on lived religion in medieval and early modern societies that religious doctrines and theological systems were not adopted by people in their entirety but were adapted to local circumstances and intermingled with various cultures and traditions.⁴

Thus, religious elements were easily perceivable in medieval towns, but did church buildings and other physical references to faith affect how people perceived the urban space in which they lived and worked? By examining written records from towns around the Baltic Sea, we focus on descriptions of sacred landmarks and their role in navigating urban space. We also undertake an analysis of the frequency with which sacred spaces and religious sites were mentioned in people's descriptions of their surroundings. Our aim is to emphasize the significance of these places in the daily lives and experiences of the residents of Baltic Sea region towns. Thus, this study provides new insights into the influence of clerical and religious institutions on the mental maps of both inhabitants and visitors to urban spaces.

In urban spaces in the Baltic Sea region, faith was made manifest in the medieval era in the form of churches, chapels, monasteries, and convent houses. Moreover, guild houses, leproseries, and charitable institutions also bore religious names and used religious symbols. In a similar way, several secular buildings, such as towers and gates, could bear names that referred to saints and other Christian emblems. Profane urban space was also utilized and temporarily sanctified when religious processions took place on streets and in market squares.⁵

Accordingly, churches and guild houses, hospitals, mendicant convents and monasteries, as well as streets named after them, were used as landmarks when describing the neighbourhoods around religious institutions. Hitherto, only a few historically-oriented studies on the spatial language in the past and the role of landmarks have been written. The most notable among these is Daniel Lord Smail's study on the 'cartographic language' and the 'cartographic grammar' in late medieval Marseille.⁶ Such findings serve as sources of inspiration for our analysis.

We use the term 'landmark' when studying references to ecclesiastical institutions within more general descriptions of a location. According to the *Oxford Dictionary of English*, the word 'landmark' signifies 'an object or feature of a landscape or town that is easily seen and recognised from a distance, especially one that enables someone to establish their location'.⁷ Likewise, Kevin Lynch utilized this definition in his work *The Image of the City*, published in 1960, which has become something of a guidebook for all who want to understand how human beings perceive urban space. Lynch stressed the significance of a built structure's visibility for its usefulness as a landmark.⁸ We have applied this definition to our study of sacred landmarks.

Research question and methodology

Our analysis focuses on six late medieval European towns: the Old and New Towns of Thorn (Pol. Toruń), Stralsund, Reval (Est. Tallinn), Åbo (Fin. Turku) and Stockholm. All these towns were founded during the thirteenth century. Nowadays, all these towns are situated in different countries and in different linguistic environments. This was also the case in the Middle Ages, with the exception of Åbo and Stockholm, which both belonged

to the Kingdom of Sweden. Although the towns were situated far away from each other, they shared certain common features, such as official adherence to the Western Church and belonging to the Hanseatic sphere of influence. The Old Town of Thorn, Stralsund and Reval were also officially members of the Hansa. Åbo and Stockholm were frequently visited by Hanseatic merchants, and both had German-speaking communities. The biggest of these towns was Stralsund with an estimated population of around 13,000 inhabitants, whereas approximately 10,000 people lived in the Old and New Towns of Thorn (collectively), 7,000–8,000 in Reval, 5,000–8,000 in Stockholm, and 1,500–2,000 in Åbo. The town plans are depicted on maps A1–A5 (in Appendix 1).⁹

Our central questions in this article are the following: 1) In what ways and to what extent were religious landmarks used in location descriptions in the six Baltic Sea region towns under scrutiny in this paper? 2) What types of religious space were visible and which were completely absent in the mental maps of late medieval burghers? 3) Did spatial language change over time vis-à-vis the frequency of religious landmarks? 4) What were the similarities and differences in the spatial language (and the mental landscapes) between the towns analysed in this article?

Our primary source material comprises location descriptions found in documents and registers related to property within the aforementioned towns and their suburbs. This documentation, which pertains to property transactions, residential relationships, and ownership disputes, allows us to map these descriptions and examine the role of sacred landmarks in determining how people describe their neighbourhoods. Given the prominence and visibility of many ecclesiastical institutions, they likely functioned as landmarks. Their absence from place descriptions also provides insights into their position in the mental maps of the townspeople. By compiling the number and frequency of mentions of sacred landmarks, we study the prominence of sacred institutions in the urban environment, offering new insights into the study of urban religion.

By 'sacred' we understand places that were officially connected to religious activities. For the sake of consistency and clarity, we have divided the landmarks analysed in this study into three categories: the first is comprised of 'proper' sacred landmarks, that is, churches (including hospital churches), chapels, monasteries, nunneries, mendicant convents, churchyards, and graveyards. These buildings and spaces are considered 'properly' sacred because they were used primarily for religious worship, and thus they were directed towards the otherworld. Our second category comprises landmarks that we judge to have been semi-sacred and they consist of buildings that could play a secondary role for a religious cult but were mostly utilized for 'worldly' activities. Such buildings include guild houses, which also served the 'earthly' needs of guild brothers and sisters, as well as houses belonging to the Beguine and Beghard lay religious communities, and various kinds of charitable institutions, such as hospitals, leproseries, almshouses, and rest homes that served the poor, sick and elderly.

The boundary between 'sacred' and 'secular' is fluid in the medieval context.¹⁰ This holds true also for our topic. There were places in the towns in the Baltic Sea region that we are examining that had names that contained a Christian connotation. For example, St Nicholas' Gate in Stockholm, Sisters' Street in Reval, Church Street in Åbo, and St Anne's Street in Thorn. These places were profane, but they bore the names of saints, a religious community, such as a nunnery or convent, or holy objects and entities, such as the Holy Spirit. This is why we have included all streets, town gates, towers, bridges, and other

physical elements in our study that have names that contain religious references. This third category, which we denote as 'secular landmarks with sacred names', also comprises individuals whose residency is expressed by means of a street name with a spiritual reference. Some examples of this custom (which was not present in all the towns we analysed) are 'Marina Knut Tailor's daughter in Blackfriars Street'¹¹ and 'Anders Olsson beside the churchyard'¹² in Stockholm, as well as 'Nicholas at the corner of Holy Spirit Street' in Thorn.¹³ Sacred landmarks provided the inspiration for several established street names, but this did not make these spaces sacred, as the example regarding Blackfriars Street demonstrates: it was merely a passage leading to or from the convent house of the Dominicans in Stockholm. The profane landmarks bearing names from nearby/adjacent ('proper') sacred landmarks, such as churches, monasteries, and convents, were sometimes combined with the landmarks that gave them their name in order to describe certain locations.

Plenty of other kinds of landmark also existed, and they were not limited to those that evoked Christian connotations. However, their total number has not been investigated by the authors of this article. Such a task would have extended far beyond the scope of this text. Instead, we refer to relative similarities and differences between towns as well as changes over time regarding the use of elements that bore religious names and/or served a religious purpose. We have also omitted cases in which religious institutions, such as churches, monasteries, chapels, and altars, are mentioned merely as property owners when the property itself had no sacred function.

Sources

Nearly all the location descriptions that we compiled were collected from documents that were produced by the respective late medieval municipal administrations: town court protocols and registers of property deeds. These documents were kept by most urban authorities to keep track of property and judicial issues within the town's jurisdiction. These are very versatile source materials, containing volumes with charter copies as well as running ledgers in which entries are noted in successive order. All such sources were accessed through printed or digitized editions. To ensure proper comparability between the towns, our analysis focuses on the period between 1420 and 1520. Thus, we analyse mental landscapes during the late medieval period, which was still dominated by the Western Church, that is, before the emergence and spread of theological ideas associated with the Reformation.¹⁴

In the case of the Old Town of Thorn, four edited volumes of court records have been published, covering a period from 1363 to 1515. Only one volume of court records has been published in regard to the New Town, for the years 1387–1450. Although the New Town maintained a separate town court after its incorporation into the Old Town in 1454, there is a serious gap in the records produced by this institution between 1451 and 1530. The language used in the official Old Town and New Town records was East Middle German. The municipal administration of both towns produced primary sources that have been preserved and have proven to be useful for the present analysis. In total, 211 sacred, six semi-sacred, and 342 secular landmarks with sacred names were registered in these sources (see [Table 1](#)).

Table 1. Sacred, semi-sacred and secular landmarks with sacred names in the Old and New Towns of Thorn, 1420–1515.

Decade	Sacred landmarks	Semi-sacred landmarks	Secular landmarks with sacred names	Total
1420–1429	18	0	45	63
1430–1439	34	0	70	104
1440–1449	40	0	54	94
1450–1459	14	0	27	41
1460–1469	36	0	32	68
1470–1479	27	1	30	58
1480–1489	13	3	28	44
1490–1499	9	0	17	26
1500–1509	13	2	28	43
1510–1515	7	0	11	18
Total	211	6	342	559

Sources: Kaczmarczyk, ed., *Liber scabinorum*; Ciesielska and Tandecki, eds., *Księga ławnicza Starego Miasta Torunia (1428–1456)*, vols. 1–2; Kopiński and Tandecki, eds., *Księga ławnicza Starego Miasta Torunia (1456–1479)*; Kopiński, Mikulski, and Tandecki, eds., *Księga ławnicza Starego Miasta Torunia (1479–1515)*, vols. 1–2; Ciesielska, ed., *Księga ławnicza Nowego Miasta Torunia*.

Multiple series of town registers from Stralsund have been preserved, but only the so-called *Liber Memorialis* (*LM*), which covers the years 1321–1525, has been edited and made available for use in this study. Most entries were written in Latin, but some are in Middle Low German.¹⁵ In the *LM*, references to sacred landmarks decrease sharply at the end of the fifteenth century, dropping from a few per decade to none by the early sixteenth century. This decline is primarily due to the *LM* only being preserved in fragments. In location descriptions from Stralsund, parish churches were the most frequently cited landmarks, with a total of 47 references. Semi-sacred landmarks were the least used category, with only 18 references. Secular landmarks bearing sacred names were cited on 44 occasions (see [Table 2](#)).

The surviving fragments of medieval copy books from Reval were also written in Middle Low German.¹⁶ Here, too, entries in the copy books become more fragmentary towards the end of the period, which explains the decline in references to sacred landmarks during the second half of the fifteenth century.¹⁷ In Reval, there were a total of 205 references to sacred landmarks. The great variety of sacred institutions is reflected in the division of references between the three categories. References to streets named after the Dominican convent and the Cistercian nunnery were the most common. Hence, most references fall into the category of secular landmarks bearing sacred names with 90

Table 2. Sacred, semi-sacred and secular landmarks with sacred names in Stralsund, 1420–1519.

Decade	Sacred landmarks	Semi-sacred landmarks	Secular landmarks with sacred names	Total
1420–1429	15	12	20	47
1430–1439	6	2	5	13
1440–1449	7	1	12	20
1450–1459	9	0	4	13
1460–1469	5	2	2	9
1470–1479	3	1	1	5
1480–1489	2	0	0	2
1490–1499	0	0	0	0
1500–1509	0	0	0	0
1510–1519	0	0	0	0
Total	47	18	44	109

Sources: Schröder, ed., *Der Stralsunder Liber Memorialis*, vols. 2–6.

Table 3. Sacred, semi-sacred and secular landmarks with sacred names in Reval, 1420–1519.

Decade	Sacred landmarks	Semi-sacred landmarks	Secular landmarks with sacred names	Total
1420–1429	28	6	9	43
1430–1439	28	8	26	62
1440–1449	12	8	17	37
1450–1459	4	0	11	15
1460–1469	1	1	6	8
1470–1479	4	3	7	14
1480–1489	1	0	4	5
1490–1499	4	1	5	10
1500–1509	6	0	4	10
1510–1519	0	0	1	1
Total	88	27	90	205

Sources: Plaesterer, ed., *Das Revaler Pergament Rentenbuch*; von Nottbeck, ed., *Das Drittälteste Erbebuch*.

references. The second most common category were the references to sacred landmarks with 88 references and the least references included semi-sacred landmarks (see Table 3).

The Stockholm sources utilized in this study consist of a register of property deeds for the years 1420–1498 and records of the town council between 1474–1520. The language used in the records was mainly Swedish, although notices were occasionally written in Middle Low German. Overall, 441 location descriptions containing references to sacred landmarks can be found in these sources. They contain 472 references to sacred landmarks. Secular spaces with religious connotations were the most utilized category (287 mentions), whilst the second most cited were sacred spaces (124 mentions), with the rarest being semi-sacred landmarks (61 mentions) (see Table 4). References to sacred spaces became less frequent towards the end of the period studied herein: for instance, the records for 1515 contain only one reference to the Dominican convent, and only two to St Clare's Nunnery in 1519.

The source material regarding Åbo is far scarcer than the materials available for the other towns examined in this study because the records of the town council have not been preserved. Nevertheless, information can be collected from sporadically preserved deed documents, notices in the records kept in Stockholm (some property affairs relating to Åbo were dealt with there), and two copy books produced for the cathedral chapter of

Table 4. Sacred, semi-sacred and secular landmarks with sacred names in Stockholm, 1420–1520.

Decade	Sacred spaces	Semi-sacred spaces	Secular spaces with religious names	Total
1420–1429	2	1	4	7
1430–1439	6	3	4	13
1440–1449	12	4	9	25
1450–1459	10	7	10	27
1460–1469	8	4	17	29
1470–1479	12	4	25	41
1480–1489	17	8	50	75
1490–1499	30	18	74	122
1500–1509	10	2	30	42
1510–1520	17	10	64	91
Total	124	61	287	472

Sources: H. Hildebrand, ed., *Stockholms stads jordebok*, vols. 1–2; E. Hildebrand et al., eds., *Stockholms stads tänkeböcker*, vols. 1–5. NB: There are small gaps in all the volumes. The biggest omissions concern records from the early 1500s: the records from 1501–1503 are entirely missing, whilst from 1508 the records only cover the period January–May. The records from 1509 are mostly lost and the records from 1510 are completely lost. Moreover, the preserved notices regarding 1511 only begin in May for this year.

Table 5. Sacred, semi-sacred and secular landmarks with sacred names in Åbo, 1420–1520.

Decade	Sacred spaces	Semi-sacred spaces	Secular spaces with religious names	Total
1420–1429	0	0	0	0
1430–1439	1	1	0	2
1440–1449	1	0	1	2
1450–1459	1	0	1	2
1460–1469	0	1	0	1
1470–1479	1	0	1	2
1480–1489	1	0	2	3
1490–1499	0	0	1	1
1500–1509	0	0	0	0
1510–1520	0	0	0	0
Total	5	2	6	13

Sources: Hausen, Kokkonen, and Pispala, eds., *Registrum Ecclesiae Aboensis*, nos. 213, 364, 365, 436, 477, 515, 621, 688, 714; *Diplomatarium Fennicum* database, nos. 3005, 3301, 3783, 4183, 4187, 4381.

Åbo.¹⁸ The main language in the documents is Old Swedish, but several notices were written in Latin, due to the role played by the episcopal administration in the town. The total number of documents describing the urban space in Åbo between 1420 and 1520 is as low as 70. Of these, only 13 mention landmarks, which can be connected to sacrality (see Table 5). The sporadic preservation of copy books points to a general decline in references to landmarks from the end of the fifteenth century. Thus, it is not possible to discern if there was an actual decline in the use of sacred landmarks over time.

This issue, resulting from the fragmented source material, affects, to a greater or lesser extent, all the towns examined in this study, especially towards the end of the period in question. This may explain the general decline in the number of references to sacred landmarks. Thus, this factor has been taken into account accordingly in our analysis and conclusions.

Sacred spaces as landmarks: parish churches and chapels

The most visible landmark in a medieval town was usually the parish church with its high tower(s). Churches were typically constructed to be focal points of a town, near market squares and busy streets (see Map A1–A5). Their visibility would suggest that they should be amply mentioned as landmarks. In this section we look at churches and chapels that are referred to as landmarks and discuss the reasons for them being mentioned. This highlights the significance of the churches in the daily vocabulary of the town residents and the prominence of churches in their mental maps.

In all towns examined in this article, and according to a widespread custom in medieval Europe, churches and chapels were dedicated to saints or other sacred connotations. This especially held true for the parish churches that had the following patron saints: St John in the Old Town of Thorn, St James in the New Town of Thorn and Stralsund, St Nicholas in Reval, Stockholm and Stralsund, and the Virgin Mary and St Henrik in Åbo and the Virgin Mary in Stralsund. In the German-speaking of Thorn, Stralsund and Reval, parish churches were typically referred to by the names of their patron saints. For example, in the Old Town of Thorn, the parish church was usually described as ‘St John’s’. Places in the vicinity of a church building were also occasionally referred to by the latter’s saintly name. People were described, for example, as ‘living next to St Nicholas’, ‘opposite St John’, and ‘behind Our Lady’.¹⁹

The church of St John, located in the Old Town of Thorn, was evidently far more popular as a landmark than the church of St James (41 mentions for the former as opposed to 23 for the latter). The parish church of St James appeared more often as a landmark in the records of the New Town court. After 1450 it was mentioned in this context only twice, which illustrates how the assessment of its usefulness as a landmark is affected by a lack of relevant primary sources.²⁰

This is not the case in both Stockholm and Åbo, where German was a minority language, as spatial terminology appears more worldly than in the other towns. In Stockholm, the parish church was always mentioned in a very worldly fashion as the Town Church (Swe. *Bykyrkan*) and not as St Nicholas' Church. St Nicholas's presence was most often expressed in a worldly context in references to the town gate bearing his name: St Nicholas' Gate was especially used as a landmark in address-like descriptions. Such usage accounts for 45 mentions in the sources analysed in the present article.

Likewise, in Åbo, despite the scarcity of sources, the spatial language was relatively profane: one of the two references to the cathedral mentions Our Lady, but there is no mention of St Henry, who shared the role of patron saint of the building. However, in some donation charters, the saint is mentioned as the recipient of gifts that were intended for the entire cathedral. St Olav, the patron saint of the Dominican convent in Åbo, is only mentioned in one of the five references to the convent building. Saints do appear regularly in property registers from Åbo as estates owned by individual altar foundations. Yet, such references have been omitted from this study as these properties were simply owned or managed by ecclesiastical institutions and do not fit into any of the three landmark categories analysed herein.

The use of sacred landmarks can accordingly be defined as an element of the lived religion of town dwellers when they described their town. For example, through references to the patrons of churches, the saints became part of the urban space. Merely referring to the names of the patron saints, demarcates their significance to the townspeople when they described and thought about their town. The saints, in some manner, were viewed as 'neighbours' and a vital part of the urban mind maps. The use of the patron saints' names when referring to the sacred landmarks of the town is a sign of their saintly presence in the everyday language of the burghers.

The descriptions of landmarks usually concerned properties in the neighbourhood of the sacred institutions. The yard of the Town Church in Stockholm was mentioned far more often than the church itself, at least 24 times.²¹ The actual church, in turn, was mentioned in only eight descriptions. It was situated near Great Market Square, but not immediately next to it, which seems to have diminished its usefulness as a landmark. In both Stralsund and Reval, graveyards of churches and hospitals were also frequently cited landmarks. The graveyard of St Mary's Church in Stralsund was mentioned most often (11 times) and in Reval the graveyard of Nicholas was cited on nine occasions. Graveyards were possibly viewed as suitable landmarks because they were located closer to the described properties than the churches themselves.

The convenient location of some parish churches naturally impacted their usefulness as landmarks. For example, the two most popular religious landmarks in Reval were the parish churches of St Nicholas (church 11 mentions, tower and graveyard 12 mentions) and St Olav (24 mentions, tower six mentions, and graveyard seven mentions) along with

their towers and graveyards. The location of St Olav's Church at the end of Reval's two main parallel streets and near the harbour, at a central crossing point of the town, was probably a contributory factor to its frequent use as a landmark as well as its high tower and spire making it visible from a long distance. St Nicholas Church was located on the opposite side of the town from St Olav's, thereby determining that it served a similar role as a landmark in its neighbourhood.²²

Even if church towers were visible, their prominent position did not guarantee their use as landmarks. Thus, it seems that factors other than visibility were at play when people chose how to describe addresses in the vicinity. For instance, the two tall towers of St Nicholas' Church in Stralsund were never mentioned as landmarks, although their distinguishable architecture would in theory have provided an excellent basis for describing locations. Neither was the parish church of St James, which was a popular landmark but was only mentioned four times. This is perhaps due to its location in the northern part of Stralsund, meaning that it was located at some distance from the most central parts of the town (see [Map A2](#)).

The topographical development of the towns also contributed to how churches were used as landmarks. This becomes particularly evident in the case of Åbo. The cathedral was only cited in three records. This is partly a consequence of the physical topography of Åbo: the cathedral was separated from the rest of the town by a wall and it was situated in a northerly corner of the town, whereas the Dominican convent was located in a corresponding way in a southerly quarter.²³

The chapels in the suburbs were also notable among the sacred landmarks. In Stockholm, religious institutions and shrines in both suburbs around the town were frequently used as landmarks. The following landmarks were situated in the northern suburb: St Clare's Nunnery (13 mentions), St James's Chapel, which was occasionally referred to as a church (seven mentions), and St George's Chapel (four mentions). St Mary Magdalene's Chapel (14 mentions) and the Chapel of the Holy Cross (seven mentions) were situated in the southern suburb. Because of the smaller number of houses and plots in the suburbs, the references to these shrines were scarcer than references to churches and convents on the main island of the town. No location on the main island was defined in relationship to shrines outside it and no locations on the other islands or in the suburbs were explained by means of landmarks on the main island (see [Table 4](#) and [Map A4](#)).

Accordingly, the use of churches and chapels as landmarks was dependent on how they were situated in the towns. Their visibility was reduced if they were erected in a busy part of the town, along a central street or next to a square, or if they were located on the outskirts of an urban area or were surrounded by a wall. Nevertheless, they were still familiar places to the burghers. The churches and chapels that were dedicated to saints were thus convenient landmarks. Consequently, saints were present in the language of the inhabitants of a town.

Sacred spaces as landmarks: monasteries and convents

In addition to parish churches and chapels, all the towns examined in this article were home to other ecclesiastical institutions that entered the mental topography of the locals. Most notable were monasteries, convent houses and convent churches, which could even

be more present in location descriptions than parish churches. The mendicant convents were established in all of the towns being examined in this article during the course of the thirteenth century. Such convents were referred to as monasteries in these towns and they were often located on the outskirts of the urban environment. Nonetheless, they were all visible in the urban space through the convent buildings and also through streets that were named after them (see [Maps A1–A5](#)). All the towns examined in this article were home to Dominican convents, while Thorn, Stralsund and Stockholm also had convents of the Franciscan Order. Moreover, medieval Stockholm also housed a nunnery of the Order of St Clare, and the Knights Hospitallers owned several properties including a church from the late fifteenth century. Cistercian and Benedictine monastic communities for women were also founded in Reval and Thorn.

The use of monastic buildings as toponyms was dependent on their visibility, especially if they were located on the outskirts of an urban environment. In Åbo, the Dominican convent was mentioned only five times in location descriptions. In Stockholm, the Dominican (Blackfriars) convent was frequently cited (32 times), while the Franciscan (Greyfriars) convent, located on a different island from the main part of the town, was mentioned only twice. The Dominican convent's position on the southern part of the main island, at the end of a street adjacent to Great Market Square, made it a more visible landmark. The Hospitallers church, built in the south-eastern corner of the main island in the early sixteenth century, was rarely used as a landmark. Indeed, it appears in only four location descriptions, which is likely due to its later foundation and less visible location.

In Thorn, the Franciscan Church of Our Lady and the adjacent Franciscan convent were the sacred landmarks that were most often referred to (104 mentions) and were more popular than both parish churches.²⁴ The main market square of the Old Town of Thorn was relocated early in the development of the town in 1259 to a location next to the Franciscan church.²⁵ Thus, the church turned out to be a particularly practical landmark and overshadowed the more distant St Nicholas Church and Dominican convent situated on the outskirts of the New Town.

When assessing the popularity of sacred landmarks, the number of properties in the vicinity should be taken into account as this factor directly influenced the number of transactions (purchase, sale, rent, etc.) recorded in the respective town court books. The greater popularity of the Franciscan Church of Our Lady in Thorn compared to the aforementioned parish Church of St John was not only influenced by location, but also by the number of nearby properties that could be recorded and that needed a landmark to indicate their place in the urban space. This observation also applies to sacred landmarks located elsewhere and to other landmark categories discussed in the present article.

In Reval, the Dominican convent of St Catherine of Alexandria, located near the town walls along Monks' Street (nowadays Vene Street) was a popular religious institution in the town, but was rarely used as a toponym. Despite its spiritual prominence to the residents of the town, it was only mentioned eight times as a landmark during the period in question in our study. This suggests that the convent, though well-known, was not a significant spatial reference. Nonetheless, it was still present in topographic descriptions due to the direct association between the street (Monks' Street) and the convent. Thus, the relative popularity of some religious institutions is not always reflected in their use as landmarks. In other words, the mental maps of sacred spaces created by people to

describe the urban environments in which they lived tended to differ from the sacred spaces reserved for devotional practices. This is observable in all the towns under discussion in this study.

Female monastic communities were seldom used as landmarks. Just like the mendicant convents, these communities were located on the edge of the Baltic Sea region towns studied herein. This might provide an explanation as to why such premises were typically not utilized as landmarks. An exception in this regard relates to Sisters' Street in Reval, which was named after the Cistercian Nunnery of St Michael, and was frequently used as a landmark.

Semi-sacred landmarks: charitable institutions and guild houses

The category of 'semi-sacred' landmarks primarily includes three types of institutions that combined both devotional practices and earthly activities: charitable institutions (such as hospitals, rest homes, and leproseries), guild houses and houses belonging to Beguine and Beghard communities. These institutions were referenced in varying degrees, and in this section we explore their significance as landmarks within the urban environment. As we will demonstrate, the number of semi-sacred landmarks varied between the six Baltic towns we studied and in the frequency with which they were used.

Overall, semi-sacred spaces were referenced less than half as frequently as sacred ones, despite being just as numerous (see [Table 6](#)). This discrepancy can be partly attributed to urban topography, as hospitals – the most common type of semi-sacred institution found in the sources – were often situated on the outskirts of an urban centre, and in some cases, even outside the town walls.

The effect of location on the use of charitable institutions as landmarks is especially well illustrated by the example of Stockholm, where two – the House of the Holy Spirit and St George's Hospital – were situated outside the core urban area (see [Map A4](#)). The House of Souls was the most frequently referenced institution. It was a home for the elderly on the main island of the town and was mentioned 12 times, including two address-like descriptions. The House of the Holy Spirit was, in turn, situated on an island of its own, between the main island and the northern suburb. It was mentioned 11 times. Most often the home appears in address-like formulations when individuals residing in the House of Souls were mentioned. Thus, its role as a physical landmark was limited. The Isle of the

Table 6. Sacred, semi-sacred and secular landmarks with sacred names in the six towns studied, 1420–1520.

Decade	Sacred spaces	Semi-sacred spaces	Secular spaces with religious names	Total
1420–1429	63	19	78	160
1430–1439	75	14	105	194
1440–1449	72	13	93	178
1450–1459	38	7	53	98
1460–1469	50	8	57	115
1470–1479	47	9	64	120
1480–1489	34	11	84	129
1490–1499	43	19	97	159
1500–1509	29	4	62	95
1510–1515/1520	24	10	76	110
Total	475	114	769	1358

Holy Spirit was mentioned 18 times, but merely as a place where something was situated or where somebody was living. St George's Hospital in the northern suburb was only mentioned in three formulations. It had a remote position, but this meant that the road leading to it was long. Nevertheless, not even the long road strengthened its role as a landmark. It would seem that medieval residents of the six towns examined in this study wanted to keep the spaces 'contaminated' by lepers outside their own mental landscapes. However, charitable institutions appeared more continuously throughout the second decade of the sixteenth century in Stockholm, with the exception of the hospital. This was not the case in the five other towns examined herein, where it appears that charitable institutions increasingly became redundant. Above all this demonstrates the societal activities of individuals residing or working in homes for the poor, elderly and ill. The last evidence of the use of a charitable institution as a landmark outside person-related address-like formulations in Stockholm dates from 1516.

In contrast to the other towns, Reval's Hospital of the Holy Spirit and its church were located in the town centre, near the guild houses. Consequently, they were used relatively often as landmarks (five mentions). While none of the semi-sacred institutions in the town received more than ten mentions, the hospital and its church were as significant as the nearby guild houses. This suggests that hospitals and leproseries were not shunned as landmarks due to their association with disease, but their location played a key role in their prominence in the town's mental map.

In some cases, it is difficult to distinguish whether the actual churches or their associated charitable institutions were being referenced in the sources. For example, in Thorn, there were two hospital churches dedicated to the Holy Spirit (five mentions) and St Lawrence (four mentions) respectively, as well as the Church of St George being associated with a leproseries (four mentions).²⁶ All three were situated in the suburbs of the Old Town and simply referred to by their patron saints' names. The churches were more visible as landmarks than the hospital buildings, with the latter only being occasionally described in relation to the former.²⁷ Accordingly, the hospital churches of Thorn have been categorized as 'proper' sacred landmarks.

Guild houses, central to social activities, were well-known to members and burghers alike.²⁸ Their use as landmarks varied in the towns we examined: in Thorn, Stralsund, and Åbo, they were not mentioned at all, while in Reval and Stockholm some were used to describe nearby addresses. In Stockholm, guild houses were mentioned relatively often (28 times), with St Olav's Guild House cited most frequently (seven times). Other guild houses, including those of Our Lady, St Catherine, St Lawrence, and the Swedish Men's Guild, were mentioned less often. Not all guilds had their own houses, even prominent ones like Corpus Christi. The last reference to a guild house in Stockholm was in 1512.

In Reval, guild houses were mentioned 20 times. St Canute's Guild House, located next to the town hall, was the most frequently cited (nine mentions). The other guild houses mentioned were the Great Guild (five mentions) and St Olav's Guild (seven mentions). Since these guild houses were located near each other, they could have been used interchangeably, suggesting that personal preference, to a certain degree, played a role in their use as landmarks (see [Map A3](#)). Interestingly, the Black Heads' Guild House, dedicated to unmarried merchants, was not mentioned as a landmark, despite its proximity to the others, though it is unclear whether this was due to townspeople's preference for other guilds or missing sources.²⁹

Beguine convents, which housed communes of men and women who lead a monastic-like lifestyle (without the need to take vows), constitute a third type of semi-sacred landmark. Beguine convents were only present in Thorn and Stralsund in the towns studied in the present article, but they were seldom used as toponyms. Beguine communes were typically located in ordinary houses, and thus they were not particularly distinguishable in urban spaces and not very useful as distinctive landmarks.

Secular landmarks with sacred names: streets and other urban structures

Our third category is named ‘secular landmarks with sacred names’. Within this category fall elements of urban space that were named after sacred institutions or their patron saints but were not intended for devotional or liturgical activities. Typically, this category includes streets, alleys, gates and similar elements of urban space. Such elements existed in all of the towns studied herein and in this section we analyse their function as landmarks. Unsurprisingly, it was the most popular category of landmarks we discuss in this article, as gates, towers, bridges, and, especially, streets and alleys were natural landmarks used to describe the location of burgage plots and houses located in their immediate vicinity.

Three common elements are found in the names of landmarks in this category: 1) Places named after the patron saints of churches and convents, such as St James’s Street in Thorn and St John’s Alley in Stockholm; 2) Streets and gates named after institutions dedicated to the Holy Spirit, like Holy Spirit Street in Thorn and Stralsund, and the Town Gate of the Holy Spirit in Thorn; 3) Streets named after clergy or monastics, such as Sisters’ Street in Reval and Greyfriars Alley in Stockholm.

There were places and objects in the urban space that bore sacred names in both towns of Thorn, such as streets and town gates. They, too, played the role of a landmark. The most popular landmarks in this category were Holy Spirit Street (105 mentions) and St Anne’s Street (102 mentions), which both ran through the Old Town, with Paulers Street in the New Town and Paulers Bridge that led into the town coming in third place (a total of 78 mentions).

Likewise in Stralsund, the street (26 mentions) and the town gate (six mentions), named after the Holy Spirit Hospital, were often mentioned. This can be explained by the fact that Holy Spirit Street is one of the oldest and longest streets in Stralsund. It leads through the town from the Küter Gate in the west to the Fish Market (Ger. *Fischmarkt*) in the east. Another street with an overtly religious meaning is Clergy Street (Ger. *Papenstrate*) in the middle of the town leading from Holy Spirit Street. Despite its central location, it was only referred to on 3 occasions, probably because of its relatively short length.³⁰ In Stralsund, the Holy Spirit Street also transects Monks’ Street (Ger. *Monnikestrate*, eight mentions), which was named after the Dominican convent.³¹

In Reval, the hill upon which the cathedral and the upper town were located was also used as a landmark. Cathedral Hill (Est. *Toompea*) was used (on four occasions) to describe properties located beneath it. The streets bearing names after the religious communities in Reval – Sisters’ Street and Monks’ Street – were frequently used as landmarks since both ran through the entire centre of the town. Both begin under Cathedral Hill and run parallel through the town towards the Church of St Olav.³² As they ran through the whole town,

these two streets connected many properties that were involved in recorded legal proceedings, and thus became relevant landmarks (Sisters' Street with 50 mentions and Monks' Street with 30 mentions).

The great number of secular spaces found in the findings for Stockholm is partly explained by the fact that several individuals were identified with address-like references to streets, town gates or other elements in the local space that contain a religious element. One of them was Joan Nielsson at St Nicholas' Gate (*Joan Nielsson j Sancti Nicolaj port*) and Mistress Anne in Greyfriars Alley (*hustrv Anne j Gramwnke grend*).³³ Other landmarks in this category are St Lawrence's Alley, which is occasionally considered a street, as well as St Lawrence's Wedge, The Alley of the Holy Body, House of Souls Street, St John's Alley and St John's Water. The latter apparently referred to the eastern shore near the church building. St Lawrence's Alley was mentioned 31 times, whereas the others were cited less and more sporadically. These spaces were seldom utilized in address-like contexts. Although references to the Town Church in Stockholm were relatively profane, many secular landmarks bore sacred names, indicating that religious toponyms were widespread in the town, just not when referring to the parish church.

Secular landmarks bearing sacred names in Stockholm sometimes referenced the local mendicant friars. The Franciscan convent was a far more popular reference than the Dominican convent among the toponyms that were used. There were 40 references to Blackfriars Street, whereas Blackfriars Slope and Blackfriars Well were only mentioned once. Greyfriars Alley, occasionally spoken of as a street, was mentioned 100 times, and there were also 17 references to Greyfriars Wedge, which signified the wedge-shaped block on the northern side of the alley. An explanation as to why references to the dwelling of the Franciscans, located on an island of their own, were so numerous can be sought in the socio-economic structures of the residents. People living on the street leading to the Dominican convent were mostly craftsmen and they could easily be identified by means of their occupations, whereas the area in which Greyfriars Alley was situated was mostly populated by lesser social groups.³⁴ This explains why there was a greater need for using address-like formulations when inhabitants along Greyfriars Alley were mentioned.

In Åbo, the street named after the cathedral, the so-called Church Street, was not very long. Thus, it was often more practical to use other, profane landmarks, when describing locations next to it. In total, there are only six references to Church Street.³⁵ Medieval sources do not mention any other street name in the town that contains a reference to a religious entity, although street names, such as St Lawrence Street and Holy Spirit Street, are known from the sixteenth century.³⁶ It is possible to assume that such toponyms were already in use during the medieval period, but we cannot be completely certain about this. Nor do we know if the administrative districts known as the Church Quarter and the Monastery Quarter, which were known from a later period, were already functioning using these names in the Middle Ages.

Conclusion

The number of available primary sources and the total number of analysed landmarks differ greatly between the towns examined in this study. It ranges from 559 in the case of Thorn to 13 for Åbo. Yet, some general conclusions can be drawn. There

were at least three key factors that made sacred buildings, such as churches, chapels, monasteries and convent houses, suitable landmarks. Of primary importance was their visibility in urban space, which is clearly indicated by the use of church towers to describe locations. Second, their relative permanence was an important factor. They were more permanent features of the urban landscape than, for example, street names and the names of individual houses that changed over time with different inhabitants and varied ownership. Churches and monasteries were rarely relocated, and they seldom changed their patron saints and their names. Those that did, such as the convent of Cistercian-Benedictine nuns in Thorn, were not popularly used as landmarks. Thus, most churches, chapels, monasteries, convents, etc. were a convenient means to describe the location of a given property and to preserve it for posterity. Third, they were institutions that most town dwellers had a connection to in their daily lives: they were places where they worshipped, visited shrines and family graves, or simply passed by when undertaking errands. Hence, sacred institutions were also suitable landmarks because they were widely known to the inhabitants of the towns.

Secular spaces with religious names were the most common category of landmarks. We noted 769 references in the six towns we studied (see [Table 6](#)). The popularity of this category is explained by the fact that it was commonplace to name streets, alleys, gates and other structures after nearby religious buildings, or their patron saints. For example, the denizens of Stralsund described places located on Monks' Street, and in Stockholm inhabitants described buildings located near St Nicholas' Gate. Moreover, in Stockholm and Thorn, such toponyms were combined with the names of people, which resulted in address-like characterizations.

Genuine sacred spaces were the second most common category in the urban settlements studied in this article (475 mentions). The role of sacred spaces as landmarks seems to have diminished towards the end of the medieval period, but this most likely reflects gaps in the source material.

Semi-sacred spaces, which were mentioned 114 times, were the least utilized landmark category. Charitable institutions played a minor role when people created mind-maps of their urban surroundings. It is plausible to assume that many urban dwellers consciously or subconsciously avoided mentioning leproseries. Nevertheless, even here, we can discern the significance of their visibility: most charitable institutions in the towns studied herein were situated outside the actual urban area or at least on the outskirts.

The role of guild houses, which functioned as venues for a great deal of social interaction, varied greatly between the towns studied in this article. In Stockholm and Reval guild houses were quite regularly used as landmarks. On the other hand, the lack of guild houses named after saints and sacred entities in Thorn, combined with the preference to refer to a church of a charitable institution and not to the institution itself, left Beguine convent houses as the sole semi-sacred landmarks in Thorn. This helps to explain their marginal role in that town. In Åbo, guild houses played no known role as landmarks. Guild houses in Stralsund were not mentioned either. All in all, we can perhaps see here more proof of the role of visibility: guild houses were not able to compete with churches and convents when it came to size and usefulness as landmarks.

Local differences can also be detected in regard to the way sacred landmarks were addressed. In Reval, sacred landmarks were often referred to using the names of their

patron saints. In Thorn and Stralsund, it was also common to use the names of saints and holy entities when referring to sacred landmarks. But in Stockholm, the local parish church was most often simply addressed as the Town Church. Its patron, St Nicholas, was mentioned far more often when the town gate bearing his name was referred to as a landmark.

It may be testament to the rather profane linguistic habits of Stockholm burghers compared to those of the inhabitants of Reval and Thorn, where names of saints and holy objects and entities were rarely omitted while naming sacred landmarks. Also, the spatial language in Åbo seems to have been quite profane. But again, a more practical explanation may lie in the number of churches in the urban space. Medieval Stralsund and Reval had three parish churches each, while both towns of Thorn had their own parish church, whereas there was only one in Stockholm and Åbo. Thus, when the Town Church of Stockholm, and the parish church and the cathedral of Åbo were referred to it was clear that it was *the* parish church or *the* cathedral.

Furthermore, the number of neighbouring properties also influenced the usefulness of a potential landmark. The more burghage plots, houses, sheds, attics, cellars, etc. that could be purchased, sold, mortgaged, rented out and so on in a given location ensured that more transactions took place and more location descriptions were needed. On the outskirts of urban areas, where some of the convents as well as most of the charitable institutions were located, the number of property transactions remained inconsequential and correspondingly the need for landmarks occurred less than in more central areas. But despite their more central locations, individual parish churches did not play an equal role in location descriptions: in Thorn, Stralsund, Stockholm, and perhaps also in Åbo, the parish churches were overshadowed as landmarks by at least one of the local mendicant convents and their convent churches. It is possible that the number of immovable properties was not equal in all parts of the urban spaces. What is more, transactions did not often take place equally in different urban areas. Pure coincidence may have affected how often houses and other immovables changed ownership and how often they needed written location descriptions in official records. Thus, our findings mostly support an interpretation whereby man-made structures linked to Christian faith had a practical role above all else in late medieval mental landscapes in the towns examined herein.

Notes

1. DuBois, *Sanctity in the North*; Aldrin, *The Prayer Life*; Katajala-Peltomaa and Toivo, eds., *Lived Religion and the Long Reformation*; Katajala-Peltomaa and Toivo, *Lived Religion and Gender*.
2. Weiler, "Secularization in Late Medieval Europe"; Mitchell, *Witchcraft and Magic*, 172–3.
3. Arnold, *Belief and Unbelief*; Smith, *A Short History of Secularism*.
4. Katajala-Peltomaa and Toivo, "Religion as historical experience"; Katajala-Peltomaa and Toivo, *Lived Religion and Gender*; Katajala-Peltomaa and Toivo, "Religion as Experience".
5. Ashley and Hüsken, eds., *Moving Subjects*; Rivard, *Blessing the World*.
6. Smail, *Imaginary Cartographies*; Smail, "The Linguistic Cartography".
7. "landmark, n." OED Online. Oxford University Press. Accessed April 13, 2023. <https://www.oed.com>.
8. Lynch, *The Image of the City*, 78–82.

9. Åbo: Kallioinen, *Kauppias, kaupunki, kruunu*, 44–52; Reval: Pöltsam-Jürjo, “Die Städte,” 304–5; Reval: Johansen and von zur Mühlen, *Deutsch und Undeutsch*, 107–26; Stockholm: Dahlbäck, *I medeltidens Stockholm*, 35–51; Sidén, *Mälarstädernas befolkningsutveckling 1200–1611*, 42; Stralsund: Fritze, “Stralsunds Bevölkerung,” 14–28; Fritze, “Die Bevölkerungsstruktur”; Fritze, “Entstehung,” 65; Schildhauer, “Hansestädtischer Alltag” and Thorn: Tandecki, “Mieszczanstwo,” 438.
10. Besserman, “Introduction”.
11. Hildebrand, eds., *Stockholms stads tänkeböcker*, vol. 5, 110.
12. *Ibid.*, 323.
13. Ciesielska and Tandecki, eds., *Księga ławnicza Starego Miasta Torunia (1428–1456)*, vol. 1.
14. Schnitzler, “Kirchenbruch und lose Rotten”; Lamberg, “Religiosity and Readiness”; Oliński, “Pierwsze ślady reformacji”; Lavery, *Reforming Finland*; Kala and Kreem, “Reformatsioon”.
15. Schröder, ed., *Der Stralsunder Liber Memorialis*, vols. 2–6.
16. Plaesterer, ed., *Das Revaler Pergament Rentenbuch*; von Nottbeck, ed., *Das Drittälteste Erbebuch der Stadt Reval*.
17. See *Ibid.*
18. Both books have been published as a joint source edition. See, Hausen, Kokkonen, and Pispala, eds., *Registrum Ecclesiae Aboensis*.
19. Social consequences and connotations linked to the proximity of churches are discussed in Rosenwein, *To Be the Neighbor of Saint Peter*.
20. Mikulski, *Przestrzeń i społeczeństwo*, 338–9, 356–7.
21. It is possible that it is referred to in three more location descriptions, but the identification remains uncertain.
22. Neumann and Nottbeck, *Geschichte und Kunstdenkmäler*, 101.
23. Lamberg, “Identifying Places,” 169–89.
24. Mikulski, *Przestrzeń i społeczeństwo*, 339–41, 357–8.
25. Jasiński, “Toruń XIII–XIV wieku,” 125, 152–4.
26. Falkowski, “Dzieje toruńskiego szpitala”; Wasik, “W kwestii lokalizacji”; Falkowski, “Toruński szpital”.
27. Kopiński, Mikulski, and Tandecki, eds., *Księga ławnicza Starego Miasta Torunia (1479–1515)*, vol. 1.
28. For the role of guilds in urban communities, see, for example, Mänd, *Urban Carnival*, 25–54; Ojala-Fulwood, *Protection, Continuity and Gender*, 82–9; Strenga, “Donations, discipline and commemoration,” 103–28.
29. Regarding the guilds in Reval, see Mänd, “Membership and Social Carrier”.
30. Neumerkel and Matuschat, *Von der Arschkerbe*, 68–71, 131.
31. *Ibid.*, 114–7.
32. Mänd, “Geselligkeit und soziale Karriere”.
33. Hildebrand, eds., *Stockholms stads tänkeböcker*, vol. 1, 244; Hildebrand, eds., *Stockholms stads tänkeböcker*, vol. 3, 448; Hildebrand, eds., *Stockholms stads tänkeböcker*, vol. 5, 202.
34. Dahlbäck, *I medeltidens Stockholm*, 51, 92–4.
35. Hausen, Kokkonen, and Pispala, eds., *Registrum Ecclesiae Aboensis; Diplomatarium Fennicum* database.
36. Lamberg, “Identifying Places,” 169–89.

Acknowledgements

The completion of this article has been greatly helped by the generous support of research grants from The Swedish Literature Society in Finland, The Swedish Cultural Foundation in Finland, Turku Institute for Advanced Studies (TIAS) as well as a PRELUDIUM grant from the National Science Centre, Poland registered under project no. 2020/37/N/HS3/00412.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

Funding

The work was supported by the Narodowe Centrum Nauki, Turku Institute for Advanced Studies (TIAS), Svenska Kulturfonden, Svenska Litteratursällskapet i Finland.

Notes on contributors

Anna-Stina Hägglund, PhD 2022 (University of Turku), is a post-doctoral researcher at the Department of Cultural History and at the research centre Turku Centre for Medieval and Early Modern Studies (TUCEMEMS) at the University of Turku. Her research interests concern donations as part of the culture of remembrance in the Baltic Sea region, with a particular focus on female religious communities and their role in maintaining the memory of deceased benefactors.

Piotr Kołodziejczak received his doctoral degree in history from the Faculty of History at Nicolaus Copernicus University, Toruń, Poland in 2023 based on a dissertation on 'Pious Gifts in Late Medieval Stockholm in the Context of Baltic Towns.' Currently, he is employed as a researcher at the Tadeusz Manteuffel Institute of History of the Polish Academy of Sciences. He is involved as an investigator in two research projects at Nicolaus Copernicus University funded by the National Science Centre, Poland and the National Programme for the Development of Humanities of the Polish Ministry of Science and Higher Education. His main research interests include church and urban history, late medieval and early modern religious life and lay piety, and the Reformation in the Baltic region.

Marko Lamberg, PhD 2000 (University of Jyväskylä), Professor, Docent of history of communities and Docent of Nordic history, is currently working as a senior researcher fellow at the University of Helsinki. His research expertise deals mostly with late medieval and early modern social and cultural history in Nordic contexts. One of his current research projects is focused on pre-modern notions of space. He has earlier co-edited, among other things, a collection of essays entitled *Physical and Cultural Space in Pre-industrial Europe* (Nordic Academic Press 2011). He participated in writing of the article while working as a special researcher at the Åbo Akademi University in Turku.

ORCID

Anna-Stina Hägglund  <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-3629-2469>

Piotr Kołodziejczak  <http://orcid.org/0000-0001-6858-707X>

Marko Lamberg  <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-6466-3634>

References

- Aldrin, Viktor. *The Prayer Life of Peasant Communities in Late Medieval Sweden: A Contrast of Ideals and Practices*. Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2011.
- Ashley, Kathleen M., and Wim N. M. Hüsken, eds. *Moving Subjects: Processional Performance in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2001.
- Besserman, Lawrence. "Introduction: Sacred and Secular in Medieval and Early Modern Cultures: Issues and Approaches." In *Sacred and Secular in Medieval and Early Modern Cultures: New Essays*, edited by Lawrence Besserman, 1–18. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006.
- Biskup, Marian. *Historia Torunia, vol. 2, no. 1: U schyłku średniowiecza i w początkach odrodzenia (1454–1548)*. Toruń: TNT, 1992.
- Dahlbäck, Göran. *I medeltidens Stockholm*. Stockholm: Kommittén för Stockholmsforskning, 1987.

- DuBois, Thomas. *Sanctity in the North: Saints, Lives, and Cults in Medieval Scandinavia*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008.
- Falkowski, Grzegorz. "Toruński szpital trędowatych św. Jerzego." *Rocznik Toruński* 12 (1977): 155–186.
- Falkowski, Grzegorz. "Dzieje toruńskiego szpitala św. Ducha w średniowieczu." *Kwartalnik Historii Kultury Materialnej* 27, no. 1 (1979): 3–15.
- Fritze, Konrad. "Die Bevölkerungsstruktur Rostocks, Stralsunds und Wismars am Anfang des 15. Jahrhunderts: Versuch einer Sozialstatistischen Analyse." *Greifswald-Stralsunder Jahrbuch* 4 (1964): 69–79.
- Fritze, Konrad. "Stralsunds Bevölkerung um 1400." *Greifswald-Stralsunder Jahrbuch* 6 (1966): 14–28.
- Fritze, Konrad. "Erstes Kapitel: Entstehung, Aufstieg und Blüte der Hansestadt Stralsund." In *Geschichte der Hansestadt Stralsund*, edited by Herbert Ewe, 9–102. Weimar: Herman Böhlau Nachfolger, 1984.
- Hahn, Kadri-Rutt. *Die Revaler Testamente im 15. und 16. Jahrhundert*. Münster: LIT Verlag, 2015.
- Jasiński, Tomasz. "Toruń XIII–XIV wieku: Lokacja miast toruńskich i początek ich rozwoju (1231 – około 1350)." In *Historia Torunia, vol. 1: Wzschach średniowiecza (do roku 1454)*, edited by Marian Biskup, 100–166. Toruń: TNT, 1999.
- Johansen, Paul, and Heinz von zur Mühlen. *Deutsch und Undeutsch im Mittelalterlichen und Frühneuzeitlichen Reval*. Köln: Böhlau Verlag, 1973.
- Kaczmarczyk, Kazimierz, ed. *Liber scabinorum veteris civitatis Thoruniensis 1363–1428*. Toruń: TNT, 1936.
- Kala, Tiina, and Juhan Kreem. "Reformatsioon." In *Tallinna ajalugu, vol. 1: 1561. aastani*, edited by Tiina Kala and Toomas Tamla, 309–324. Tallinn: Tallinna Linnaarhiiv, 2019.
- Kallioinen, Mika. *Kauppias, kaupunki, kruunu: Turun porvareyhteisö ja talouden organisaatio varhaiskeskijalta 1570-luvulle*. Helsinki: Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura, 2000.
- Katajala-Peltomaa, Sari, and Raisa Toivo. *Lived Religion and Gender in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe*. Abingdon: Routledge, 2021.
- Katajala-Peltomaa, Sari, and Raisa Toivo. "Introduction: Religion as Historical Experience." In *Histories of Experience in the World of Lived Religion*, edited by Sari Katajala-Peltomaa and Raisa Toivo, 1–36. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2022.
- Katajala-Peltomaa, Sari, and Raisa Maria Toivo. "Religion as Experience." In *Lived Religion and the Long Reformation in Northern Europe*, edited by Sari Katajala-Peltomaa and Raisa Maria Toivo, 1–18. Leiden: Brill, 2017a.
- Katajala-Peltomaa, Sari, and Raisa Maria Toivo, eds. *Lived Religion and the Long Reformation in Northern Europe, C. 1300–1700*. Leiden: Brill, 2017b.
- Lamberg, Marko. "Identifying Places in Late Medieval Stockholm." *Revue d'histoire Nordique* 16 (2013): 169–189.
- Lamberg, Marko. "Religiosity and Readiness for the Reformation Among Late Medieval Burghers in Stockholm, Ca. 1420–1570." In *Lived Religion and the Long Reformation in Northern Europe, C. 1300–1700*, edited by Sari Katajala-Peltomaa and Raisa Maria Toivo, 178–203. Leiden: Brill, 2017.
- "Landmark, n." *OED Online*. Oxford University Press 2023. Accessed April 13, 2023. <https://www.oed.com>.
- Lavery, Jason Edward. *Reforming Finland: The Diocese of Turku in the Age of Gustav Vasa 1523–1560*. Leiden: Brill, 2018.
- Lynch, Kevin. *The Image of the City*. Cambridge, MA: M.I.T. Press, 1960.
- Mänd, Anu. *Urban Carnival: Festive Culture in the Hanseatic Cities of the Eastern Baltic, 1350–1550*. Turnhout: Brepols, 2005.
- Mänd, Anu. "Geselligkeit und soziale Karriere in den Revaler Gilden und Schwarzhäupterbruderschaft." In *Vereinskultur und Zivilgesellschaft in Nordosteuropa: Regionale Spezifik und europäische Zusammenhänge/Associational Culture and Civil Society in North-Eastern Europe: Regional Features and the European Context*, edited by Jörg Hackmann, 39–76. Vienna: Böhlau, 2012.
- Mänd, Anu. "Membership and Social Carrier in Tallinn Merchants' Guilds." In *Guilds, Towns, and Cultural Transmission in the North, 1300–1500*, edited by Lars Bisgaard, et al., 229–250. Odense: University Press of Southern Denmark, 2013.

- Mikulski, Krzysztof. *Przestrzeń i społeczeństwo Torunia od końca XIV do początku XVIII wieku*. Toruń: Wydawnictwo UMK, 1999.
- Mitchell, Stephen A. *Witchcraft and Magic in the Nordic Middle Ages*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011.
- Neumerkel, Andreas, and Jörg Matuschat. *Von der Arschkerbe bis Zipollenhagen: Stralsunder Straßen und ihre Geschichte*. Stralsund: Kruse, 2007.
- Ojala-Fulwood, Maija. *Protection, Continuity and Gender: Craft Trade Culture in the Baltic Sea Region (14th–16th Centuries)*. Tampere: Tampere University Press, 2014.
- Oliński, Piotr. "Pierwsze ślady reformacji w Toruniu." In *Toruń: Miasto wielu wyznań*, edited by Jarosław Klaczkow, Piotr Oliński, and Waldemar Rozynekowski, 9–16. Toruń: Towarzystwo Miłośników Torunia, 2017.
- Pölsam-Jürjo, Inkeri. "Die Städte: Alltag, Soziale Schichten, Handel und Gewerbe." In *Das Baltikum: Geschichte einer europäischen Region, vol. 1: Von der Vor- und Frühgeschichte bis zum Ende des Mittelalters*, edited by Karsten Brüggemann et al., 296–340. Stuttgart: Anton Hiersemann KG, 2018.
- Rivard, Derek A. *Blessing the World: Ritual and Lay Piety in Medieval Religion*. Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2009.
- Rosenwein, Barbara H. *To Be the Neighbor of Saint Peter: The Social Meaning of Cluny's Property, 909–1049*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1989.
- Schildhauer, Johannes. *Hansestädtischer Alltag: Untersuchungen auf der Grundlage der Stralsunder Bürgertestamente vom Anfang des 14. bis zum Ausgang des 16. Jahrhunderts*. Weimar: Verlag Herman Böhlhaus Nachfolger, 1992.
- Schnitzler, Norbert. "'Kirchenbruch' und 'lose Rotten': Gewalt, Recht und Reformation (Stralsund 1525)." In *Kulturelle Reformation. Sinninformationen im Umbruch 1400–1600*, edited by Bernhard Jussen and Craig Koslofsky, 285–315. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1999.
- Sidén, Per Gunnar. *Mälärstädernas befolkningsutveckling 1200–1611*. Stockholm: Stockholms universitet, 2002. https://www.historia.su.se/polopoly_fs/1.27754.1320939842!/SidenD.pdf.
- Smail, Daniel Lord. *Imaginary Cartographies: Possession and Identity in Late Medieval Marseille*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1999.
- Smail, Daniel Lord. "The Linguistic Cartography of Property and Power in Late Medieval Marseille." In *Medieval Practices of Space*, edited by Barbara A. Hanawalt and Michal Kobialka, 37–63. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000.
- Strenga, Gustavs. "Donations, Discipline and Commemoration. Creating Group Identity in the Transport Workers Guilds of Mid Fifteenth-Century Riga." *Journal of Medieval History* 48, no. 1 (2022): 103–128. [10.1080/03044181.2021.2012502](https://doi.org/10.1080/03044181.2021.2012502).
- Tandecki, Janusz. "Mieszczanstwo: Liczebność i pochodzenie terytorialne." In *Państwo zakonu krzyżackiego w Prusach: Władza i społeczeństwo*, edited by Marian Biskup and Roman Czaja, 437–444. Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 2009.
- Tandecki, Janusz, and Zenon Kozieł, eds. *Atlas historyczny miast polskich*, vol. 1, Toruń: UMK, 1995.
- von Nottbeck, Eugen, and Wilhelm Neumann. *Geschichte und Kunstdenkmäler der Stadt Reval*, vol. 2. Tallinn: Franz Kluges Verlag, 1899.
- Wasik, Bogusz. "W kwestii lokalizacji 'zaginionego' kościoła św. Wawrzyńca w Toruniu." *Rocznik Toruński* 42 (2015): 269–279.
- Weiler, Antonius Gerardus. "Secularization in Late Medieval Europe." *Theology* 71 (1968): 71–80. [10.1177/0040571X6807100205](https://doi.org/10.1177/0040571X6807100205).

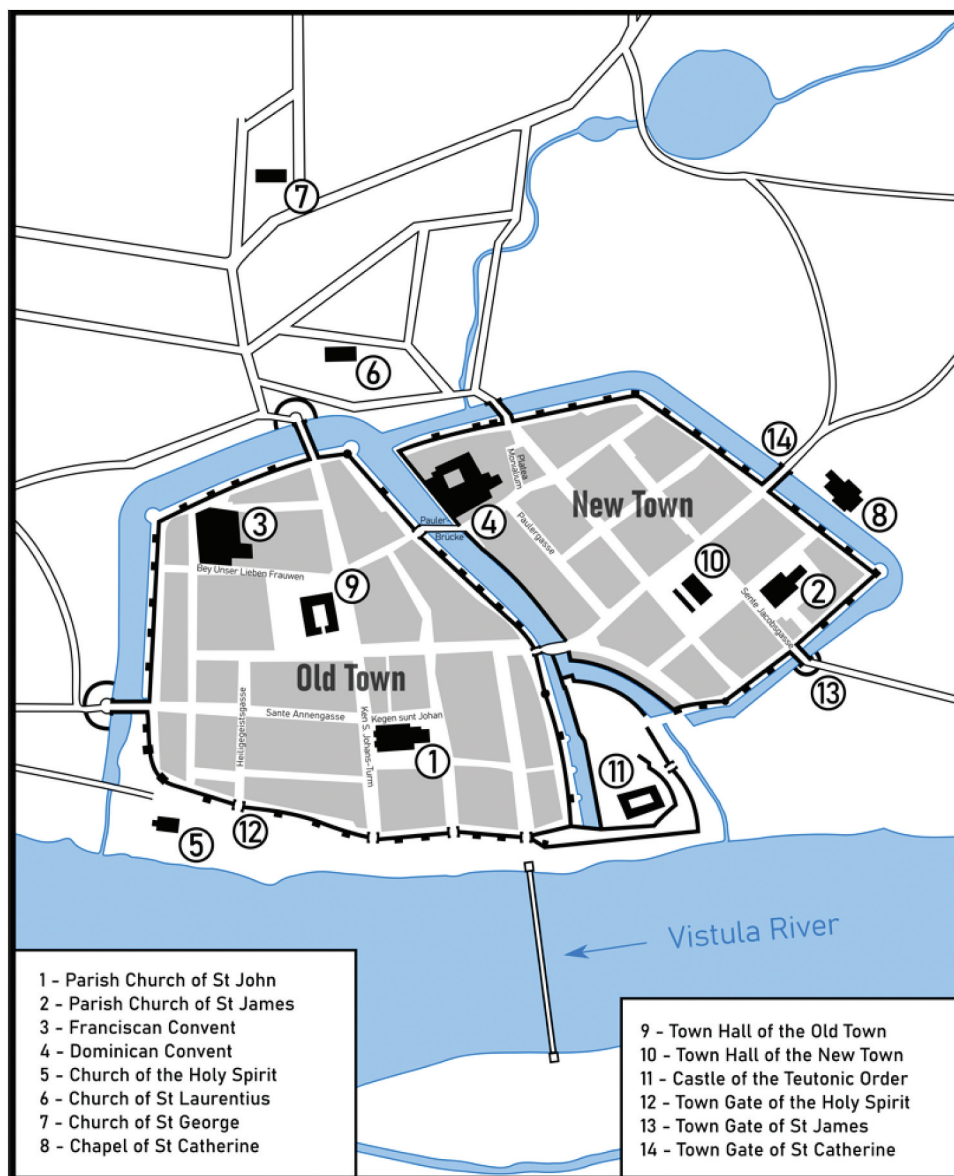
Printed and digital sources

- Ciesielska, Karola, ed. *Księga ławnicza Nowego Miasta Torunia (1387–1450)*. Warsaw: PWN, 1973.
- Ciesielska, Karola, and Janusz Tandecki, eds. *Księga ławnicza Starego Miasta Torunia (1428–1456)*, vols. 1–2. Toruń: TNT, 1992–1993.
- Diplomatarium Fennicum* database. <https://df.narc.fi>.
- Eesti Rahvusarhiiv, Tallinn. *A Map Based on the Town Plan of 1836*. Reval: Franz Kluge Verlag, 1836.

- Ewe, Herbert, ed. *Geschichte der Stadt Stralsund*. Weimar: Hermann Böhlau Nachfolger, 1984.
- Hausen, Reinhold, Jüri Kokkonen, and Elisa Pispala, eds. *Registrum Ecclesiae Aboensis eller Åbo Domkyrkas Svartbok: The Black Book of Abo Cathedral*. Helsinki: Valtionarkisto, 1996.
- Hildebrand, Emil, eds. *Stockholms stads tänkeböcker från äldre tid*, vols. 1–5. Stockholm: Kungl Samfundet för utgivande af handskrifter rörande Skandinaviens historia and Samfundet St. Erik, 1917–1944.
- Hildebrand, Hans, ed. *Stockholms stads jordebok*, vols. 1–2. Stockholm: Kungl. Samfundet för utgivande af handskrifter rörande Skandinaviens historia and Samfundet St:t Erik, 1876–1914.
- Kopiński, Krzysztof, Krzysztof Mikulski, and Janusz Tandecki, eds. *Księga ławnicza Starego Miasta Torunia (1479–1515)*, vols. 1–2. Toruń: TNT, 2018.
- Kopiński, Krzysztof, and Janusz Tandecki, eds. *Księga ławnicza Starego Miasta Torunia (1456–1479)*. Toruń: TNT, 2007.
- National Archives of Finland, Helsinki, Map collection, Turun kartat, Turku Itu* 2, Charta öfver Åbo stad. <https://astia.narc.fi/uusiastia/digitarkastelu.html?id=1656066578>.
- Plaesterer, Arthur, ed. *Das Revaler Pergament Rentenbuch 1382–1518*. Reval: Revaler Estn. Verlagsgenossenschaft, 1930.
- Schröder, Horst-Diether, ed. *Der Stralsunder Liber Memorialis*, vols. 2–6. Weimar: Herman Böhlau Nachfolger, 1969–1988.
- Town Archives of Stockholm, Map collection, NS 442, SE/SSA/0234/J 1:22 handritade kartor HK 68:1, 1625 års karta. <https://stockholmskallan.stockholm.se/post/8955>.
- von Nottbeck, Eugen, ed. *Das Drittälteste Erbebuch der Stadt Reval (1383–1458)*. Tallinn: Verlag von Franz Kluge, 1892.

APPENDICES

Appendix: maps

**Map A1.**

Sacred, semi-sacred and secular landmarks with sacred names in late medieval Thorn. The map was drawn by Krystian Chyrkowski (Nicolaus Copernicus University) and is based on the map "Toruń u schyłku średniowiecza", which was published in Biskup, *Historia Torunia*, vol. 2, no. 1, and on the map "Toruń: Rozwój przestrzenny miasta, XIII – XX w.", which was published in Tandecki and Koziół, eds., *Atlas historyczny*, vol. 1, no. 2.



Map A2.

Sacred, semi-sacred and secular landmarks with sacred names in Stralsund, 1420–1509. Map drawn by Kauko Kyöstiö. Source: The map is based on the town plan of 1883, published in Ewe, ed., *Geschichte der Stadt Stralsund*. The sacred landmarks are based on Schröder, ed., *Der Stralsunder Liber Memorialis*, vols. 1–6.



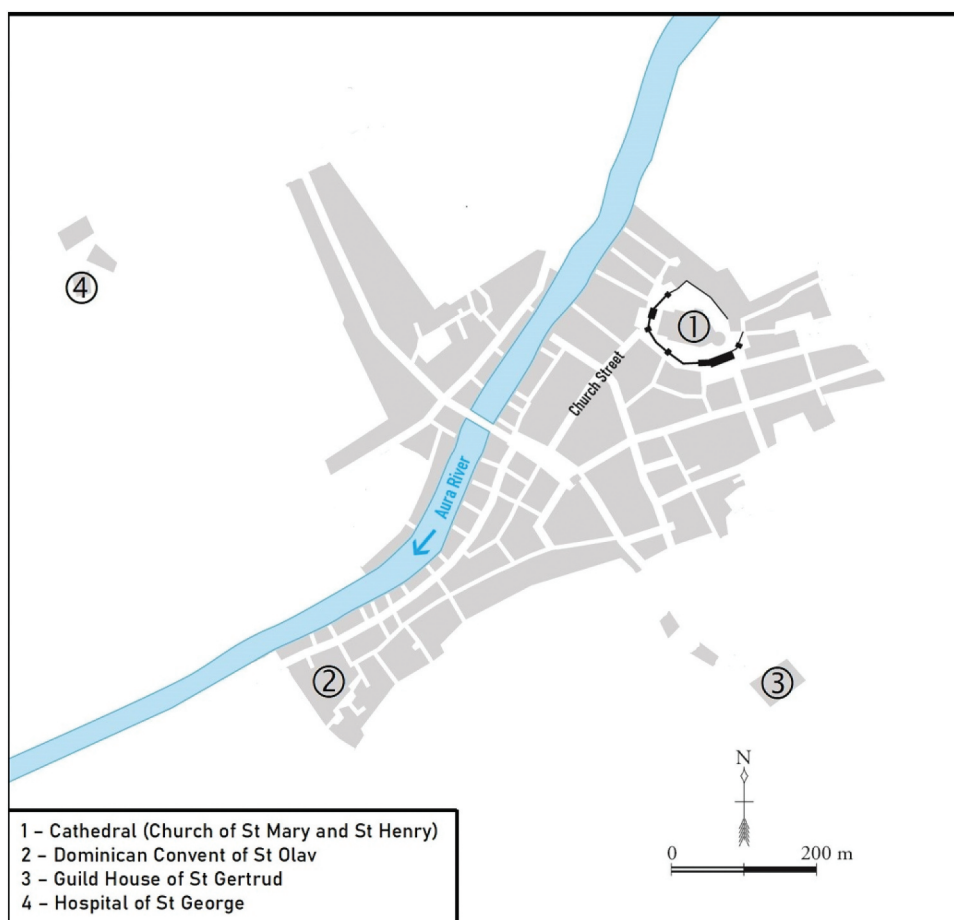
Map A3.

Sacred, semi-sacred and secular landmarks with sacred names in Reval, 1420–1520. A map drawn by Kauko Kyöstiö. Sources: A map based on the town plan of 1836 (Reval: Franz Kluge Verlag 1836), Eesti Rahvusarhiiv; Hahn, *Die Revaler Testamente*, 224–8; Plaesterer, ed., *Das Revaler Pergament Rentenbuch*; von Nottbeck, ed., *Das Drittälteste Erbebuch*.



Map A4.

Sacred, semi-sacred and secular landmarks with sacred names in Stockholm, 1420–1520. The map was drawn by Kauko Kyöstiö and is based on the earliest preserved map of Stockholm from 1625 (The map collection of the City Archives of Stockholm, NS 442, SE/SSA/0234/J 1:22 handritade kartor HK 68:1, 1625 års karta).

**Map A5.**

Sacred, semi-sacred and secular landmarks with sacred names in Åbo, 1420–1520. The map was drawn by Kauko Kyöstiö and is based on the earliest preserved map of Åbo from circa 1634 (The town map collection of The National Archives of Finland, Helsinki, Turun kartat, Turku Itu * 2, Charta öfver Åbo stad).