

## 14 Harbourscapes

### Three Examples from Early to High Medieval Northern Europe

**Abstract:** The port as an interface between the town and its (maritime-fluvial) hinterland is a place of complex spatial interactions. Harbourscapes take this multidimensionality and multivocality into account. In this paper, the concept of harbourscapes is presented to describe the multidimensionality of ports as an urban area. Starting from Appadurai's concepts of (-)spaces and (-)flows, the contribution attempts to explore five 'scapes' to present multiple interwoven practices. This is done using three examples (Haithabu, Schleswig, Lübeck), which paradigmatically represent specific 'development phases' of urbanity as well as specific 'port types'.

In the travel journal of the Norwegian merchant Ottar and the Anglo-Saxon Wulfstan, which was inserted into a translation of Paulus Orosius' *Historiarum adversum paganos* made around 890, we find evidence of one journey made by Wulfstan in the geographical introductory chapter: *Sciringes heale he cwæð þæt he seglode on f dagan to þæm porte þæt mon hæf æt Hæþum, se stent betuh Winedum 7 Seaxum 7 Angle 7 hyrð in on Dene*.<sup>1</sup> Helmold von Bosau completed his *Slavenchronik* (*Chronica Slavorum*) around 1167. After the Slavic centre of Buku was destroyed, Count Adolf II von Schauenburg sought out a location where a new city might be founded. He chose a 13 m high moraine, set between the Trave and Wakenitz rivers. In the year 1143, there was a port at this location: *Videns igitur industrius vir competetiam loci portumque nobilem cepit illic edificare civitatem vocavitque eam Lubeke, eo quo non longe abesset a veteri portu et civitate, quam Henricus princeps olim constituerat*.<sup>2</sup> In the Schleswig town charter laws, codified circa in 1200, the Schlei inlet is noted as a royal body of water in § 86.<sup>3</sup> Whoever might wish to erect a building on the waterfront needed the approval of the bailiff. Whether travel journal, chronicle, or legal written source, all three of these historical documents not only name concrete geographical locations, they also all mention the port as an interface between the sea and the city. According to Carsten Jahnke, a port is a

*rechtlich definierter Landungsplatz an einem Gewässerabschnitt [...]. Die rechtliche Entwicklung des Hafenbegriffes ist mit der Ausbildung des Stadtrechts verbunden. Im Hafen gewährte der Landesherr periodisch oder ganzjährig Fremden Kaufmannschutz [und] Marktschutz [...] sowohl auf dem Land als auch zu Wasser. Dieses setzt gefestigte Vorstellungen über die Eigentumsverhältnisse über Flüsse, das Meer und die Strände voraus*.<sup>4</sup>

Port and harbour cities have been centres for trade, culture, and commerce since time immemorial. Wulfstan and Helmold show us that the location of a harbour plays a decisive role: geographical factors such as accessibility and water-depth, currents, and wind favour the development of a port. However, both of these texts, as well as the Schleswig town charter, show that a political culture favouring maritime trade can also promote this development.

Urban agglomerations can be identified as 'hubs' within dynamic networks. By constituting foci of cultural, social, political and economic forms of interaction, 'urbanscapes' stand out

<sup>1</sup> 'From Sciringes heal he says that he sailed for five days to the port town that was called *Haepum* (Hedeby), which is located amongst the Wends and Saxons and Angles and is property of the Danes'. Batley 2007, 47.

<sup>2</sup> Helmold 1, 57, 8–16.

<sup>3</sup> Jessen 1996.

<sup>4</sup> '[...] legally defined mooring located by a body of water [...]. The legal development of the idea of a port is bound to the development of the municipal laws. A ruler could extend periodical or all-year-round protection to foreigners engaged in merchant or trade activities, on the shore as well as on the water. This requires set concepts concerning the ownership rights held over rivers, the sea, and shore'. Jahnke 2011, 649–652.

against their environment. The port is an urban subspace with a very unique face. It is a hub of multiple flows of people, objects and ideas that are more than just an expression of economic relationships. Ports are hubs for global commercial and socio-cultural relationships – this is not only true for our modern societies, but also for their pre-modern forebears.<sup>5</sup> As intersections between water and land – seas and rivers on the one hand, and cities, roads and hinterlands on the other – they have always facilitated local and long-distance transportation, as well as the trading and movement of goods, knowledge, and people. ‘Harbourscapes’ are understood in the following text as spaces formed by action (‘doings’), perceptions and interpretations (‘sayings’).<sup>6</sup> The material and immaterial ‘Designs’ resulting from this process can be explained as the consequences of practical needs and lifestyles, that for their part are based on both habits of perception and historical constellations.<sup>7</sup> Haithabu, Schleswig, Lübeck are all three typical ports of their time. At the same time, they represent universal dimensions which are best represented by the concept of ‘scapes’.

‘Scapes’ is an omnipresent term in cultural studies and medieval history.<sup>8</sup> Thus terms such as ‘urbanscapes’, ‘riskscapes’, ‘heritagescapes’ or ‘commodityscapes’ are common.<sup>9</sup> Despite all their differences, they share a capacity to put our relational views of, on, and concerning a topic into perspective. ‘In analogy to the notion of landscape, the new terminology carries a spatial connotation that points to the ambiguity and fluidity of social phenomena. Against the backdrop of increasing global connectivity and flows, it conceives of space in terms of relations’.<sup>10</sup> The concepts of the Indian anthropologist Arjun Appadurai form a direct or indirect point of reference for various ‘scapes’. Appadurai describes globalisation in the form of dynamic currents of people, technologies, finances, media, and ideas (‘ethnoscapes’, ‘technoscapes’, ‘financescapes’, ‘ideoscapes’, ‘mediascapes’).<sup>11</sup> At the same time, these five currents of globalisation are also components, just as individuals and groups of people construct a notion of their own movements in the global context: ‘worlds that are constituted by the historically situated imaginations of persons and groups spread around the globe’.<sup>12</sup> As consistently as Appadurai emphasises these relationships in a global society, his concepts cannot simply be applied unmodified to pre-modern societies: it is especially difficult to find evidence of his postulated separation of the nominated fields.<sup>13</sup> In archaeological scholarship, Appadurai’s approach has been most significantly received with a particular focus on methods of attribution, as well as being taken up in the course of network-turns and modified in the service of assemblage theory.<sup>14</sup> A detailed discussion of Appadurai’s concept for archaeology is definitely still pending, but – and here lies its epistemological value – this concept can help us to emphasise the interconnectedness of global (cultural) landscapes and local (commercial) spaces in the sense of a *glocalisation*. In times of medieval globalization and complex connectivities, harbourscapes are an example that

5 Cf. North 2016; Borgolte – Jaspert 2016; Blockmans et al. 2017; von Carnap-Bornheim et al. 2018; Elvert – Elvert 2018. For a comparative approach, see Stanley et al. 2012.

6 Christophersen 2015, 125–128; Brugger et al. 2018.

7 In the following text, the term ‘harbourscapes’ will be used to express the meaning of a harbour in a way that reaches beyond its function as a mooring place for ships, and into the multiplexity of the whole harbour area. Because of the commonly made, but only loosely defined differentiation between ‘harbour’ as the mooring grounds, and ‘port’ as the wider area, the precise term used should be ‘portscapes’. ‘Harbourscapes’ is used above all as a concept in current city planning, cf. Russo 2016.

8 For example, Fouquet et al. 2018; Kooij 2018.

9 For example, Knox 1995, 6: ‘Commodityscapes produced by flows of material culture that encompass everything from architecture and interior design through to clothes and jewellery’.

10 Müller-Mahn et al. 2018, 195.

11 Cf. here Appadurai 1990, 329–331. For criticism of the concept, see for example Heymann – Campbell 2009, 134–139.

12 Appadurai 1996, 33.

13 Müller 2017a, 17–21.

14 Müller – Schurr 2016, 218–220.

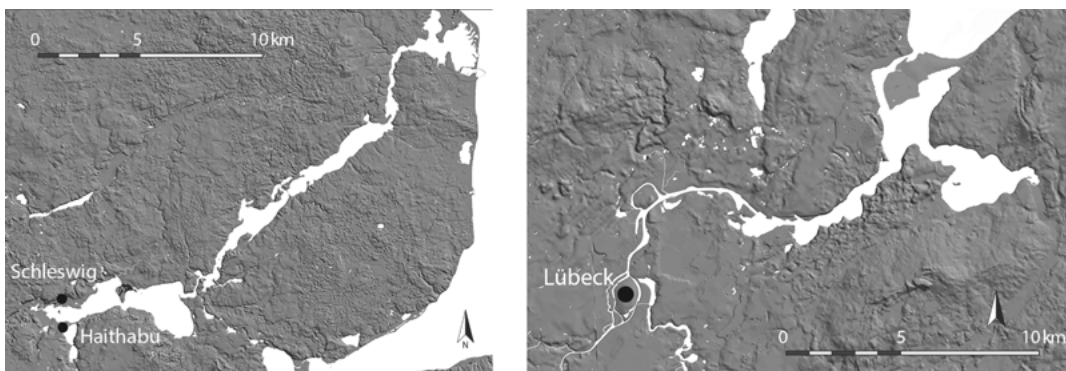
global and thus location-independent ‘scapes’ can be found in specific places. In the following, three different ports with their specific structures will be outlined and finally discussed in terms of the ‘scapes’ concept.

## Three harbourscapes

Haithabu, Schleswig und Lübeck (Fig. 1) are not only distinguish themselves by their geographical proximity in northern Germany, but are also seen in scholarship as prototypes for specific urban configurations and the globalised societies of the Early and High Middle Ages. Haithabu and Schleswig lie at the end of the Schlei, an approximately 42 km long fjord in the south-eastern part of the Jutland peninsula. Lübeck is located about 17 km from the Baltic Sea, between the Trave and Wakenitz rivers.

Even though the legal (sovereign) aspect was, and still remains, decisive in the development of a port, the setting created by a favourable topography should not be underestimated. Thus Helmold states: *Nam ex una parte Trabena, ex altera Wochniza preterfluit, habens uterque paludosam et inviam ripam. Ex ea vero parte, qua terrestre iter continuatur, est collis contractior, vallo castris prestructus.*<sup>15</sup> The question of historical water depth is crucial for harbours on the coast, as also for other sites near the coastline. Reliable data exists for the Schlei in particular. In the Early Middle Ages, the water level stood at 0.80 m below the mean sea level (MSL), in the late 10<sup>th</sup> century a depth of about 1 m below the MSL was recorded, and circa in 1100 the water level stood at approximately 0.2 to 0.3 m below the MSL.<sup>16</sup> It has also been possible to reconstruct the shoreline of the river Trave, and its historical topography.<sup>17</sup>

Haithabu (Fig. 2) is recognised as a synonym for centres with urban structures, and has been variously characterised (according to individual perspectives and levels of research) as a proto-city, a trade and crafts centre, a hub for maritime commerce, and as an *emporium*.<sup>18</sup> The universally optimal location on the east-west and north-south transport routes not only transformed this place into a key point in the traffic between the North Sea and the Baltic Sea, but also between continental Europe and Scandinavia. The written sources provide evidence in every respect for the significance of the location. Haithabu is a comprehensive settlement complex and part of a settlement landscape characterised by both limnic and maritime activities on the Jutland peninsula. The undeveloped acreage (circa 27 ha) within the Haithabu *Halbkreiswall* (a semi-circular wall erected in the later 10<sup>th</sup> century) and the surrounding area were already



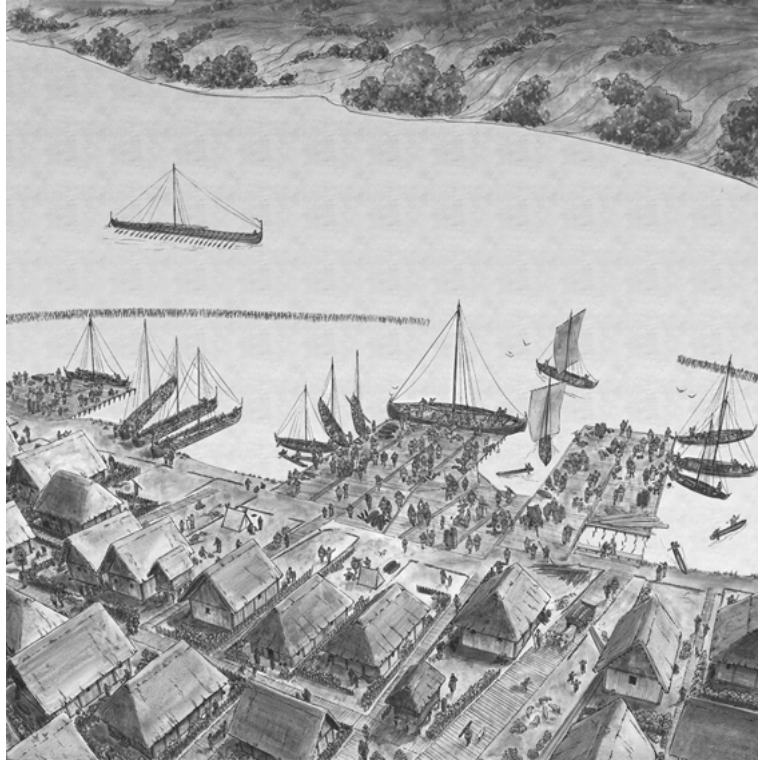
**Fig. 1:** Location of Haithabu, Schleswig and Lübeck.

<sup>15</sup> Helmold 1, 57.

<sup>16</sup> Rösch 2018, with further details.

<sup>17</sup> Kräling 2019, 43–52.

<sup>18</sup> Kleingärtner 2014, 68–72; Kalmring 2016.



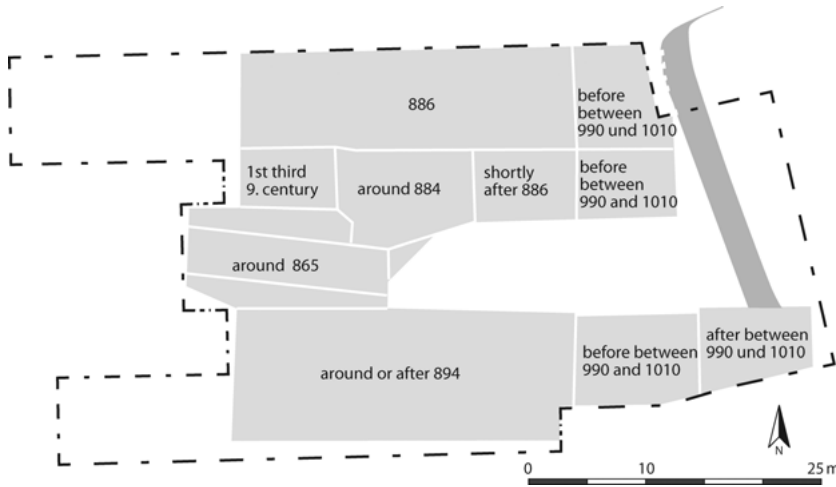
**Fig. 2:** Haithabu, reconstruction of the port in the 10<sup>th</sup> century.

the subject of comprehensive excavations at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the results of which were systematically presented. The prospection and geophysical testing performed within the wall from the 2000s onwards have provided research into Haithabu with a new impetus as regards assessment of the population density and settlement structure, and also regarding the question of the settlement's intended function.<sup>19</sup> It is now assumed that there was a fairly dense level of building development. While the cemeteries were already the focus of archaeological research quite early on, academic interest in the harbour was roused following the recovery of two wrecks in 1953 and 1980. A total of approximately 2200 m<sup>2</sup> of the shallows and shoreline areas were examined during 1978/9, and these excavations were presented in a fundamental new analysis by Sven Kalmring.<sup>20</sup> Even before the development of the first harbour building works, there were recognisable activities taking place in Haithabu during the middle of the 9<sup>th</sup> century that Kalmring has connected to a *hithe*.<sup>21</sup> The water's edge was used for various activities. During the following years, we can observe developmental phases consisting of the raising and levelling of the land, as well as protective measures in the waterside areas. The building works covered an area of approximately 1800 m<sup>2</sup> and can be dated between 817 and circa 885. To the side, in the southern part of the site, these measures can be divided into four developmental phases. Here, the ground level was raised in about 823 or later and 890, and the port area was pushed back around 11 m into the lagoon. The period of actual port construction began around the end of the 9<sup>th</sup> century (Fig. 3). After this, a secure access route to the jetties was created. The first jetty was completed around 865, and sometime between 865 and 884 this was then connected with the pre-existing building to create a 'platform'. The succeeding building measures also enlarged the port structure. This step-by-step building process and the extension into the lagoon created a closed frontage by the end of the 9<sup>th</sup> century. At the

<sup>19</sup> Hilberg 2018.

<sup>20</sup> Kalmring 2010.

<sup>21</sup> Kalmring 2010, 265.



**Fig. 3:** Haithabu, development phases of the harbour based on archaeological excavations.

bridgeheads, this offered mooring possibilities for ships with a deeper draught, and also offered smaller boats the possibility of mooring alongside. It is conceivable that in this way a spatial separation of local and long-distance shipping was formed.

According to Kalmring, the use of the harbour area for the dumping of waste meant that the necessary water depth for appropriate ships was gradually reduced until it was no longer available.<sup>22</sup> This is the only explanation for the further developments that took place at the end of the 10<sup>th</sup> and beginning of the 11<sup>th</sup> centuries, after which the pier comprised a surface area of 1475 m<sup>2</sup>. In this case, there was less dumping of waste from the settlement, and rather more ‘commercial waste’. This included shipping equipment and ballast weights, as well as evidence of maintenance and repair work for ships and the port buildings. Last but not least, a certain amount of cargo went overboard during the loading and unloading processes.

The geophysical testing and systematic inspection of the *Halbkreiswall* begun in the 2000s have yet to provide evidence of any free spaces that could have served as a marketplace. This, and other comparable finds, gave Kalmring reason to accept the idea of a harbour market. Detlev Ellmers used the term *Ufermarkt* (beach market) to signify general areas with evidence of trade or bartering.<sup>23</sup> However, Kalmring in particular has made the effort to create differentiated terminology. Harbour markets are markets located within port facilities;<sup>24</sup> in contrast, beach markets are specifically connected with the actual landing places. The harbour market of Haithabu would have been situated on the platforms themselves. The almost closed-off area, as well as the characteristic nature and distribution of finds such as coins and weights here, all support this theory. Furthermore, the platforms also offered space for storage and the display of goods – whether short-term for products like canvas and fabrics, or long-term, as might be assumed for ballast weights.

While there is ample evidence of the economic and related logistical functions of the port, its further uses are a matter of speculation, or rather very difficult to prove. Thus, a harbour is always a judicial space, or it may be used for military purposes. Social differentiations are part of everyday life in the port, just as the port itself has a place within an ecological system. These varied and in part interwoven uses may be discussed with reference to particular finds or groups of finds, but it is still not easy to move from general statements to real knowledge in terms of individual cases. The harbour of Haithabu was an urban space since at least the 10<sup>th</sup> century, indistinguishable at first glance from the rest of the urban structures surrounding it. This

<sup>22</sup> Kalmring 2010, 440.

<sup>23</sup> Ellmers 1990, 104–107.

<sup>24</sup> Kalmring 2010, 443–448.

space nonetheless displays a relevant internal differentiation, and not only through the actual logistical features of the port (land bridges, storage, market). Even if we knew the precise details and, most importantly, the functions of the waterfront building developments along the west-east route, we would still be permitted to assume that this development included functional zones that corresponded with the activities of the port. One fact remains fundamental to our understanding of the *emporium* here, which is that the marketplace, with all of its various functions, was not separated from the platforms.

Haithabu as an *emporium* is very strongly focused on supra-regional connectivity. The development of the port over 200 years reflects both the different intensities of these relationships and the fact that it was always a hub in maritime networks.

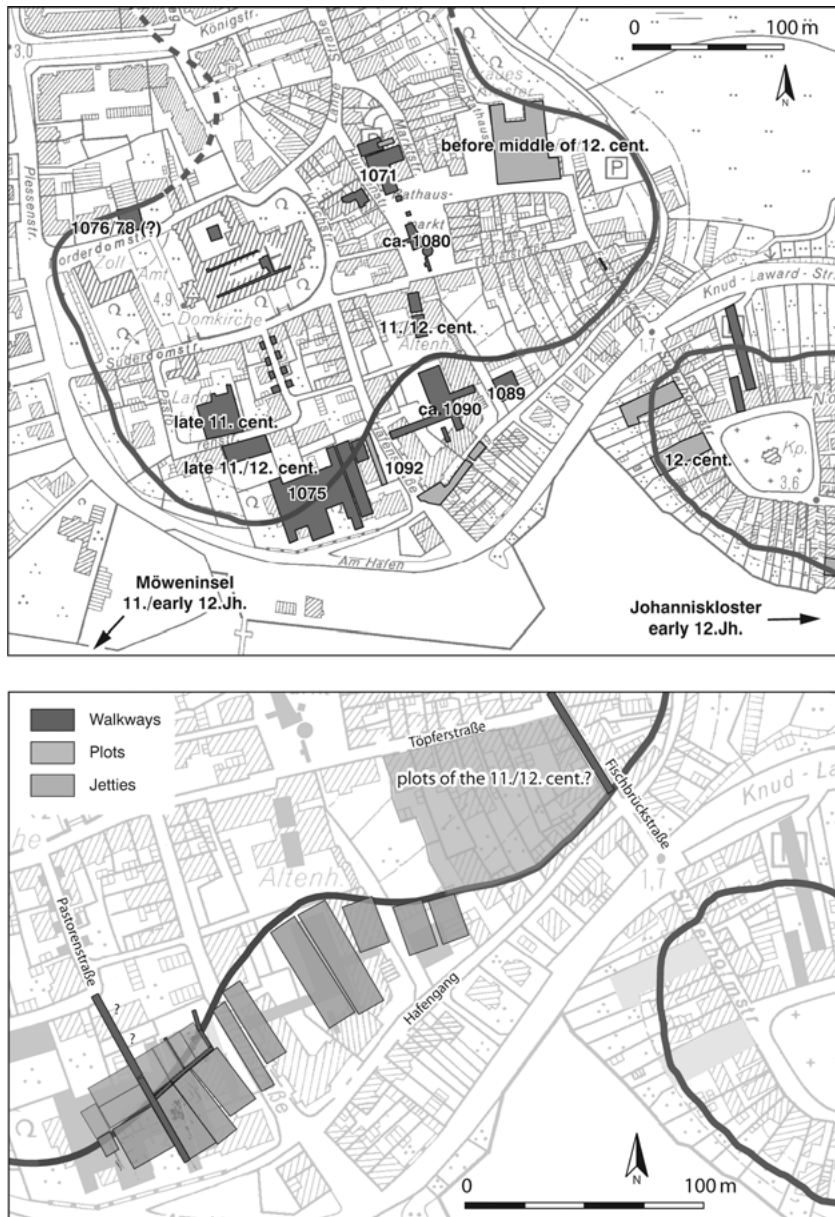
Schleswig is referred to as a *civitas* in the written sources.<sup>25</sup> Set opposite Haithabu on the northern side of the Schlei, the city was the southernmost centre of the Danish kingdom between the second half of the 11<sup>th</sup> century and the mid- to late 12<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>26</sup> Schleswig was located in the north-western section of the innermost Schlei, on a hilltop formed by Pleistocene deposits and with a maximum height of 8 m. Today, the old city covers approximately 16 ha. Prior to the anthropogenic sedimentation of the west-lying *Königswiesen*, the location's historical topography was that of a pouch-shaped peninsula with a surface area of about 10 ha. Systematic archaeological research into Schleswig was initiated at the beginning of the 1970s, whereby the excavation of the historical waterfront areas accounted for the largest excavated surface area. These excavations were the subject of a new analysis by Felix Rösch in 2018.<sup>27</sup> Now, as before, there remains controversy as to when and how the 'move' from Haithabu to Schleswig happened and which areas of the peninsula were concretely developed during the 11<sup>th</sup> century (Fig. 4.1). On the grounds of a new analysis of the written sources, the historian Christian Radtke supports the thesis that Schleswig already existed in the first half of the 11<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>28</sup> The earliest archaeologically observable development is the creation of at least six distinct plots of land in the period around 1070. This may be considered the most chronologically meaningful evidence for the initial settlement of the peninsula. In any case, the settlement areas along the Schlei were systematically developed (Fig. 4.2). The plots established during the 1070s were about 6 to 10 m wide, and it is posited that they extended some 15 to 25 m to the north. In the beginning, these plots of land were probably already divided by ditches and fences, and lay about 4 to 5 m from the shoreline. Plot 2 is exceptional, with a width of approximately 20 m and a significantly different orientation to the others. From 1076 on, the first fundamental changes took place. Thus, some of the land plots were extended in the direction of the Schlei's shoreline, and to the east a road running parallel to the shore was constructed. On the one hand, these building measures opened up access for all of the plots along the shoreline, but on the other hand, they restricted any further extension in the direction of the Schlei. The road, with its west-east route, created a corridor for interaction that not only opened up the area to the waterfront, but also connected the plots of land to one another. If we assume that the plots were individually managed, from this point on the road would create, as it were, a 'public space'. It is reasonable to agree with Rösch when he assumes that this development was probably the result of a royal initiative, or at least required royal permission. At the same time, some individual initiatives can be observed. For example, the construction of the road progressed in two directions, and a misalignment can be seen at the juncture. One engaging question that remains as yet unanswered is whether this road continued westwards, connecting to an access road in the direction of the Schlei.

<sup>25</sup> Radtke 2017b.

<sup>26</sup> On the archaeology and history of Schleswig, see most recently Müller 2016, 346–350 and Rösch 2018, 35–38 with further details.

<sup>27</sup> Rösch 2018. The following explanations are based on Chapter 9.

<sup>28</sup> Radtke 2017a.



**Fig. 4:** Schleswig, Old Town,  
1: Excavations with features of the 11th century.  
2: Walkways, plots and jetties in the harbour district.

From the beginning of the 1080s, both consolidation and land-filling works took place along the road and on the southern borders of the land partitions. These works definitely aimed to consolidate the area as a building site, forming the foundation for further development. In the year 1085 these works were completed. The erection of a jetty, though quite small, at least optically marks the aspiration to build out into the shallows. Within four years, the area of the original land partitions had been opened up with individually executed dam constructions. The extent to which these dams actually served as mooring places is questionable. Because the water depth remained shallow during this early phase, it was hardly possible for ships with a deeper draught to dock here. Apart from the theory that such ships docked anchored at the mouth of the inlet and were unloaded there, these dams also constituted a measure against the restricted space available on the peninsula. In the following period they also served as multipurpose spaces, as is reflected in the different forms and uses of the buildings found there. Hearths, cesspits, wells, stalls for domestic animals, and ovens signify that some dams were used as living space, while others served as space for workshops for crafts and trades. The jetty built



**Fig. 5:** Schleswig, Old Town, reconstruction of the port around 1100.

out onto the Schlei in front of platform 2 is especially noteworthy, as it clearly served as a marketplace. Beyond the existing connection to the shore, there is a visible public road, which not only extends towards the north, but also reaches out into the Schlei. Following this, the building developments continued through the 1090s. In many places the dams were extended into the shallows. In addition, there was an increase in the density of buildings on the shoreside. By the mid-1090s, these building measures were completed to the point where a step-like terracing of the dams had been created. These terraced dams extended about 8 m out into the Schlei in the western area, and up to about 18 m out in the eastern area. At the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> century, approximately 25 years after the initial building work began, further and more comprehensive building and restructuring work on the land plots, the dams, and the roads was undertaken. The harbour district reached the apex of its development. A reconstruction from the period around 1100 allows us to observe the area's complexity and differentiated forms of usage during that time (Fig. 5). Platform 2 (measuring about 20 m in width) and its dam-like extension have been referred to as the marketplace on the basis of the very low building density, the remarkable distribution of finds, and the background provided by written sources and analogous finds. These waterside developments meant that from 1095 on, mid-sized cargo ships could also be despatched without problems. The docking area was now equipped with such docking facilities along a total length of 300 m. We know relatively little about the form of the rest of the city during the second half of the 11<sup>th</sup> century. Nonetheless, there is evidence of settlement activity across the whole peninsula from the 1070s onwards. Even though clear traces of the cathedral building, parish churches, and the *aula regia* only date from the 12<sup>th</sup> century, cemeteries, churches, and buildings of state must have belonged to the earlier topography. Analogous to Haithabu, the harbour market in Schleswig created a situation whereby the port area was directly connected to the urban areas of the city.

By the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century, an increasing amount of restructuring could be observed in the city, demonstrating the area's decrease in significance between the second half of the 12<sup>th</sup> century and the period around 1200. In current scholarship, these changes are taken as evidence of the decline of Schleswig during the 13<sup>th</sup> century, seen in connection with a system-



atic reconstruction of the city.<sup>29</sup> In the course of these structural changes, an inner-city marketplace was created, built on a plot where a church and its cemetery had stood since the late 11<sup>th</sup> century. At the end of the 1230s, large areas of the port were given up. A Dominican monastery was erected in their place.

Since the second half of the 11<sup>th</sup> century, the city of Schleswig had been a centre for trade between eastern and western Europe, but also an important connection between the Scandinavian and continental markets. Schleswig was the southernmost Danish metropolis, and because of this it functioned as a flagship. Here at the intersection of land and sea there arose a space for interaction that corresponded to the *portus* and *locus celeberrimus* recorded in the written sources. In Schleswig, the change from a seaside town still in the early medieval tradition to a high medieval town can be traced. Schleswigs' harbourscapes are an expression of these changes, which are, however, linked to completely new directions by the loss of significance around 1200.

The city of Lübeck lies around 17 km from the Baltic Sea. Lübeck is a 'hotspot' for both historical and archaeological scholarship, where the development of a high medieval port city and a Hanseatic city with a very particular type of urbanity can be almost paradigmatically observed.<sup>30</sup> The relevant historical interpretations are based, above all, on the statements of the chronicler Helmold von Bosau. He not only reports on the harbour, but also describes the founding of the city in 1143 by Adolf II von Schauenburg. Following an historically recorded fire in 1158, Heinrich der Löwe founded the legendary *Löwenstadt*.<sup>31</sup> The status of a free city, granted in 1226, but also the period of Danish rule between 1201 and 1227, gave the city decisive momentum to become the Queen of the Hanse.<sup>32</sup>

The *Altstadtinsel* of Lübeck lies between the Trave and Wakenitz rivers. The historical topography of the raised, approximately 100 ha river-island is very different from that of today, but this can be reconstructed very well with the assistance of LIDAR scans and drillings. Until the 13<sup>th</sup> century the areas near the water were characterised by large marshlands. This held especially true for the lowlands of the Trave, which were first made accessible thanks to land reclamation undertaken from the 13<sup>th</sup> century on, and which led to building developments that reached all the way to the rivers.

At the time of the city's foundation, there were extensive lowlands, characterised by coves and found especially in the north of the old city island. In the area between the later Alfstraße and Braunstraße, there was a plateau that offered an attractive space for settlement, reaching eastwards from the steep drop into the lowlands of the Trave river to a further terrace in the terrain (Fig. 6).

The analysis of the 2009–2016 excavation, presented in 2019, gives us an entirely new image of the city's early development and the related harbourscapes. The excavations to the north and south of Fischstraße revealed eleven approximately 15–20 m<sup>2</sup> wattle-and-daub buildings aligned with the shore and shielded to the north by a ditch. In the rearward section to the north-east, there was also evidence of an open, square-shaped area (Fig. 7).

The 14-C data (2 Sigma) date these to between 1080 and 1130. Hence, there are buildings and constructed spaces that clearly pre-date the founding of the city by Schauenburg. This could be an 'ältere Filialstelle oder gar potentielle Verlegung'<sup>33</sup> of the Slavonic settlement *Alt-Lübeck*, which was destroyed in 1138. It is also conceivable that this was a permanent or temporary settlement area for Saxon merchants, in which case the location should be referred to as a

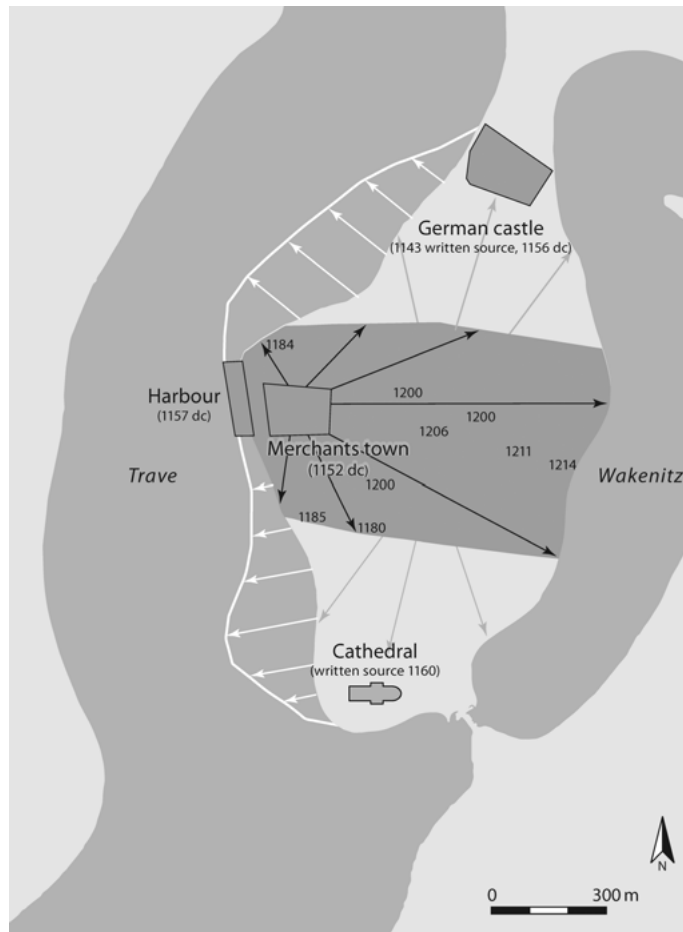
<sup>29</sup> Müller 2016, 253 f.

<sup>30</sup> Müller 2017b, 710; Jahnke 2019 with notes on historiography.

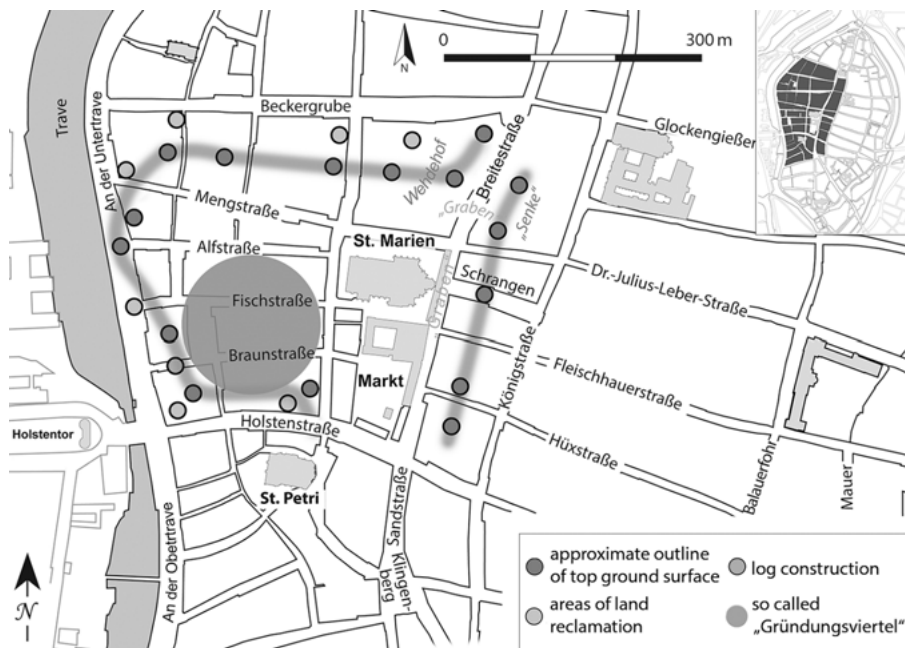
<sup>31</sup> Helmold 1, 86.

<sup>32</sup> Jahnke 2019, 226–229.

<sup>33</sup> Rieger 2019, 78.



**Fig. 6:** Lübeck, Old Town, reconstruction of the urban development.



**Fig. 7:** Lübeck, Old Town, reconstruction of the earliest settlement.

*vitte* – a medieval place of (fish)-trade.<sup>34</sup> Even if there is no direct evidence of a landing, a shallow drop to the Trave river and a wide beach zone are visible, and these ought to have made this an ideal landing location. In connection with this, Dirk Rieger brings the question of an early merchant's church into play.<sup>35</sup> The open space can certainly be defined as a public space. Comparable finds from this space point to its use as a marketplace. Here it is important to note that the concept of the marketplace was not limited to the exchange of goods, but rather included many other kinds of material and immaterial practices and interactions.

Count Adolf II von Schauenburg's founding of the city has influenced the historical and archaeological scholarship on this topic for more than a hundred years, and led to four different models of the early *civitas*.<sup>36</sup> Archaeologically speaking, Schauenburg's founding of the city can be divided into two phases, both of which are clearly connected to the older waterfront settlement. The first phase matches the date of about 1143 for the city's founding, the later phase dates from the mid-1150s. In contrast to the apparently quite informal layout of the early waterfront settlement, the building measures from 1143 onwards seem planned. A planned approach is observable in the scheme whereby the architecture of the main buildings is orientated towards the street front, with both open and built-up courtyards, as well as in the general infrastructure. In this way, it appears that the architecture from Schauenburg's time was most likely individually executed, whereas the buildings from the later phase seem to have been strictly standardised. The orientation of these blocks of buildings in relation to the harbour is striking. Taken together, these factors indicate that there was a master plan that reached well beyond individual properties, since under Adolf II there was definitely expansion in the settlement, or perhaps even the creation of a structured settlement enclosure, with buildings partitioned into blocks. It is plausible that such measures could only have been implemented by royal decree, or through the representatives of the King. The Slavic invasion of 1147 created a turning point in these activities. Even if the effects of this event are assessed differently by various scholars,<sup>37</sup> it is clear that more than just the building structures changed during the second 'Schauenburg-phase' in Lübeck. The construction of an open space for a (later) forum at the top of the old city intentionally created a new space for interaction. Nonetheless, it is assumed that just as before, the majority of exchanges took place in the beach market, and it was only during the first thirty years of the 13<sup>th</sup> century that the new inner-city market achieved the status of a main market.

Although there is no concrete evidence of a harbour pre-dating the Schauenburg-period settlement of the waterfront, consolidation measures were taken in the flood zone during the course of the mid-12<sup>th</sup> century (Figs. 7–8). This included pole pilings around 1157. During or after 1164, we can see evidence of land reclamation to the north of the outcrop. This area, which remained largely undeveloped, is currently interpreted as a beach market set upstream from the original settlement.<sup>38</sup> There was expansion during the following decades, including more land reclamation and the construction of a bulkhead. Used as a quay, this made it possible for ships to moor alongside. With a length of at least 200 m, this created a harbour-front that would have been completed by the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century at the latest. It was also part of the seaport and, according to statements in the written sources, lay to the north of the Holstenbrücke.<sup>39</sup> D. Rieger and I. Schalties understand these measures as parts of a master-plan that aimed for expansion right from the foundation of the settlement, and ultimately had the whole of the old city island

<sup>34</sup> On this, Rieger 2019, 75–79. The finds also point in this direction, as do Rieger's considerations concerning the possibility of a church of St Clement.

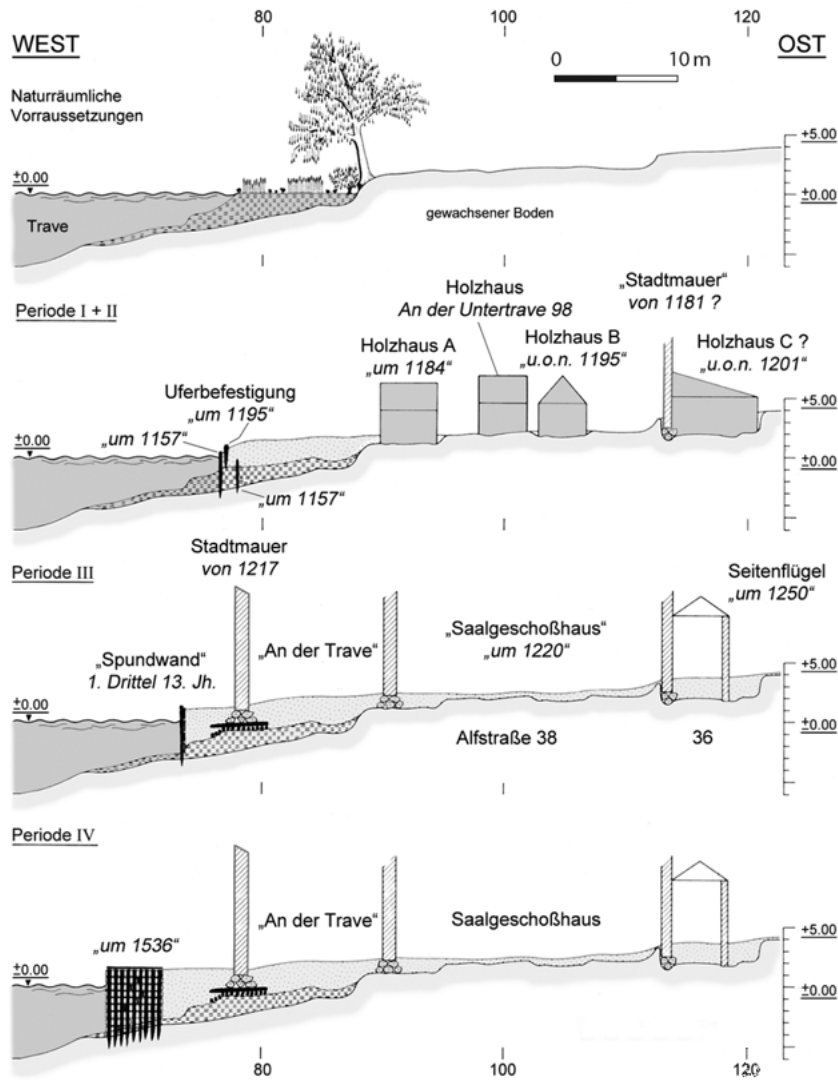
<sup>35</sup> Rieger 2019, 73 f.

<sup>36</sup> Rieger 2019, 83 fig. 43.

<sup>37</sup> Rieger 2019, 89.

<sup>38</sup> Schalties – Rieger 2019, 56.

<sup>39</sup> Schalties 2014, 165.



**Fig. 8:** Lübeck, Old Town, reconstruction of the second beach market and later harbour, ca. 1157–1217.

in its sights. Besides the transport connections and security considerations, the development resources also played a fundamental role.<sup>40</sup>

Although it was once assumed that a city wall was erected about 1181, which was interpreted as evidence of the first defensive effort of the *Bürgerstadt* (civil city), these assumptions have come under criticism in the intervening years.<sup>41</sup> The 1217 city wall was the first defence to enclose the whole of the old city hill. Finally, it should be noted that the developments extending southwards from the Holstenbrücke (evidence for which dates from 1216) and along the upper Trave river progressed in a different way. The written sources provide proof of an inner harbour and many granaries and storehouses from the late 13<sup>th</sup> and early 14<sup>th</sup> centuries, as well as for the wharves located on the external side of the city. The toll-house, dated from 1284, closed off the port district to the south.

Both earlier and current scholarship have favoured the model in which there was a transition from a beach market to a harbour market, and the development of an inner-city market. The market on the eastern shore of the Trave river, dated between 1157 and 1217 (Fig. 8), is interpreted as a beach market by Ellmers und Schalties, while Kalmring considers this a harbour

<sup>40</sup> Schalties – Rieger 2019, 63.

<sup>41</sup> Schalties – Rieger 2019, 66.

market.<sup>42</sup> In light of the current much earlier dating to about 1100, Rieger initially argued for a waterfront settlement with an open space that served as a marketplace, storage space, or cargo handling area.<sup>43</sup> The restructuring, with its systematic building scheme, seems to lead to the more recent beach market in a hitherto undeveloped area. Fundamental changes only occurred from the 1130s on, and these were manifestations of both the new policies of Heinrich des Löwen, and fundamental economic and cultural shifts in the Baltic area. This can be observed, for example, in the apparently standardised timber and early brick architecture built with large cellars, in the systematic opening up and developing of land moving toward the hilltop, and in the new civil and sacral infrastructure. In all this, the beach market retained its function until the beginning of the 13<sup>th</sup> century. It was not until the creation of the inner-city market that fundamental changes to cargo-handling took place. Loading and unloading procedures would become dominant on the quays, and trading areas and stockyards would be reduced to a minimum. These changes were not limited to new marketplaces within the city. Further inner-city changes were visible in the form of large storehouses and merchant houses, which created a completely new quality of urbanism. This urbanism, expressed in the form of the brick-built *Dielenhäuser*, would finally come to characterise the image and narrative of the Hanseatic city right up to the present day.<sup>44</sup> The new excavations may have thrown new light on ‘early Lübeck’, but the urban layout is connected with maritime trade and this has manifested itself in over 500 years of harbour growth.

## Harbours ...

The ports of Haithabu, Schleswig and Lübeck represent very different political, economic and cultural constellations, and provide proof of pre-modern globalisation.<sup>45</sup> As hubs for global networks, they not only connected the maritime worlds of the North Sea and the Baltic Sea, but also facilitated trade and exchange well beyond Europe. As different as these harbours were in terms of their individual development, they were all locations existing in physical, concrete space, on the one hand, and, on the other, were at the same time spaces constructed via various co-dependent forms of interaction.<sup>46</sup> Here, there was a concentration of different forms of cultural, political, or economic exchange, whose locality was interwoven with global perspectives. Specific architectonic and immaterial arrangements result from these different forms of exchange, as well as the perception and interpretation of those exchanges. In this way, ‘harbour-scapes’ are not merely a part of the maritime cultural landscape, but also have the capacity to express global views.

Independent of this, the disposition of geological factors – in a wider sense the whole natural environment – plays a role in the initial choice of location for harbours. This basic parameter, though it does not seem to be the only determining factor, ultimately influences the further development of the harbour against the backdrop of changing maritime technology and the necessary logistic-infrastructure facilities. This is clearly displayed in the attempts at dam-building undertaken on the Schlei and all of the land-reclamation measures, but also in the gradual opening of the whole shoreline of the Trave river. Focusing on the material settings – that is, the physical level of the concrete building remains – allows us to observe the arrangements and relationships of these surviving buildings. These include not only the facilities directly associated with the port, but also the road- and street-systems that connected the port district

<sup>42</sup> Ellmers 1990, 104; Schalties 2014, 166 fig. 6; Kalmring 2010, 443 f.

<sup>43</sup> Rieger 2019, 79.

<sup>44</sup> Torbus – Wojtczak 2017.

<sup>45</sup> Müller 2017a; Hodos 2016.

<sup>46</sup> Rogers 2013, 185–190.

to the rest of the city's urban spaces. Looking at these reveals functional connections in the form of land-bridges, quays, or storage spaces, living or craftsmen's quarters, shipyards or marketplaces. A particularity of Haithabu and Schleswig (but also of early Lübeck) is the way in which the location combines the logistics of cargo loading and despatch with those of commercial exchange and trade. Further urbanisation led to differentiated and more complex structures, and it was this that first resulted in the relocation of the market into the city. The city was ultimately closed off, both materially by the city walls, and immaterially by the municipal laws.

The question of who started these building arrangements and retained responsibility for their ongoing functioning should, according to practical-theoretical approaches, be 'located' in various dimensions. Neither the king alone nor his local representative, nor the apparently flat hierarchies of self-organised groups of interested parties (guilds, travellers with common routes) were the sole initiators here.<sup>47</sup> The model of interdependent processes of negotiation on various levels comes closer to the reality than any purely top-down or bottom-up approach. All three examples given here prove that the internal and external urbanisation of the city resulted from the initiative and support of the king, as well as that of the local elite. Even when the practices of individual actors or groups of actors can be identified, it must be assumed that such city-creating measures do not result solely from private initiatives.

## ... and Habourscapes

If we also understand 'harbourscapes' as 'imagined worlds', constructed via the various 'scapes' and the historically contextualised imaginations of people and groups, we find our focus shifts beyond social practices to the wider cultural processes that work to create new global orders. With the beach- and harbour markets in Haithabu and Schleswig, just as in early Lübeck, the port became visible as a place of economic transactions and a part of the early and high medieval 'financescapes'. Viking-period *emporium* like Haithabu were in particular perceived as 'special economic zones'.<sup>48</sup> These zones were not only bound to the European networks, but also, in their function as 'brokers', formed points of interface with the global networks of the Middle Ages in Africa and Asia.<sup>49</sup> In the spatial interface between logistics and economy (the marketplace), we see the material and immaterial flows concentrated into the smallest possible area. The port also represents various forms of monetary commerce.<sup>50</sup> On one hand, Haithabu is a 'subspace' for bullion-based trade and commerce, which dominated north and northeast Europe during the Early Middle Ages. Here goods were weighed against hack-silver or Arabic dirhams and an exchange rate fixed. Then again, in a certain way the *emporium* formed a 'special monetary zone', connecting the Carolingian and Ottonian monetary economies with the areas of bullion-based trade and commerce to the north and northeast. The transition to a monetary economy was already almost complete in Schleswig, but the marketplace still remained the economic centre of exchange, just as it was before. Finally, Lübeck not only represents an economy exclusively based on monetary trade and commerce, it also shows a shift and increased dynamic in the streams of goods and finances, and their increased complexity. The former is demonstrated by the inner-city marketplace, as well as in the partial relocation of these activities to the merchants' houses; the latter is expressed not only in the new economic forms of transactions, but

<sup>47</sup> For example, Ellmers 2018; Radtke 2017b; Jahnke 2008.

<sup>48</sup> Kalmring 2016, 17.

<sup>49</sup> Sindbæk 2017, 560–562; Preiser-Kapeller 2018, 141–192.

<sup>50</sup> Kershaw et al. 2018.

also in the reduction of transaction costs and new forms of organisation that are always mentioned in connection with the Hanse.<sup>51</sup>

On the basis of finds from Haithabu, Schleswig and Lübeck, it is possible to recognise a spatial and functional shift in the movement of goods. Until the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries, long-distance trade was concentrated on prestige goods from northeast Europe (furs, amber, wax and slaves) and goods from the Far East (silks, spices and frankincense). From the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries, Hanseatic trade built itself up on bulk products such as herring, salt, grain, and woollen cloth. In addition to this, the Hanseatic trade played an intermediary role between western and eastern Europe, as well as middle Europe.

At the same time, ‘technoscapes’ manifest themselves most significantly in the changes to maritime technology. From the archaeological point of view, attention here must certainly be turned towards ship-types. Whatever the genesis of the ship type *Kogge* (a single-masted, square-rigged and mostly clinker-built vessel) was, during the 12<sup>th</sup> century onwards, the cog was absolutely ideal for the requirements of bulk trade. Even if a direct correlation between ship-types and harbour facilities cannot always be demonstrated, the increases in cargo capacity and draught for long-distance trading vessels between the later Viking period and the High Middle Ages necessitated appropriate mooring facilities.<sup>52</sup> The port areas accommodated these new requirements, and the changing logistics were not only displayed in the construction of land bridges and quays, but also in the new forms of packing (barrels) and the relocation of storage spaces. Although objects are the carriers of ideas, and ideas communicate something to other people, the ‘ideoscapes’ in the port areas – which are not always easy to recognise archaeologically – appear in the various concepts of maritime law, customs law, and seller’s rights, and of course also in the municipal laws. The question of correlation between maritime and municipal law is currently under intensive discussion, as is the differentiation between ship-owners and ships’ crews, as well as between the actual owners of goods and trading agents.<sup>53</sup> Here, there seem to have been some fundamental changes during the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries in the Baltic area. While the town charter of Schleswig still reflected the significance of the merchants’ guilds, the *Lübsche Recht* was considered a valid form of municipal law, and was used as the exemplar for the founding of many new cities in the Baltic region.

Taking a general perspective, these three ports certainly represent the power of what Nils Blomkvist describes as the ‘Catholic world system’, which is also more than a little visible in the career-specific faith and practical religiosity of the Hanseatic merchant-class.<sup>54</sup>

The port is often seen pragmatically as a place of cultural encounters, and this is particularly clear in the narratives of modern harbour areas. In terms of constantly changing flows of people, it is the mobility of the merchants that first comes to mind.<sup>55</sup> However, it is not only the travels of Wulfstan and Ottar in the 9<sup>th</sup> century, or the apprenticeship and merchant’s life of Hildbrand Vechinchusen in the early 14<sup>th</sup> century that stand as representatives for this global mobility. Ship-owning families were deeply woven into the urban narrative and participated in the formation of both the life of the port and that of the city as a whole. There were also the travellers from distant locations, for example the Arabic merchant and diplomat At-Tartûshi from Tortosa in Spain, who visited Haithabu in 965. A completely different side of the ‘ethnoscapes’ is visible in the slave trade, for which early medieval Haithabu was an important hub, but which also presents archaeologists with massive challenges.<sup>56</sup> Slaves were not only traded in the north but also, and most importantly, in the Arabic lands. This example simultaneously

<sup>51</sup> Kypka 2016, 151–155.

<sup>52</sup> Blobel 2014; Englert 2015, 261–283.

<sup>53</sup> Blomkvist 2005, 374–375; Englert 2015, 39–54; Cordes 2017, 71–73.

<sup>54</sup> Blomkvist 2005, 30–35; Ayers 2016, 111–146; Jezierski 2016.

<sup>55</sup> Christophersen 2017.

<sup>56</sup> Fontaine 2017, 479–482. 488.

emphasises the fact that, while ports were spaces of transcultural encounter, they were also places of exclusion and inclusion.

The term ‘mediascape’ refers to the electronic and print media, but also describes visual culture. ‘Mediascapes’ create an image of a distant culture. For the Middle Ages, ‘mediascapes’ cannot be interpreted purely in the way Appadurai suggested. Thus, written or oral narratives, but also the perception of the foreign or different, will be an expression of ‘mediascapes’ in this context. Unique testimonies are the statements of Wulfstan or At-Tartûshi. But it is also the people and the objects connected with them that can be understood as an expression of ‘mediascapes’. On one hand, medieval badges or fibulae can be understood as an indicator of strong social affiliations, on the other as ‘social media’ with which the person wearing them expresses certain (world)-views. Ultimately, then, these ‘harbourscapes’ were spaces of absolutely direct communication. This is recorded in all the various historical material. The verbal communication between the different actors – those who, for example, took Low German as their *lingua franca* – is hardly accessible via archaeological means. However, both implicit and explicit knowledge and its transferral can sometimes be observed, for example, when dealing with questions of port construction, maritime technology, or navigation.

The examples given here provide a diachronic and historical perspective on just how complex the development from a simple hithe to an actual port was. A working model that reduces the number of steps in that development, as well as its different forms, may be seen as acceptable. However, such simplified images have a long-lasting impact on both scientific and non-scientific perceptions. In contrast to this, the ‘harbourscapes’ model understands that harbours, functioning as subspaces of urban constellations, are the exit-, inter- and end-stations of intensive maritime movement. The space of the harbour connects water and land. But the port as a place of encounter neither begins nor ends with the quays. These ‘harbourscapes’ create an area for social, cultural and political processes of transformation, which manifest themselves in concrete urban locations. They represent a paradigm of connectivity in motion.

## Illustration Credits

Fig. 1: Drawing by Susanne Beyer, IUFG CAU Kiel.

Fig. 2: Courtesy of the Museum für Archäologie Schloss Gottorf/Wikinger Museum Haithabu.

Fig. 3: After Kalmring 2010, 453 fig. 324.

Fig. 4: After Rösch 2018, 241 figs. 83. 85.

Fig. 5: After Rösch 2018, 272–273.

Fig. 6: Drawing by Susanne Beyer, IUFG CAU Kiel.

Fig. 7: After Schalties – Rieger 2019, 61.

Fig. 8: Schalties 2014, 164 fig. 4.

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