Chapter 25

Chronology and Time: Northern European Coastal Settlements and Societies, c. 500-1050

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Abstract
This contribution uses material culture, textual sources and associated social practices to explore how cycles of time and memory influenced the development of coastal societies and their expressions of identity in northwest Europe, between c. 500 and 1050. There are three themes. First, how memories of earlier material culture traditions and social practices were used to create new identities in eastern and western maritime Britain, between c. 450 and 600. Secondly, how cycles of maritime-orientation on the part of coastal societies in England and Denmark varied between c. 650 and 1000, despite situation next to the sea, maritime resources and communications. And thirdly, how social practices, representation and memory were used in major port-towns of Flanders and England, in emulative and competitive relations between seafarer-merchant-patricians and older landed elites, between c. 900 and 1050.

Keywords
Coastal, maritime orientation, cycles, memory, interaction, competition, early-medieval, identity, gender, time.

Time, the strategic use of memory (both remembering and forgetting) and varying patterns of material engagement via land and sea influenced the development of coastal societies and their expressions of identity in northwest Europe, between c. 500 and 1050. The people inhabiting the coasts and estuarine zones of major rivers in this region lived in some of the most connected and liminal locales of the early Middle Ages. Waterborne connectivity and the fact that many of the low-lying coasts were difficult to police, owing to the presence of numerous sand and clay islands among tidal creeks and treacherous marsh-fenland and peat belts, made these regions landscapes of opportunity. Specialist activities for exchange were the norm to support subsistence needs. Direct contact with local and foreign mariners also made the coasts porous contact zones where ideas, objects and people could interact, often away from the eyes of ruling authorities. These coastal and delta regions and rivers reaching inland constituted what anthropologist Christer Westerdahl terms "maritime cultural landscapes" and "transport corridors" where water-borne connections of the inhabitants of these landscape niches could give their societies some exceptional characteristics.[1] However, analysis of anthropogenic material culture in the broadest sense (objects, texts, buildings, and man-altered landscapes) from these areas shows that the physical circumstances of the living environment did not result in uniform social practices of engagement with people, the sea and its networks through time. Indeed, in certain periods very little evidence of use of maritime networks and resources is evident in material culture. Yet, for those same periods textual sources demonstrate seasonal exploitation of the sea and its resources, showing how links were maintained and recorded for posterity when archaeological evidence alone would

suggest a very different conclusion. This allows some exploration of the complexity of the dynamics between human actions and the recording, significance and manipulation of memory and time in material culture and text for specific purposes.

Within the context of the changing patterns of material engagement with the sea and maritime and river networks through time, memories of past connections were selected, manipulated and reflected in social practices, objects and buildings, or were forgotten or remembered in seasonal actions or textual records, depending on the needs of the different presents, between c. 450 and 1050.[2] Case study evidence primarily from Britain, Flanders and Denmark illuminate three themes. The first explores how memories of earlier political and cultural affinities were used to create new social practices and material expressions of identity in eastern and western maritime Britain, between the later fifth and seventh centuries. The second examines changing cycles of maritime-orientation and engagement on the part of coastal societies in eastern England and east Jutland, Denmark, between c. 650 and 1000, to illustrate how situation next to the sea and major waterways did not always ensure use of maritime resources and communications in a uniform manner through time. The final theme explores the use of social practices, self-representation and memory in major port-towns, between c. 700 and 1050, to analyse the changing relationships from emulation to competition, between emerging seafarer-merchant-patricians and older, established landed elites. It is hoped that the conclusions drawn and questions generated from the exploration of these limited and specific themes can contribute some insights to place alongside and interrogate those drawn from the growing corpus of grand-narrative works analysing maritime-oriented societies on a global and diachronic basis.[3]

Material Culture, Memory, and Identity Construction in Coastal Zones, c. 450-600

Between the later fifth and the seventh centuries, new societies were created in both eastern and western Britain through the adoption of new influences from abroad, whether they were transferred via population movement and conquest or more peaceful acculturation and exchange. The use of old traditions and memories, whether native or foreign, was a key element in the creation of the material representation of new group identities. The melding of inherited traditions or the deliberate adoption of old traditions to create new markers of social expression can be seen especially in maritime eastern and western Britain, between the later fifth and seventh centuries. They provide an excellent window on to the use of "the past" as fifth- and sixth-century northern Europeans perceived it, and on to the role of coastal regions as porous contact and entry zones for objects, commodities, ideologies and people.

In southeast Britain, the maritime-oriented kingdom of Kent provides excellent examples of how old, remembered traditions were used and retained alongside the new between c. 450 and 550, in order to create what we call the "Early Anglo-Saxon" society of Kent. Old and contemporary artefact styles and decorative traditions were used in a new furnished inhumation burial practice to signal the new "Kentish" identity. These artefacts and traditions were derived from both British and varying Continental European sources, reflecting the maritime connectivity and social networks that influenced what was "Kentish." This identity had an especial bias in its gendered representation of women and their affiliations within furnished inhumation tableaux, although men would probably have been as active in the representation of the women of their families within the grave as female relatives.[4] Hence, preferential use of the female burial practice to signal group affiliations and ethnic identity in their dress and other furnished accessories should be read as an act of both genders within family groups.

In contrast, memory and affiliation in male graves tended to be marked in the richest of graves, especially in relation to certain swords, rather than in the furnished majority. Writing at the end of the seventh century, the Venerable Bede recorded the myths of his time in relation to the "Anglo-Saxon" kingdoms of his day, and he noted that Kent had been settled by Jutes from Jutland, in Denmark, and this also accorded with the foundation myth of the Kentish royal house.[5] There is some material either from Jutland or with Jutish affiliations in later fifth- and sixth-century graves in Kent, especially in the female graves, but influences from the material culture of fifth-century Britain are also evident, and those from northern France and the Rhineland are even more demonstrable.

Quoit brooches and the "Quoit-Brooch-style" of metalwork, found in richer female graves, were undoubtedly inherited from the provincial Roman metalworking traditions of fifth-century southern Britain, and the items were old when buried, in the late fifth and sixth centuries.[6] They may have been heirlooms or were markers of legitimacy for new leaders who adopted what had been the principal clothing signs of elite status of the preceding generation together with other signs of status. It is possible that like other forms of fifth-century British artefacts found in sixth-century "Anglo-Saxon" graves, such as certain type-G penannular brooches (open-ring-shaped brooches, with two decorated terminals; usually copper-alloy), there was also an inter-generational gender change in the wearing of Quoit brooches in life or a gender change in their display for the purposes of the grave.[7] They may have been worn by both wealthy men and women in Kent in the early to mid-fifth century, but three generations later they were displayed only in the graves of women, some of whom may have been their descendants.

The objects used in grave tableaux with an origin or inspiration from Jutland are significant in number but far from common. They consisted principally of gold bracteates (small gold coin-shaped pendants, with intertwined animal ornament) and square-headed brooches, during the later fifth century. However, bracteates were not interred in graves in Jutland. Instead they tended to be votive deposits at pagan religious cult sites, often in wetland bogs; for example, in the marshy wetland edge of the fjord-harbour settlement at Stavnsager, in east Jutland. There were also more limited similarities in stylistic and decorative traits among cruciform brooches and pottery vessels, between Jutland and Kent. By the sixth century, gold bracteates and square-headed brooches with Jutland-inspired zoomorphic artwork were only interred in the most richly furnished female graves, probably reflecting a Kentish elite. Most, if not all of the sixth-century square-headed brooches indicating affiliations to southern Scandinavia were probably made in Kent.[8] Their reduced use in the sixth century to the richest female graves seems to reflect a memory of Jutish affiliation, and perhaps ancestry. However, the rich female graves with the bracteates and square-headed brooches were also those which contained the small number of Quoit brooches of native derivation; and perhaps even more significantly, they were also the female graves with the majority of dress accessories and artefacts derived from northern France, Belgium and the Rhineland. Multiple brooch types of northern French and Rhineland origin were placed in the female graves, reflecting a much more composite maritime-created elite identity in Kent, with affiliations as close to the "Frankish" societies of northern France and the middle Rhineland as to southern Scandinavia. Indeed, there is also a concentration of Jutland-inspired gold bracteates and square-headed brooches in the middle Rhine region. Hence, one cannot claim that Kentish "Anglo-Saxon" society had the monopoly on "Jutish" affiliation in the later fifth and sixth centuries. What can be said is that the connectivity provided by the North Sea and the Rhine-valley river corridor provided the means for the movement of people, ideas and craftsmen who used new and old inter-generational markers to create new material expressions of identity at that time.

The furnishing of richer male graves tells a similar story. This is seen most emphatically in the distribution of swords of the Bifrons-Gilton type, with distinctive ring attachments to decorate their pommels. They were made predominantly in Kent during the sixth century, and discoveries concentrate in Kent, the region of Pas-de-Calais on the opposite side of the Channel from Kent, and in the Marne and Meuse river valley systems, in northern France, a political heartland of the Merovingian Frankish kings. Their diffusion again reflects maritime and river-corridor connections, and probably the maintenance of cross-Channel social alliances between the Kentish elites and the rulers of Francia, witnessed textually later in the sixth century in the marriage between the Frankish princess, Bertha, to King Æthelbert of Kent.

In maritime western Britain, we see a different use of the past and memory in the creation or consolidation of new socio-political groupings during the later fifth and sixth centuries. Western Britain had been the least "Romanized" part of the Roman provinces of Britannia. Yet, during the course of the fifth century, the leading social stratum (at least) of western Britain (Wales, Scotland) and Ireland adopted an ideological and material culture "package" based on the Late Antique fifth-century idea of what it was to be Roman. That is, they adopted Christianity, the religion of the Roman empire from the fourth century but only found in south-eastern Britain prior to AD 400. They also adopted existing traditions of monumental epigraphic and incised pictographic memorials, for which they used the distinctive Roman uncial script, and other scripts deriving from it as used in Britain and Ireland, plus the Irish ogham script. They also began to import fine pottery tablewares, glass vessels, amphorae and foodstuffs from the eastern Mediterranean, north Africa, Spain, and western Gaul/France, between the fifth and seventh centuries.

The distribution clusters of Mediterranean Phocaean and African red slipware pottery and amphorae, which transported wine, olive oil and possibly garum (fish paste), on the southern and western coasts of Iberia, southwest Britain and southern Ireland suggest a trade route travelling out of the Straits of Gibraltar and up the Atlantic coast in the sixth century. The discovery of a glass flagon from the elite centre at Tintagel (Cornwall), paralleled in sixth- to seventh-century cemetery finds at Malaga and Cadiz, further reinforces the operation of such a trade route along the Atlantic coast.[9] Ewan Campbell has convincingly argued that this reflects a sixth-century trade led by Byzantine merchants, in search of tin from southwest Britain, and perhaps gold and copper from southern Ireland.[10] Hence, adoption of "Roman" identities and social practices was undertaken initially in an environment of intermittent direct contact with mariners from the eastern Roman, Byzantine world.

Archaeological evidence also shows direct contacts between western Britain and the Atlantic coast of France during the sixth and seventh centuries, which is seen in a number of archaeological media: namely, stone epigraphic monuments and ecclesiastical raw materials, pottery, and glass vessels. For example, Jeremy Knight drew attention to the similarities between incised, Christian cross memorials of the sixth- to seventh-centuries from Nantes (Loire Atlantique) and Pouillé (Vienne), with Irish-Sea examples at Inismurray (Co. Sligo) and Ardwall Isle (Dumfries and Galloway).[11]

The maritime dispersion and exchange of religious commemorative practices and materials for ecclesiastical purposes is also reflected by the presence of the mineral, orpiment (arsenic sulphide), from Vesuvius in the Bay of Naples, at the fortified centre at Dunadd (Argyll) in western Scotland. This volcanic mineral was used to produce a yellow dye for manuscript illumination.[12] It may have been acquired by the secular rulers of Dunadd, as a gift for the nearby island-monastic community of Iona. It had probably travelled on the trade route from the Mediterranean via the Rivers Garonne or the Loire to the Atlantic coast of France, and then to western Scotland. Significant quantities of white/cream-coloured pottery tablewares, produced in western France and known in Britain and Ireland as "E-ware," are

also present along the western coast of Britain, in Cornwall, south Wales and western Scotland. The source area of this western French pottery is currently uncertain, as kilns that produced it have never been found, but the character of the clay would suggest a production area in the lower Charente-Saintonge region. Glass drinking vessels, probably produced in the Bordeaux region of southwest France, are also dispersed around the Irish Sea, mirroring the distribution of E-ware pottery.[13]

In western Britain, therefore, we see the deliberate choice to adopt the contemporary fifth- and sixth-century memories of what it was to be "Roman" by elites who had never wanted to express themselves as Roman when incorporated within, or situated just beyond the Roman Empire in the fourth century. The use and adoption of these Roman memories, belief systems and social practices, in terms of Christian ideology and its material manifestations, elite foods and luxury tablewares, can be seen as a strategy to mark western, Christian "Roman" Atlantic societies from their eastern "Anglo-Saxon," pagan neighbours, within early post-Roman Britain.

<h1>Coastal Societies and Cycles of Maritime Orientation through Time around the Southern North Sea and Kattegat, c. 650-1000

Time, remembering in different ways and forgetting also played key roles in the cycles or rhythms of maritime-orientation and its loss among the coastal and estuarine societies of northern Europe, between the seventh and eleventh centuries. Put at its simplest, living next to the sea or a major waterway did not always result in use of maritime or river resources, communications or exchange networks. Instead, we see interesting cycles and scales of connectivity and relative isolation through time. In some cases, earlier social practices were remembered, whereas in others they were forgotten, intentionally or otherwise.

Around the North Sea and the Kattegat (the entrance waterway to the Baltic Sea), the societies of the low-lying coasts of eastern England, Flanders, Frisia and Jutland show very similar cycles of connection, between c. 600 and 800. INSERT FIG. 25.1 HERE. For example, in eastern England between the Humber estuary and the Fens (Fig. 1), the full spectrum of the social and settlement hierarchy had access to imported goods (pottery, quern-stones, and often glass vessels and coinage) from northern France, Frisia (a region that in the Early Middle Ages extended along the North-Sea coast of the Netherlands from the Rhine mouth eastwards to include parts of northern Germany), Rhineland Germany and, sometimes, western Denmark.

There was differential consumption based on social rank on both sides of the North Sea, here illustrated by comparative trends on estate centres in eastern England and Jutland at Flixborough (Lincolnshire) and Stavnsager (East Jutland). The former centre enjoyed consumption of sixty-five Continental glass vessels, and over thirty silver coins (*sceattas*), eighteen of them from Frisia and northern France, and Continental pottery vessels during the eighth century, alongside prestigious consumption of wild, documented "feast species" from coastal margins and the sea (cranes, large wildfowl and dolphins – see Fig. 2), although fishing was estuarine and in-shore alone.[14] INSERT FIG. 25.2 HERE.

A similar consumption and connection pattern is seen in the artefact remains at the chieftain's centre and harbour settlement at Stavnsager on the Kattegat strait, in East Jutland (Fig. 3). INSERT FIG. 25.3 HERE. The presence of an elite is marked by fine dress accessories, both male and female, and also by weapons and riding gear from settlement contexts. Far-flung connections are also reflected, between the sixth and eighth centuries, marked by dress accessories and weapon fittings from Frisia, the Frankish kingdoms, Anglo-Saxon England, Wales and Irish-Sea territories, and the Baltic region (Fig. 4).[15] INSERT

. In contrast, settlements of free proprietors or tied peasants tend to yield small quantities of imported glass vessel fragments, coins and pots along the North Sea coastal marshlands of eastern England, Flanders and Frisia.[16] The situation is less clear in Jutland due to more limited excavation of smaller coastal settlements, but preliminary indications may suggest a similar picture.[17] Nevertheless, the full spectrum of coastal populations had access to objects and commodities that would have been regarded as luxuries, and would have been beyond the reach of free- and tied-peasants further inland, beyond major river corridors.

In the ninth century, long-distance international exchange was much diminished on both sides of the southern North Sea (the early Viking Age was as bad for western Scandinavia as it was for eastern England, Flanders and northern Francia). Instead, there was a focus on more intensive production and regional maritime exchange. So, for example, the estate centre at Flixborough (Lincolnshire) was transformed into a centre for producing fine cloth, linked to specialist sheep husbandry and into a centre for metalworking (it may have been a monastic estate centre at this time). There was very limited exploitation of local maritime or marshland wild resources. Regional maritime exchange along the North Sea-coast is reflected in imported pottery made at the port of Ipswich in Suffolk, and by coinage minted by the Mercian and West Saxon kings in London and Kent, during the ninth century.[18]

A similar fall in long-distance contacts was also seen at the chieftain's settlement and harbour at Stavnsager, in Jutland, with maritime links re-focussed on southern Norway and the western Baltic alone. However, despite the decline in the geographical scope of contacts a major waterfront and slipway, made of heat-shattered granite rubble, was constructed over a distance of c. 700 metres along the fjord edge at Stavnsager at this time. Therefore, any social and economic impact caused by the diminished scope of contacts was replaced by greater intensity and scale of regional maritime exchange, probably of agricultural products, textiles and possibly iron.[19]

Accompanying the picture of increasingly specialist production and regional maritime exchange at rural central places, the smaller settlements of the wider coastal populations also reflect greater specialisation over the course of the eighth and ninth centuries, which must have been accompanied by greater levels of movement by water and by land for purposes of the exchange of these products, or their payment as taxation-in-kind to linked estate centres. Both this specialisation and the nature of some of the products have a specific relationship to the impact of time and its management.

One of the products that became more significant as a commodity during the course of the eighth and ninth centuries around the North Sea was salt—a key product for preservation of foods, whether through salting and smoking of meat and fish or through conversion of dairy products to cheese. The time for the production and movement of salt would also have been governed by seasonality. Archaeological evidence, for example from Fishtoft (Lincolnshire), near Boston in the Lincolnshire fens of eastern England (Fig. 1), indicates that salt production was one of a range of activities conducted alongside animal husbandry and some cereal cultivation, often of salt-tolerant barley.[20] Movement of a bulk commodity like salt was better achieved by boat or pack-animal in the summer; and the likelihood of seasonal activities, especially those involving regional transport and exchange, would also have left coastal peasant households with gender and age imbalances when, presumably, adult men were away from their home settlements.

Increased specialisation by some peasant-proprietors and also larger estate owners, in regard to salt production and other coastal commodities, and also their transport and exchange by river or sea, would have resulted in the development of regional merchants, and their households can be expected to have had very significant gender and age imbalances for extended periods, with large numbers of women, older men and children. The vulnerability of these households when significant numbers of the adult male population were absent could

have provided an incentive for increasingly specialist artisans and merchants to locate their families and principal dwellings in the growing ports of the later seventh to ninth centuries, where close royal protection could be obtained at the price of taxation.

By the tenth and eleventh centuries, the rural centres at Flixborough and Stavnsager were no longer integrated within any regional or long-distance maritime exchange links. They were merely estate centres relying on local resources, and for specialist services their owners had to travel to major ports or regional administrative towns. They seem to have lost their direct contact with mariners and maritime networks entirely, and their populations had become focussed totally on agricultural production and consumption of the resources of their estate territories.[21] At Flixborough (called *Conesby*—King's Settlement in Old Danish—by the tenth century), there was a return to consumption of the local wild resources of the marshland landscape and Humber estuary (wildfowl and dolphins), with continued limited levels of river, estuarine, and in-shore fishing, though all evidence of maritime exchange had been lost.

It is difficult to know whether the return of the patterns of exploitation of wild species of the eighth century has any relationship, in terms of remembered practices, with those of the tenth to eleventh centuries. They may, instead, reflect the reappearance of the expected social practices of secular rural lords, in terms of hunting and falconry. A limited level of regional exchange is evident with towns and the Humber region, suggested through wheel-made pottery manufactured at the regional centre at Lincoln among others. The extent and nature of connections seem no different to smaller settlements of free and tied peasant proprietors, despite the dramatically increased production and exchange of salt within this region during the tenth and eleventh centuries.[22]

At Stavnsager, in Jutland, on the opposite side of the North Sea, there is currently even less archaeological evidence of continued links with the sea through trade or fishing from the later tenth and eleventh centuries, even though it was a fjord-edge settlement and the waterway would still have been navigable to the shallow draught sea-going ships and river boats of the period (despite some silting). Even though archaeological evidence for a continued maritime focus is lacking on behalf of the occupants of Stavnsager, textual and archaeological evidence from the wider region of Jutland and the Danish islands indicates that farmers still maintained a link with the sea through involvement in seasonal inshore sea-fishing for herring from their harbours or landing places into the central and later Middle Ages.

Sometimes, local lords also tried to break the monopolies of the larger trading ports by encouraging the growth of local harbours again from the twelfth century.[23] Fish remains have not yet been found at Stavnsager probably due to the acid leaching of the sandy soils but there remains the possibility that the tradition of linkage with the sea through marine fishing was maintained into the later Middle Ages. However, any co-operative fishing expeditions conducted by the inhabitants from the early to mid-twelfth century onwards would probably have been launched from harbours other than Stavnsager, as the remains of a raised track-way running across part of the silted fjord (made from wood felled in 1106, on the basis of dendrochronology) suggest that it had become un-navigable for sea-going ships by that time.[24]

<h1>Material Culture, Representation and Memory in Port-Towns, c. 900-1050

Increased specialisation and longer duration of waterborne journeys for exchange, trade and the transport of goods by sea and river may have been a catalyst to the foundation of larger communities of artisans and seafaring and river-traders in estuarine or river locations during

the course of the seventh century. Such forces for the co-operative foundation of larger settlements for mutual protection and access to water-based communications could be some of the most important in the development of the "emporia" ports of seventh- to ninth-century northern Europe. The influence of the time spent away from these larger "home" settlements by itinerant artisans and seafaring merchants would also have resulted in a very significant incentive to co-operate with the emerging royal dynasties and kingdom structures of the time, in terms of requesting armed royal protection for the nascent ports, with their seasonally larger proportions of women, older men, children and foreign traders than other nodes within the settlement hierarchy. The quid pro quo of this alliance of protection with ruling authorities was taxation. However, the abundant access to silver coinage and consumption of glass vessels and other imports in mercantile households at ports such as Hamwic-Southampton and Fishergate-York shows that taxed merchant-artisans were still profiting materially from their trading activities. It is certainly the case, however, that the impact of time spent by merchants and itinerant specialist artisans away from their family groups has been underplayed when considering possible merchant agency in the creation of ports, in the face of models stressing elite initiative in their foundation.[25]

The manipulation of representation, time and deliberate acts of forgetting is an even more demonstrable feature of the relationships between the emerging merchant-elites of port-towns and the landed aristocracies of northwest Europe, between the tenth and mid eleventh centuries. During the course of the tenth century, and especially from c. 950, there is clear evidence of the upward social mobility of merchant-artisans, especially in major port-towns or cities around the North Sea, the Channel and the Irish Sea. For example, the families of goldsmiths, metalworkers, moneyers (who mint money), and other artisans of Coppergate, in York, used imported materials and objects such as Byzantine or central Asian silk, in the form of a bonnet and offcuts, and also silver dirhem coins, minted in Islamic central Asia. They also possessed weapons, riding gear (horse-bits, harness, and a silver-inlaid wooden saddle).[26] The bones of two hunting birds, a goshawk and a smaller sparrowhawk, were also recovered from the Coppergate tenements, including the documented prey species, such cranes and other wildfowl, previously seen in quantity on wealthy rural estate centres, such as Flixborough.[27] This suggests that the merchant-artisans of Coppergate could indulge in pastimes previously the preserve of rural elites.

Charters from the 960s onwards indicate that some artisans, especially moneyers, goldsmiths and other metalworkers (artificers), and stone masons/engineers, were granted or purchased substantial rural estates, on which they were entitled to hunt, in the vicinity of London in particular, but also Worcester and other towns. In their ownership of riding gear, weapons and hunting animals, they were probably becoming indistinguishable from many rural aristocrats, especially the *thegns*—local and regional lords. Indeed, the funnelling of long-distance international exchange through major port-town markets, such as London and York, may well have resulted in leading merchant-artisans having access to more exotic portable wealth and clothing than many rural lords.

By 1000, if a freeborn merchant financed and undertook a voyage across the sea twice, he was automatically given the rank of *thegn*/aristocrat—reflecting the value attributed to the time away from the home settlement on voyages, and increasing merchant-seafarer wealth to finance them. It is no accident, therefore, that from mid-tenth century, we also witness rural aristocrats being given or buying urban town-houses and estates to generate income and gain access to exotica in major port cities.[28] From the late tenth century, we see leading merchants, such as the Deorman family of moneyers and spice traders in the port-city of London, becoming rich by combining commerce and royal office; and by the mid eleventh century the family had estates both within London and its rural hinterland.[29]

By the 1050s, when Edward the Confessor ordered the building of his Romanesque Westminster Abbey, he did not put a secular or ecclesiastical aristocrat in charge of its direction. Instead, he placed the direction of the abbey's construction under his church-wright (stone mason), Teinfrith, who possessed a large rural estate at Shepperton (Middlesex) of "eight hides" (i.e. its produce could support at least eight extended families). Teinfrith was supported in his task by the London merchant "burgesses," Leofsi and Alwine, who were also urban and rural landowners and held the rank of *thegn*, the lowest level of aristocracy.[30]

Within the context of the complex social worlds of these port cities, where the world of "portable wealth" and commerce faced the world of "landed wealth" and political authority, there are some key markers shedding light on the use and possession of old objects and art-styles, and the use of memory (or not) for strategies of competition, legitimacy and the marking of group identity. For example, in the tenth and eleventh centuries, it is quite clear that brooch styles with Scandinavian-inspired "Borre," "Jelling," and "Ringerike" styles were used in towns by the same people who also used West Saxon dress accessories decorated in "Winchester" style. They also used brooch forms from Continental Europe—ansate and disc brooches. Sometimes the owners of mercantile and artisan properties in York (Coppergate) and at different sites in London seem to have used dress accessories from England, Germany and Scandinavia at the same time—and this phenomenon is mirrored to a certain extent in the rural world, especially in eastern England.[31] This suggests that within the urban milieu of port-towns aspects of dress style and jewellery signalled ethnic affiliation far less during the tenth century than they had done in previous early-medieval centuries. The origins and associations of their decorative styles had been forgotten or had certainly become insignificant within the multi-ethnic worlds of major ports.

In contrast, memory entangled with certain types of old objects may have constrained their use by their later owners owing to what Igor Kopytoff termed, their singularization or restricted access to particular social groups, when first made and circulated.[32] The biography of manufacture, use and deposition of the "Coppergate helmet" may illustrate such constraints. The Coppergate helmet was manufactured during the mid eighth century, on the basis of the decorative schemes upon it, and the inscription on its crest. Yet, it was carefully placed or even hidden in an in-filled well at the back of the rich merchant-artisan tenement properties on Coppergate, in York, during the tenth century (probably the middle of the tenth century).[33] It may be a votive deposit but these are rare in this period, and especially rare in towns, and perhaps a more plausible explanation may be that a rich metalworker or merchant had come into possession of this old helmet by purchase, or potentially as a battle trophy— the merchant-artisans of York had certainly provided armed contingents for the Northumbrian Anglo-Saxon kings from the mid eighth century at latest.[34]

It is possible that the helmet was an heirloom but this is perhaps unlikely owing to the evidence of the new material wealth created at Coppergate, dating from the tenth and eleventh centuries. The fact that someone, probably the owner, carefully hid the helmet in the well in the mid-tenth century may be a reflection of what was deemed appropriate weaponry and armour for merchant-artisans to wear within the confines of the wider urban community of the port at York, at a time when the city had only recently come under West Saxon royal control. For West Saxon royal officers and aristocrats, the possession and wearing of such a fine and old helmet by a merchant may have been beyond the bounds of acceptability for more politically powerful aristocrats and state officials of the newly created kingdom of England. Once merchant-seafarers were beyond port confines, however, and safely out to sea such "singular" social constraints may have disappeared.

The final "power-play" involving time and status contests in the port-towns of early medieval northwest Europe relates to buildings in townscapes, and the seemingly intentional maintenance of old architectural styles to convey legitimacy of social position as "old

money." This involved the construction of monumental stone town-houses in the Romanesque style from the later eleventh and early twelfth centuries, and their retention through the later Middle Ages by merchant families in Flanders, England and other regions.

For example, by the mid to late eleventh century, the river-port city of Ghent in East Flanders was probably the largest in northwest Europe, in terms of population. The merchants of Ghent had grown in wealth to become a self-governing collective by the 1040s to 1050s, when men termed, *viri illustrii* or *viri probii* (illustrious and just men) were elected from among the leading merchants to govern the town's interests in the face of the power of the count of Flanders, focussed in the townscape on the count's hall or embryonic castle in the north of the town, and the power of the two major abbeys—St. Peter's and St. Bavo's on its outskirts. As an exercise of displaying power in the townscape, the leading merchant-patricians of Ghent built up to one hundred fine Romanesque town-houses, some with towers, between the late eleventh and mid twelfth centuries.[35] During subsequent fashions in architectural development, such as the adoption of the Gothic style in the early thirteenth century, the existing Romanesque townhouses were not altered and very few new Gothic-style townhouses were built (Fig. 5). INSERT FIG. 25.5 HERE. One might assume that the merchant families no longer had the money to remodel or build fine townhouses, but this is clearly not the case. Merchant wealth increased in the thirteenth century generally. A more plausible explanation is that the Romanesque townhouses of the later eleventh and twelfth centuries were deliberately retained by merchants in major port cities like Ghent and other towns, as a form of displaying wealth and urban power of long-standing by continuing the memory of the Romanesque style. The same phenomenon is also seen in major English port cities such as London and Southampton, and in the latter port especially it has often been commented that merchants did not seem to build many new palatial town houses in the thirteenth century—they too were using the curation of the architectural styles of the past to make a statement of the longevity of their importance.[36]

Concluding Remarks

The populations of coastal, estuarine and river delta regions of early medieval northern Europe interacted with their material and social worlds between the later fifth and eleventh centuries in a variety of ways. Their living environments, situated next to large bodies of water that could be used for communication and exchange seasonally or throughout the year gave them opportunities that were exploited in different ways at different times. The actions of these societies very much encapsulate Tim Ingold's recent characterization of the "two faces of materiality": the physicality of the land-, sea- and river-scapes provided opportunities and constraints at all times but it was not environment that determined actions through time. Instead, it was the social driver of how the material world was comprehended, used and involved in human activities that influenced different aspects of social expression.[37]

The impact of time, remembering and forgetting and the changing social dynamics of different early medieval centuries produced very different patterns of material engagement and disengagement. For the immediate post-Roman period the communications provided by the seaways of North-Sea and Atlantic Europe were used to create new material expressions of social identity through the adoption and re-working of imported material-memories of Rome and Scandinavia (and other regions). Through the seventh to mid-ninth centuries, coastal societies saw changing cycles of connection and use of coastal land- and sea-scapes for production, movement and exchange, from long-distance connections for the majority in the North-Sea coastal regions, to regional and larger-scale specialist production and connection by land and water, probably resulting in greater gender and age imbalances

among coastal populations for longer periods, as more specialist seafaring and river traders emerged. Vulnerability of these coastal specialist households with adult men absent for extended periods probably resulted in location of their families in larger settlements by choice, and in co-operation with ruling elites who provided protection for taxation.

By the tenth and eleventh centuries, many of the connected rural centres and communities of earlier times demonstrated only very limited use of the sea or maritime and river communications, even though they were located next to them. Material engagement with the wider world of products from beyond their regions and their purchase had to be undertaken increasingly in towns, especially major port cities. By the eleventh century, some of the coastal specialists and seafarers of the eighth and ninth centuries had emerged as urban patricians indulging in complex "tournaments of value," in the sense of periodic contests for status,[38] with the established landed aristocracy, using objects, port townscapes and time as tools of competition and the demonstration of the antiquity of their power in those urban collectives.

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Illustrations

Fig. 1. Location of sites discussed along the low-lying coast of eastern England from the Humber estuary to the Fens (Drawn by Lacey Wallace).

Fig. 2. Jaw bones and teeth of dolphins consumed at Flixborough in its later seventh- to eighth century and tenth-century phases of occupation (Photo: Humber Archaeology).

Fig. 3. Location of Stavnsager and other key coastal and fjord-edge settlements in eastern Jutland and the Kattegat waterway (Drawn by Ragna Stidsing).

Fig. 4. A Frisian "Domburg-type" brooch (a) and a pelta-scroll-decorated piece of enamelled metalwork from the Irish-Sea region (b), both dating from the seventh century and found at Stavnsager (Photos: Reno Fiedel).

Fig. 5. One of the twelfth-century, Romanesque townhouses of Ghent (centre), next to the Church of St. Nicholas. The Romanesque house was retained until the addition of an early modern façade (Photo: Christopher Loveluck).

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[1] As defined by Christer Westerdahl, "The maritime cultural landscape," *The International Journal of Nautical Archaeology* 21.1 (1992): 5-14; and Christer Westerdahl, "From land to sea, from sea to land. On transport, borders and human space," in Jerzy Litwin, ed., *Down the River to the Sea. Proceedings of the Eighth International Symposium on Boat and Ship Archaeology, Gdansk 1997* (Gdansk: Polish Maritime Museum, 2000): 11-20.

[2] Here, I borrow the term and concept defined in the works of Lambros Malafouris and Carl Knappett. See Lambros Malafouris, "At the Potter's Wheel: An Argument for Material Agency" in Carl Knapett and Lambros Malafouris, eds., *Material Agency. Towards a Non-Anthropocentric Approach* (New York: Springer, 2010): 19-36, especially 22 and 34-35; and Carl Knappett, *An Archaeology of Interaction. Network Perspectives on Material Culture & Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

[3] For example, among others: Barry Cunliffe, *Facing The Ocean. The Atlantic and its Peoples* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); David Abulafia, *The Great Sea. A Human*

History of the Mediterranean (London: Allen Lane/Penguin, 2011); Cyprian Broodbank, *The Making of the Middle Sea. A History of the Mediterranean from the Beginning to the Emergence of the Classical World* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2013); Peter N. Miller, ed., *The Sea: Thalassography and Historiography*, Bard Graduate Center Cultural Studies of the Material World series (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2013); David Armitage and Alison Bashford, eds., *Pacific Histories. Ocean, Land, People* (London & New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

[4] See Birte Brugmann, "The role of Continental artefact-types in sixth-century Kentish chronology," in John Hines, Karen Høilund Nielsen and Frank Siegmund, eds., *The Pace of Change. Studies in Early Medieval Chronology* (Oxford: Oxbow, 1999): 37-64, especially 38-40.

[5] Barbara Yorke, *Kings and Kingdoms of Early Anglo-Saxon England,* 26-27 (London: Seaby, 1990).

[6] See Seiichi Suzuki, *The Quoit Brooch Style and Anglo-Saxon Settlement. A casting and recasting of cultural identity symbols* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2000).

[7] Christopher Loveluck and Lloyd Laing, "Britons and Anglo-Saxons," in Helena Hamerow, David A. Hinton and Sally Crawford, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Anglo-Saxon Archaeology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011): 534-555, see p. 541. On inter-generational biographies and roles of material culture, see Carl Knappett, *An Archaeology of Interaction*: 192-195; and Roberta Gilchrist, *Medieval Life. Archaeology and the Life Course* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2012): 217-218.

[8] See Karen Høilund Nielsen, "The Real Thing or Just Wannabes? Scandinavian-style Brooches in the Fifth and Sixth Centuries," in Dieter Quast, ed., *Foreigners in Early Medieval Europe: Thirteen International Studies on Early Medieval Mobility* (Mainz: Verlag des Römisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseums, 2009): 51-111, see pp. 99-101.

[9] See Ewan Campbell, "The archaeological evidence for external contacts: imports, trade and economy in Celtic Britain, AD 400-800," in Ken R. Dark, ed., *External Contacts and the Economy of Late and Post-Roman Britain* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1996): 86-88; and Ewan Campbell, "Glass", in Rachel C. Barrowman, Coleen E. Batey and Christopher D. Morris, *Excavations at Tintagel Castle, Cornwall, 1990-1999* (London: Soc. of Antiquaries, 2007): 222-228.

[10] See Ewan Campbell, "The archaeological evidence for external contacts: imports, trade and economy,": 88-89; and Ewan Campbell, *Continental and Maritime Imports to Atlantic Britain and Ireland, AD 400-800* (York: CBA Research Report 157, 2007).

[11] Jeremy Knight, "Seasoned with Salt: Insular-Gallic contacts in the early memorial stones and cross slabs," in Ken R. Dark, ed., *External Contacts and the Economy of Late and Post-Roman Britain* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1996): 109-120.

[12] See Alan Lane and Ewan Campbell, *Dunadd. An Early Dalriadic Capital* (Oxford: Oxbow, 2000).

[13] See Ewan Campbell, *Continental and Maritime Imports to Atlantic Britain and Ireland*: 65.

[14] For trends from Flixborough through time, see Christopher Loveluck, *Rural Settlement, Lifestyles and Social Change in the Later First Millennium AD: Anglo-Saxon Flixborough in its wider context. Excavations at Flixborough, Volume 4* (Oxford: Oxbow, 2007).

[15] Reno Fiedel, Karen Høilund Nielsen and Christopher Loveluck, "From hamlet, to central place, to manor: social transformation of the settlement at Stavnsager, eastern Jutland, and its networks, AD 400-1100*,"* in Titus A.S.M. Panhuysen, ed., *Transformations in North-Western Europe, AD 300-1000, Neue Studien zur Sachsen Forschung* 3 (Hannover: Theiss, 2011): 161-176.

[16] Andrew Crowson, Tom Lane, Ken Penn and Dale Trimble, *Anglo-Saxon Settlement on the Siltland of Eastern England*, Sleaford: Lincolnshire Archaeology and Heritage Reports 7, 2005); Pieterjan, Deckers, *Between Land and Sea. Landscape, Power and Identity in the Coastal Plain of Flanders, Zeeland and northern France in the Early Middle Ages (AD 500-1000), Volume 1* (Brussels: PhD, Vrije Universiteit Brussel, 2014); Menno Dijkstra and Henk van der Velde, *House plots, pots and pins. Transformations in the Rhine estuary during the Early Middle Ages*, in Titus A.S.M. Panhuysen, ed., *Transformations in North-Western Europe (AD 300-1000), Neue Studien zur Sachsenforschung* 3 (Hannover: Theiss, 2011): 15-21

[17] Martin Segschneider, *Centrality and trade on the North Frisian Islands during the Migration period*, in Ernst Stidsing, Karen Høilund Nielsen and Reno Fiedel, eds., *Wealth and Complexity. Economically specialised sites in Late Iron Age Denmark* (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press and Østjylland Museum, 2014): 65-71.

[18] Christopher Loveluck, *Rural Settlement, Lifestyles and Social Change*.

[19] Reno Fiedel et al., "From hamlet, to central place, to manor."

[20] See Paul Cope-Faulkner, *Clampgate Road, Fishtoft. Archaeology of a Middle Saxon Island Settlement in the Lincolnshire Fens* (Sleaford: Lincolnshire Archaeology and Heritage Reports 10, 2012).

[21] This is part of a wider trend of the focussing of exchange networks on towns "hubs," and especially on major ports, through the tenth and eleventh centuries, See Christopher Loveluck, *Northwest Europe in the Early Middle Ages, c. AD 600-1150. A Comparative Archaeology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013): 312-313.

[22] Helen Fenwick, "Medieval salt production and landscape development in the Lincolnshire Marsh", in Stephen Ellis, Helen Fenwick, Malcolm Lillie and Robert Van de Noort, eds., *Wetland Heritage of the Lincolnshire Marsh: An archaeological survey* (Kingston-upon-Hull: English Heritage and the University of Hull, 2001): 231-241.

[23] See Jens Ulriksen, "Danish sites and settlements with a maritime context, AD 200-1200", *Antiquity* 68 (1994): 797-811, especially pp. 798-801.

[24] See Reno Fiedel et al., "From hamlet, to central place, to manor": 161.

[25] For some earlier consideration of the impact of time and vulnerability of mercantile families on port foundation, see Christopher Loveluck, *Northwest Europe in the Early Middle Ages*: 211-212.

[26] See Ailsa Mainman and Nichola S. H. Rogers, "Craft and economy in Anglo-Scandinavian York," in Richard A. Hall, David W. Rollason, Mark Blackburn, David N. Parsons, Gillian Fellows-Jensen, Allan R. Hall, Harry K. Kenward, Terry P. O"Connor, Dominic Tweddle, Ailsa J. Mainman and Nichola S. H. Rogers, *Aspects of Anglo-Scandinavian York. The Archaeology of York,* Vol 8, fascicule 4 (York: Council for British Archaeology and York Archaeological Trust, 2004): 459-487, see p. 482; Penelope Walton Rogers, *Textile Production at 16-22 Coppergate. The Archaeology of York,* Vol 17, fascicule 11 (York: Council for British Archaeology and York Archaeological Trust, 1997), see p. 1779; Patrick Ottaway, *Anglo-Scandinavian Ironwork from Coppergate. The Archaeology of York,* Vol 17, fascicule 6 (York: Council for British Archaeology and York Archaeological Trust, 1992): 698-718.

[27] See Terry P. O'Connor, "Animal Bones from Anglo-Scandinavian York," in Richard A. Hall et al., *Aspects of Anglo-Scandinavian York*: 427-445, see pp. 436-438.

[28] See Christopher Loveluck, *Northwest Europe in the Early Middle Ages*: 314-318 and 325-327; and Robin Fleming, "Rural Elites and Urban Communities in Late Saxon England," *Past & Present* 141 (1993): 3-37.

[29] See Pamela Nightingale, *A Medieval Mercantile Community: The Grocers' Company and the Politics and Trade of London, 1000-1485* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995): 24-37.

[30] See Richard Gem, "Craftsmen and Administrators in the Building of the Confessor"s Abbey," in Richard Mortimer, ed., *Edward the Confessor: The Man and the Legend* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2009): 168-172.

[31] See Dominic Tweddle, "Art in Pre-Conquest York," in Richard A. Hall et al., *Aspects of Anglo-Scandinavian York*: 446-458; also Gabor Thomas, "Carolingian Culture in the North Sea World: Rethinking the Cultural Dynamics of Personal Adornment in Viking-Age England," *European Journal of Archaeology*, Vol. 15, No. 3 (2012): 486-518, see pp. 505-507 and 510.

[32] See Igor Kopytoff, "The cultural biography of things: commoditization as process," in Arjun Appadurai, ed., *The social life of things* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988): 64-91 especially 73-83.

[33] For a discussion of the helmet and the circumstances of its deposition, see Dominic Tweddle, *The Anglian Helmet from Coppergate. The Archaeology of York,* Vol. 17, fascicule 8 (London: Council for British Archaeology and York Archaeological Trust, 1992).

[34] See Altfrid, *Vita Liudgeri*, Chapters 11-12, Wilhelm Diekamp, trans., *Die Vitae sancti Liudgeri,* Geschichtsquellen des Bistums Münster 4 (Münster: Theissing, 1881).

[35] See Marie-Christine Laleman, "Témoins des basses-cours seigneuriales dans le tissue urbain d'une ville: l'exemple de Gent (Gand, Flandre Orientale, Belgique)," *Château Gaillard* 21 (2004): 179-189; and Marie-Christine Laleman and Patrick Raveschot, "Maisons patriciennes médiévales à Gand (Gent), Belgique," in Pierre Demolon, Henri Galinié and Frans Verhaeghe, eds., *Archéologie des Villes dans le Nord-Ouest de l'Europe (VIIe – XIIIe siècle)* (Douai: Société d'archéologie médiévale, 1994): 201-206.

[36] See John Schofield, *Medieval London Houses* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995); and Colin Platt and Richard Coleman-Smith, *Excavations in Medieval Southampton 1953-1969, Vol. 1, The Excavation Reports* (London: Leicester University Press, 1975).

[37] Tim Ingold, *Making. Anthropology, Archaeology, Art and Architecture* (London and New York: Routledge, 2013): 27-28.

[38] See Arjun Appadurai, "Introduction: commodities and the politics of value," in Arjun Appadurai, ed., *The Social Life of Things* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988): 3-63 especially 21-25.