

The Archaeology of Medieval Europe

Vol. 1 · Eighth to Twelfth Centuries AD

EDITED BY JAMES GRAHAM-CAMPBELL
WITH MAGDALENA VALOR



AARHUS UNIVERSITY PRESS

The Archaeology of Medieval Europe

EIGHTH TO TWELFTH CENTURIES AD

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Acta Jutlandica LXXXIII:1
Humanities Series 79

Aarhus University Press |

The Archaeology of Medieval Europe, vol. 1

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Graphic design and cover design by Jørgen Sparre

Cover illustration: The Bayeux Tapestry (c1070) depicts the construction of a fortification at Hastings (Sussex), for Duke William of Normandy, following his invasion of England in 1066 (Municipalité de Bayeux).

Typeset by Anne Marie Kaad

E-book production by Narayana Press, Denmark

ISBN 978 87 7124 427 4

This book has been peer reviewed

Aarhus University Press

Langelandsgade 177

DK-8200 Aarhus N

www.unipress.dk

White Cross Mills

Hightown, Lancaster, LA1 4XS

United Kingdom

www.gazellebookservices.co.uk

ISD

70 Enterprice Drive

Bristol, CT 06010

USA

www.isdistribution.com

This book is published with the financial support of

The Augustinus Foundation

The Charles University, Prague: Faculty of Philosophy and Arts (project 0021620827 MSM)

The University of Galway

The Ghent University: Department of Archaeology (Research Unit Medieval Archaeology)

The University of Lund: Faculty of Humanity and Theology

The University of Seville: HUM-712

The University of Aarhus: Department of Medieval and Renaissance Archaeology

The Aarhus University Research Foundation

Weblinks were active when the book was printed. They may no longer be active

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Mette Sørensen

At the 'Fourth European Symposium for Teachers of Medieval Archaeology' (ESTMA) held in Seville in 1999, I proposed the idea of a collaborative textbook on the medieval archaeology of Europe. This was triggered by recognition of the need to provide students across the Continent with a basis on which to build an appreciation of the European dimension of a discipline that has undergone rapid expansion over the last 50 years, but one that has remained largely based on somewhat nationally-focussed research which, as a result, is mostly published in national books and journals. This book – an eventual product of this proposal – is the first of two volumes that, I hope, will together provide a geographically and methodologically wide-ranging synthesis of this still fast-developing subject. It attempts to outline the coherences, diversities and developments of European culture in a period when Europe began to form itself into the national and cultural provinces that we recognise today.

The idea, so blithely proposed, met with enthusiasm and was gradually developed during the 1999 symposium; but, as with all such bright ideas, it had to be put on a realistic footing. A working-group was set up and a planning meeting took place in 2000, in Brussels, when the basic outline, structure and contents of the publication were discussed, and an Advisory Committee and editors were chosen. There were to be no theoretical or ideological straight-jackets; on the contrary, the project was intended to mirror the very diverse approaches to the discipline of Medieval Archaeology across Europe.

After much discussion, it was decided that there should be two volumes: the first dealing with the eighth to the twelfth centuries; the second with the twelfth to the sixteenth centuries. Both volumes would follow the same thematic pattern, and each chapter would contain some specific studies in the form of 'Box-texts'. In order to secure a broad approach, two authors, normally from different parts of Europe, were proposed for each chapter, with additional authors for some of the Boxes. We endeavoured (not entirely successfully) to cover all those medieval European countries or regions that came to adhere to Roman Christianity – a practical and oft-used, although not entirely satisfactory, demarcation. In all, forty-one authors from fifteen modern countries have contributed to this volume (see p 453). To all of them we are immensely grateful, as also to the two anonymous referees who kindly undertook the essential task of *peer-review*, to the great advantage of all concerned.

The complexity of the project called for further meetings between 2001 and 2004; these took place in Brussels, Bamberg, Tübingen and Seville, and we are very grateful to Johnny De Meulemeester, Barbara Scholkmann and Magdalena Valor for having organised them. Subsequent editorial meetings were held in Seville, London and Aarhus.

The editors of this first volume, James Graham-Campbell and Magdalena Valor, have, however, done all the really hard work, and to them we are particularly grateful. To James Graham-Campbell, however, must go our greatest gratitude. He it was who accepted the burden of the final organisation of all the texts and illustrations into a full manuscript and who adapted the various versions of English to his own language. We also wish to express our deep gratitude to Martin Comey for his efficient and engaging editorial assistance. Aarhus University Press accepted our, already finalised, publication proposal with enthusiasm, and Sanne Lind Hansen has seen it through the press, with design by Jørgen Sparre and Anne Marie Kaad. We also wish to express our gratitude to them. Finally, we thank those institutions which have contributed towards the cost of this publication (p 4).

Else Roesdahl
University of Aarhus, Denmark
Chairman, ESTMA Advisory Committee

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James Graham-Campbell

What is to be understood by ‘Medieval Europe’? Physically, of course, it consisted of the westernmost part of the Eurasian landmass, which is not in itself immediately identifiable, geographically speaking, as a continent. It is true that in the west, Europe faces the Atlantic Ocean, but the Mediterranean Sea to the south is a much more ambiguous space. Today, it divides Europe from Africa; however, during the period of the Roman Empire, the Mediterranean was not a boundary but a central space, being the essential means of communication with those who lived in the ‘civilized world’, all around its shores. In the north, on the other hand, it was only during the early Middle Ages that the Baltic Sea began to cease being a divide between peoples of different ethnic origins, with differing languages and religious traditions.

In the case of south-east Europe, it has become accepted that Turkey is a country in two continents, separated by the Bosphorus. However, Constantinople (the antecedent of Istanbul) was for long the capital city of a great Christian empire that can certainly be said to have blurred the boundaries of what is currently considered to be Europe (as described below). In the east, the continent of Europe is today considered to extend across the broad expanses of Russia and the Ukraine as far as the Ural Mountains; these have, however, been described as ‘comparatively insignificant’ and thus as providing ‘no real geographical basis’ for defining the extent of a continent (Jordan 1973).

The fact is, therefore, that Europe is a cultural construct with uncertain boundaries because of it having no objective geographical basis; likewise, it lacks a common family of languages (hence the importance of the spread of Latin as an essential element in the conversion of Western Christendom). Ultimately, the historical concept of Europe is firmly rooted in the Classical world.

The geographical scope of this over-view of the current state of medieval archaeology thus covers only part of the continent of Europe as it is known today. Its actual extent is considered below, as also the chronological scope of the survey. On the other hand, matters concerning the nature of ‘Medieval Archaeology at the Outset of the Third Millennium’ are the subject of Chapter 1.

Geographical scope

The geographical scope of this two-volume survey is Latin Europe, meaning that part of medieval Europe, or ‘Christendom’, in which the majority religion became Roman Catholic (so providing it with a degree of coherence), rather than Greek Orthodox. This

results in the omission of the territories of the Byzantine Empire, together with Russia and the Ukraine; however, this division is standard practice in medieval studies when space is at a premium. What is, however, different from standard practice is the full inclusion of the Islamic presence in the Iberian Peninsula, given that the contributions of al-Andalus to medieval Europe were far reaching in many fields – from art and architecture to technology and food.

It is not, however, the case that the Byzantine world is absent from this account, if only because of the extensive diplomatic and trading connections that existed between the two ‘Europes’ (see Chapter 10). In 726, there was a schism between Western and Eastern Christendom, with the Pope excommunicating both the Byzantine Emperor and the Patriarch in Constantinople. Breaks between the two Churches were, however, periodically patched up, although the mid-eighth century witnessed the creation of the Papal State in central Italy, under Frankish military protection (see Chapter 13). Eventually, there was to be the so-called ‘Great Schism’, in 1054, on points of theology, ritual and Church discipline.

In the eighth century, the Byzantine Empire embraced not only Asia Minor, Greece and the Aegean, but also Sicily, the heel and toe of Italy and the Dalmatian coast, as well as Cyprus in the Eastern Mediterranean (cf. map: Fig 2.5). This was, however, already a greatly reduced area from that of its sixth- and seventh-century predecessor, the Eastern Roman Empire. By the mid-twelfth century, the Byzantine Empire had further contracted both in the east, with the Moslem Seljuks established in Anatolia, and in the west with the Norman kings of Sicily also having control over southern Italy. The Byzantines had, however, succeeded in taking possession of the West Bulgarian Empire (1018) and had reduced the Serbs to vassalage, although both Bulgaria and the Serbs had previously adopted the Eastern Orthodox rite (cf. map: Fig 2.9). Indeed, even as the Byzantine Empire was shrinking, the authority of the Patriarch of Constantinople was increasing, most notably with the tenth-century conversion of Russia. On the other hand, after the First Crusade and the capture of Jerusalem (in 1099), the territories reconquered from Islam were created independent states, but as an extension of Western Christendom, rather than being returned to the Byzantine Emperor as their rightful sovereign.

Chronological coverage

This book covers the period from the eighth to the late twelfth century, but has no fixed chronological boundaries. The decision to commence this survey with the eighth century, rather than in the fifth (thus marking the end of the Roman Empire), was taken for several reasons, the principle ones of which are outlined below. On the other hand, the decision that the period from the eighth to sixteenth centuries would be divided during the twelfth century was largely one of convenience, although this period does witness some change in the available sources, e.g. the increased preservation of buildings (in stone, but also brick), as also the multiplication of written records. However, given that there is no artificially selected date to form a *terminus ante/post quem* for this first volume, it is to be anticipated that there will be some overlap with the second.

In many European regions, the eighth century was a period of increasing agricultural production that facilitated urban growth and the development of an associated life-style, supported by advances in manufacturing, technology and trade (including transport and communication). It was a period when Christianity had become well established in the territories that had once formed the western part of the Roman Empire, with the addition of Ireland, even if the Iberian Peninsula was then undergoing Islamisation. There followed the spread of Christianity, accompanied by development in Church organisation and institutional consolidation. These aspects of economic, social and religious life provide the major themes of the five centuries under review, which are said to have witnessed 'the Birth of Europe'.

Following Conversion, the previously widespread custom of burying the dead fully clothed, and even with additional grave-goods, went out of fashion across the greater part of Western Europe, generally speaking in the late seventh century. This factor makes for a significant change in the nature of the archaeological data-base after the early Middle Ages. For instance, certain types of luxury artefact manufactured on the Continent during the ninth-tenth centuries are best known from their deposition in the pagan graves of Scandinavia or elsewhere in the Viking world.

Ultimately, however, the eighth century was an important turning-point in the history of Europe because of the formation of the Carolingian Empire – the work of Charlemagne, or Charles the Great (cf. Story (ed) 2005), who reigned as King of the Franks, and subsequently also of the Lombards (in Italy), from 768-814. Even if the Empire that he created, after fifty-three military campaigns, began to fall apart after his death, medieval Europe had embarked on a new course, with Charlemagne having consummated a new relationship with the papacy. On Christmas Day in 800, the Pope in Rome crowned him the first Catholic Emperor in Western Christendom. Afterwards, he knelt in homage before Charlemagne – but only the Pope could create an Emperor. There was thus, from the start, a built-in tension to this new relationship.

Charlemagne ruled over what is properly described as the 'first Europe' (for which see also the 'Afterword'), although his Empire did not even comprise the full extent of Western Christendom during this period. This concept did not, however, last for long after his death, but nevertheless there can be no more appropriate period than the eighth century with which to commence *The Archaeology of Medieval Europe*.

Background

There is consensus that, by the ninth century at the latest, those parts of Europe that had formed part of the Roman Empire had been 'transformed' during the period since 'Late Antiquity'. Indeed, the centuries following its collapse in the fifth century have formed the subject of a major European Science Foundation Research Project (1993-98), which resulted in several publications and exhibitions, including *The Transformation of the Roman World, AD 400-900*, edited by L Webster and M Brown (1997). Other volumes in the series are cited elsewhere in this book, particularly those relating to 'Urbanism' (Chapter 4).

Following this initiative, there have been several important publications that have likewise concentrated on these formative centuries, e.g. M McCormick, *Origins of the European Economy. Communications and Commerce, AD 300-900* (2001); C Wickham, *Framing the Middle Ages: Europe and the Mediterranean, 400-800* (2005); and J Knight, *The End of Antiquity: Archaeology, Society and Religion AD 235-700* (2007).

Reference works

Students of the Middle Ages will need to familiarise themselves with an historical survey of Europe during the eighth-twelfth centuries to take full advantage of this book. One such is 'The Short Oxford History of Europe', with the relevant volumes being: *The Early Middle Ages: Europe 400-1000*, edited by R Mckitterick (2001); *From the Vikings to the Normans*, edited by W Davies (2003); and *The Central Middle Ages, 950-1320*, edited by D Power (2006).

There are various reference works, such as historical atlases and medieval encyclopedias, as well as exhibition catalogues, which students will likewise need to make use of, as essential companions to this book. Amongst the former may be noted: *The New Penguin Atlas of Medieval History*, by C McEvedy (1992); *The Penguin Historical Atlas of the Medieval World*, by A Jotischky & C Hull (2005); and the second edition of *The Atlas of Medieval Europe*, edited by D Ditchburn, S MacLean & A Mackay (2007). Obviously, such works cover the whole medieval period, as do many other historical surveys and compilations, such as *The Medieval World*, edited by P Linehan and J Nelson (2001).

Mention needs also to be made to both the *Dictionary of the Middle Ages*, in 13 volumes (1982-89), edited by J-R Strayer, and the continuing series of *Routledge Encyclopedias of the Middle Ages*, which commenced (in 1993) with *Medieval Scandinavia*, edited by P Pulsiano & K Wolf. Exhibition catalogues (such as those listed on p 260) are also a most valuable resource for medieval archaeologists because they provide numerous illustrations of artefacts and generally also contain a series of up-to-date essays. Indeed, some catalogues, such as that published for the Council of Europe's (1992) Exhibition, 'From Viking to Crusader: Scandinavia and Europe 800-1200', are available in more than one language (in this instance: English, French, German and Scandinavian; edited by E Roesdahl & DM Wilson).

Readers of German will benefit from the comprehensive contents of the recently completed 35 volumes of the *Reallexikon der Germanische Altertumskunde* (1973-2007), established by Johannes Hoops (although this does contain some contributions in English), and the *Lexikon des Mittelalters* (1977-99). Readers of Scandinavian languages have at their disposal the 22 volumes of the *Kulturhistorisk Leksikon for Nordisk Middelalder* (1956-78).

Contributors and contents

In a book of this kind, there are inevitably going to be biases in geographical coverage – not even when two (or more) authors are combined from different parts of Europe will

they have equal knowledge of every region. Some authors have chosen to merge their contributions into a single text, whereas in other chapters they have remained separate. In the merged chapters, where one of the authors has been responsible for the greater part of its contents, as with ‘Death, Life and Memory’ (Chapter 15), the authorship is listed as being by ‘Thomas Meier, with James Graham-Campbell’.

Amongst the many topics covered here, there are some that are only touched upon because of their having much increased importance from the twelfth century onwards, meaning that they are treated more fully in Volume 2 (Carver & Klápště (eds) 2011). Some topics have been deliberately omitted, such as art-history, other than in the form of a brief survey for architectural purposes, given the ever-increasing importance of buildings archaeology. There are several medieval technologies, crafts and industries, such as mining or leatherworking, which might readily have been included alongside those considered in Chapter 7. This is, however, where the chapter bibliographies (and such reference works as those noted above) need to be followed up. It is for this very reason that several authors have extended the scope of their bibliographies beyond the works actually cited by them in their chapters.

Medieval chronologies

There is no agreement amongst European medievalists, not even between historians and archaeologists, as to a standard chronology and terminology for the periodisation of the Middle Ages as a whole, quite apart from there being many long-established regional chronologies.

The following terms have been used here: ‘early medieval period’ or ‘early Middle Ages’, and ‘late medieval’ or ‘late Middle Ages’, with the ‘High Middle Ages’ inbetween, but without a too exact definition. The systems presented below are those that are currently in use in Germany (courtesy of Thomas Meier) and by the Society of Medieval Archaeology (in Britain).

Germany (archaeology)

Early Middle Ages: 450 to 8thC

Carolingian/Ottonian: 9th-10thC

High Middle Ages: 1000-1250

Late Middle Ages: 1250-1500

Germany (history)

Early Middle Ages: 476-1024

High Middle Ages: 1024-1250

Late Middle Ages: 1250-1492

Society of Medieval Archaeology

Early Middle Ages: 5th to mid-11thC (to the Norman Conquest, i.e. 1066)

High Middle Ages: mid-11th to mid-14thC (to the Black Death)

Late Middle Ages: mid-14th to mid-16thC

There would have been much to say for having followed here the German archaeological system, confining the ‘early medieval period’ to that ending in the eighth century (which is what, in practice, happens in England, where the ninth to mid-eleventh centu-

ries are generally known as either the 'late Saxon' or the 'Viking' period). Scandinavian usage, on the other hand, does not allow for this because there the 'Viking period' marks the transition from prehistory (late Iron Age) to the early Middle Ages, which are not therefore considered to commence before the eleventh century (these are matters further considered in Chapter 1).

The fact remains that the chronological scope of this book cuts across the most widely used and long-established chronologies, such as those listed above, and it clearly encompasses parts of both the 'early Middle Ages/early medieval period' and the 'High Middle Ages'. For present purposes therefore, but only as a rule of thumb (given the imprecision of much archaeological dating), these terms may be taken as representing: (i) the eighth-tenth centuries (although inevitably sometimes embracing earlier centuries); and (ii) the eleventh and twelfth centuries (although allowing for some continuity into the thirteenth).

Sources: TG Jordan, *The European Culture Area: a Systematic Geography* (New York, 1973); D Austin & L Alcock (eds), *From the Baltic to the Black Sea: Studies in Medieval Archaeology* (London, 1990); N Davies, *Europe: a History* (Oxford, 1996); J Story (ed), *Charlemagne: Empire and Society* (Manchester, 2005).

Note: the second volume of *The Archaeology of Medieval Europe* was published by Aarhus University Press in 2011 (Acta Jutlandica Humanities Series 2011/9):

M Carver & J Klápště (eds), *The Archaeology of Medieval Europe, Vol. 2: Twelfth to Sixteenth Centuries* (Aarhus, 2011).

MEDIEVAL ARCHAEOLOGY at the Outset of the Third Millennium: Research and Teaching

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Different Countries: Different Medieval Archaeologies

Medieval archaeology developed late as a university discipline. Nevertheless, medieval archaeology has been in existence at least since the nineteenth century in many countries and, as we shall see later, this means that the discipline has been defined in differing ways in different countries. Chronologically, it depends on the various definitions of the Middle Ages that are to be found in different parts of Europe: from southern Europe, where the fall of the Roman Empire in the fifth century AD marks the beginning of the Middle Ages, to Scandinavia where the transition to the Middle Ages is dated to c1050. It means that what is still prehistory in the north is already the medieval period in the south. Another important factor, which has influenced medieval archaeology, is from (or within) which discipline it developed: prehistory, art-history or history. This has inevitably influenced the particular character of the discipline in different countries.

Although that situation still exists, medieval archaeologists from different traditions agree on the main tasks of 'medieval archaeology': the study of a period in the past with a variety of sources, making use not only of material remains, but also of documentary and pictorial evidence. The archaeologist must of course lay stress on the physical material, but needs also to work to integrate this evidence with the other source material. This has consequences for the theory, methods and teaching of medieval archaeology. This situation is common ground for all historical archaeologies, which work together with text and objects (Andrén 1998). Many departments today are extending their study of medieval archaeology into later periods – and so the name may be changed, for example, into 'historical archaeology'. This means that the traditional termination of the Middle Ages, at the end of the fifteenth or the beginning of the sixteenth century, signifies less for archaeologists than it did before. This has to do with the new themes that are engaging researchers. Many of them, including urbanisation, landscape archaeology,

industrial archaeology and the archaeology of religion, cannot be restricted to certain periods. Also of importance are discussions of general human problems, in which medieval archaeologists can participate with essential data and can then, on their part, gain inspiration from others. Even if the discipline of medieval archaeology is not an extensive one, there exists a broad context within which to work.

The Development of Medieval Archaeology

The history of medieval archaeology is difficult to encapsulate. Whereas prehistoric archaeology was well defined and established as an independent discipline by the turn of the twentieth century, no such development took place for medieval archaeology much before the 1960s or 1970s. This is not to say, however, that there had been no substantial professional archaeological studies of medieval material before this period; indeed, lively activity may be identified as early as the 1800s, but this was broadly dependent on a general rise in interest in the Middle Ages. There are also significant differences in the discipline's emergence and growth in various parts of Europe. In the Mediterranean countries, classical archaeology long dominated, and it was only after the Second World War (1939-45) that medieval archaeology came into its own, in many cases with academic influence from Britain. In Eastern Europe the situation was divided. Given the role that the Slavs played in shaping early medieval society, research emphasis was placed on a 'Slavic archaeology'. In part for political reasons, therefore, the later Middle Ages did not receive the same attention. During the last few decades, however, the later medieval period has been incorporated into archaeological research programmes and, in general, more pan-European historical developments have attracted greater interest in Eastern Europe. In contrast, in Spain and Portugal, archaeology has been strongly influenced by the fact that these countries were, in large part, incorporated into the Muslim world for much of the Middle Ages.

It is in Western and Northern Europe that the different approaches to medieval archaeology have had the longest development (cf. van Regteren Altena 1990). One may recognise nuanced variations between those areas that had formed part of the Roman Empire and those that were beyond its borders. Nevertheless, there was a common ground to the emergence of medieval archaeology with the rise of Romanticism in the early 1800s, when there occurred a strong growth in interest in the Middle Ages. From a purely archaeological point of view, the nineteenth-century excavations of Merovingian graves in southern Germany represent a key development. Another manifestation of the growing interest in the Middle Ages involved the restoration and reconstruction of buildings, including both churches and castles. These helped to give rise to 'buildings archaeology' as a well-defined sub-discipline. Examples of this may be found in France, England and Scandinavia, as well as other areas. It is important to note that these initial developments were also influenced by a romantic interest in monuments, a focus that was to affect medieval archaeology for a long time. It is also worth observing that, before medieval archaeology achieved academic status as a discipline in its own right,

other areas of study – including art-history, architecture and history – had been setting the agenda and organising archaeological investigations.

The development that took off after the Second World War was initiated by settlement studies, both archaeological and historical. These concerned the countryside as well as towns, with somewhat different emphases being evident once again in the research traditions of different countries. Urban archaeology certainly existed from the beginning of the twentieth century, and even somewhat earlier. In Lund, southern Sweden, there was actually a late nineteenth-century excavation programme that focused on the medieval town. During 1915–18, parts of Nya Lödöse were discovered and excavated within the borders of modern-day Gothenburg in western Sweden. This excavation is significant because it was a professional academic study of an historic late medieval town, carried out with what were then advanced methods. While a few other isolated medieval archaeological studies were carried out before World War II, it remains true that the major development of the discipline occurred post-war. Among the pioneering work, which immediately followed the war, was W Neugebauer's excavation of the partially destroyed Lübeck and, for example, similar studies were carried out in Hamburg, as also by WF Grimes in London (Neugebauer 1980; Schindler 1957; Grimes 1968). The excavation of medieval Novgorod by AV Artsikhovskiy began in the 1930s; after the war, work was re-started by BA Kolchin, with open-area excavation being carried out on a large-scale from 1951–62, with the discovery of well-preserved wooden streets, log-constructed buildings and a vast quantity of artefacts, including letters written on birch bark (see Thompson 1967, for an English summary); work continues (cf. Yanin et al 1992), but this material lies outside the scope of this book.

It was only towards the end of the 1950s that there took place a truly rapid expansion in the archaeology of towns in the West. The leading innovator in Western Europe was Asbjørn Herteig, in Bergen, western Norway. In 1955, parts of the so-called 'German Wharf' were destroyed by fire in Bergen's harbour. This was indeed the area of medieval town where Hanseatic trade activity had been focused. Herteig's large-scale excavations (Clarke 1989) allowed him to trace how settlement and building activity had developed, as well as the manner in which the harbour area had expanded. By considering related sources, Herteig was able to establish a better understanding of the town's evolution. This manner of thinking and of planning this archaeological research had a substantial influence, especially in Sweden. From the beginning of the 1960s, archaeologists working in Lund carried out several new, extensive excavations. British participants in both the Bergen and Lund studies carried their experiences with them back to England, and it can be said, for example, that the excavations of King's Lynn reflected this methodological influence (Clarke & Carter 1977). Many other European countries followed with the adoption of large-scale urban archaeological investigations. The timing and focus of the work depended in part on how cultural heritage legislation was shaped in the different countries. An effect of these early, large-scale studies was that comprehensive artefact and site-inventory work was also carried out in many European countries. Indeed, these efforts were often aimed at protecting historical-cultural deposits against destruction and buildings that were threatened by rapid post-war reconstruction and

city-centre development, especially in Northern and Western Europe. Here, inspiration came mainly from England: Martin Biddle's analysis of London (Biddle & Hudson 1972), and CW Heighway's overview of the risks to cultural deposits in English cities (Heighway 1972), were established as model approaches. Perhaps the largest project of this sort to have then been carried out was 'Medieval Towns in Sweden and Finland' (Andersson 1992).

In Eastern Europe, the development of medieval archaeology followed a somewhat different course. Nevertheless, the archaeology of towns emerged as a driving force in the growing discipline. For example, Poland has a tradition of medieval archaeological research that can be traced back to the inter-war period, and there, after the Second World War, the study of medieval towns was integrated into a broader project concerning the rise of the Polish state. The same pattern characterised the then Czechoslovakia, where archaeological investigations concerned Great Moravia, as well as East Germany, where the Slavs became the focus of research (Leciejewicz 1993).

As for research interest into the medieval countryside, there is a virtually parallel trend in which post-World War II developments played a major role. In 1950, excavations began at Wharram Percy, in northern England, which in many ways were to set the standard for village studies in Northern Europe. From 1960 to 1962, Walter Janssen investigated the complex of ruins at Königshagen vid Harz. In 1961, Gabrielle Damians d'Archimbaud started her excavations in Rougiers, Provence. In Denmark, the ethnologist Axel Steensberg had already completed his first rural excavation by the end of the 1930s and he continued with the large-scale excavations of Store Valby (Steensberg et al 1974) and Borup Ris (Steensberg 1983). These projects were one of the inspirations for the work undertaken at Wharram Percy (Beresford & Hurst 1990). Nevertheless, these three early post-war excavations together formed the threshold for modern research into medieval rural archaeology. In England, interest in deserted medieval villages became a key focus for historical archaeology, and Italy was inspired by the research being undertaken in England, with many landscape studies carried out – often as collaborations between Italian and English research institutions.

Other significant research foci have also contributed to the modern development of medieval archaeology. For example, research on castles and fortifications took a major step-forward with the establishment of the important Chateau Gaillard conferences, which started in 1962 on the initiative of Michel de Bouard (Caen).

Major field-projects were clearly important contributors in defining the discipline in the 1950s, 60s and 70s, but there are other indications that medieval archaeology was seeking self-consciously to establish its identity as an independent discipline during these decades. This is to be seen most clearly in the creation of new university positions and institutions. In 1951, Michel de Bouard established the *Centre de Recherches Archéologiques Médiévales* at the University of Caen. In Lund, Erik Cinthio became Docent in Art-History and Medieval Archaeology (and subsequently the first Professor of Medieval Archaeology in Sweden), when the topic was formally offered for study at the university in 1962. In 1971, David Wilson became the first Professor of Medieval Archaeology in Britain, at University College London (where he had been Reader in

the Archaeology of the Anglo-Saxon Period since 1964); in addition, Olaf Olsen became Professor of Medieval Archaeology at the University of Aarhus, Denmark, in the same year. In Italy, Riccardo Francovich has shown how academic work in medieval archaeology can be traced back to the 1960s. At the same time, there was the establishment of new specialised academic journals: the first was *Medieval Archaeology* (1957), followed among others by *Archéologie médiévale* (1971), *Zeitschrift für Archäologie des Mittelalters* (1973) and *Archeologia medievale* (1974).

By the beginning of the 1970s, the discipline of medieval archaeology had generally taken shape and had become thoroughly professionalized throughout Europe. A consensus concerning the contents of the study of medieval archaeology had more or less been achieved by this time, and the following years reflect a period of consolidation. Urban archaeology experienced further growth. New research topics were integrated, such as metalworking, with a substantial emphasis on iron production. In general, both Italy and Scandinavia played an important role in the development of the discipline at this stage and, as happened in Eastern Europe a few decades earlier, medieval archaeology was incorporated into larger interdisciplinary projects. At the same time, the discussion of theory took on a more central importance, influenced not least by prehistoric archaeology, but also by history (e.g. the study of mentality).

As mentioned above, the discipline of medieval archaeology was for long closely tied to antiquarian activity and this is reflected today in an interest in historical preservation. Rescue archaeology has had a particularly tangible influence, not least concerning urban archaeology, although the scale and rate of development in cities has declined somewhat since the early post-war period, if not everywhere across Europe. The agenda of historical preservation has become so strong that fewer structures are now torn down in medieval urban centres. Instead, large-scale infrastructural projects – including motorways, railways and industrial parks – have impacted on the countryside to an unprecedented degree. It is therefore hardly surprising that the archaeology of villages has become an important topic in recent years, in some ways overshadowing urban archaeology.

Objectives and Research Topics

Modern medieval archaeology considers all material remains, in the broadest sense, to be the objects of its research, integrating the investigation of archaeological evidence with that of monuments and standing buildings. However, the importance and consideration given to these different sources varies from country to country. This is the result of independent national development and, consequently, the varying emphasis accorded to them within research agendas (Andersson & Wienberg 1993; Decaëns & Flambard Héricher 1999; Valor & Carmona 2001).

The general topics of medieval archaeology may be divided into three main fields:

- the formation of the medieval world, i.e. the transition from Late Antique or prehistoric structures and societies to those of the European Middle Ages;