



FACULTY OF SCIENCE

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Chair of the public defence:
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Opponent's questions to the candidate:

For the defence of Kristina Linscott's thesis "Interpretations of old wood – Figuring mid-twelfth century church architecture", 15/12/2017

1) The origins: wood or stone?

Following the results of the research and your deep understanding of these churches in their diachronic transformations, what is your opinion on the discussed question of the origins of the Scandinavian medieval church architecture?

- a) Derived from Romanesque (Dietrichson, 1892)
- b) Derived from Byzantine (Nicolaysen, 1854)
- c) Derived from pre-Christian local architecture, *hof*, *sal* etc. (Norberg Schultz, 1997)

2) The interface between stone and wood: *fäst-i-band*

Between the wooden tiebeam and the masonry wall, a wooden wall plate acts as a nodal interface between the two materials. According to your interpretation, this is what the Old Västgöta law puts into words, 'attached to plates' [*fäst-i-band*]. Is there any similar wooden element in the structure of Stave Church architecture?

3) The first transformation: from wood to stone.

The research infers, by the understanding of the layout of trusses, that in the origins, the front gable was open and therefore the trusses were visible from the outside. In fact, the Myrberg type of coin from Gotland in the XII century depicts clearly a church with diagonal struts on the facade (Myrberg 2008 type 1:1, variation +IO, Å3-F3) confirming this interpretation. For which reasons do you think they built this masonry gable, what did they want to hide, how could it be explained?

4) The second transformation: from wood to stone.

The research outlines the gradual transformation of these medieval parish churches from wood to masonry. The wooden structure of the attic in the origins was quite meaningful to the space beyond, later it was covered by the construction of masonry vaults, and became invisible. Why did they hide it? How would you explain this transformation in a wider historical context?

5) Parallel inverse transformations: from stone to wood

These five churches in Västergötland, recall in the name of the region, but not only, the Gothic architecture. In the same years of the construction of the earliest example, i.e. Forsby 1135, we can find the first appearance of Gothic characters in architecture, e.g. St. Anne, Jerusalem 1132, and St. Denis, 1144. Is it possible to correlate the transformation from wood to masonry of these churches with the coeval transformation from Romanesque to Gothic in architecture?

6) The Gothic character of modernist architecture: wooden stones.

Finally, there is also a more recent derivation: that of the modernist style in architecture as oriented to lightness and independence of structure and skin. Some characters can be found in these churches and, as a comparative case, in Sverre Fehn's Nordic pavilion at the Venice Biennale, 1962. Do you think that the understanding of these constructions did influence modern and contemporary architecture?

References

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Norberg-Schulz, Christian (1997). *Nightlands: Nordic Building*. Boston: MIT Press.

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