

Anna-Stina Häggglund

Birgittine landscapes

Three monasteries in their local and regional environment across the Baltic Sea Region
c. 1410–1530



Palus dei loquitur. Audite omnes inimici mei in mundo vinetis. quia ad amicos meos non loquor.
Audite omnes clerici. Archiepi. Epi. et omnes inferiores domus ecclesie. Audite omnes religiosi cuiuscumque
que ordinis estis. Audite reges et principes et iudices terre et omnes servientes. Audite mulieres. regie
et principes. ac omnes domine et anales et omnes cuiuscumque conditionis et gradus estis. magni et parvi
qui habitatis orbem. Verba hec que ego ipse qui creavi vos. nunc loquor ad vos. Ego conquor quod recessistis
a me et adistis dyabolo voluntate et obedistis suggestoribus eius. Derisistis quod ego sanguine meo re-
tuli vos. et nichil quod nisi aias vestras. Ideo redite ad me cum humilitate. et vestros filios suscipiam vos.





Anna-Stina Hägglund

Born 1990

Previous studies and degrees:

Master of Arts, Åbo Akademi University 2016

Picture on the cover: *Revelationes caelestes: mit Vita abbreviata sanctae Birgittae, Inhaltsverzeichnis. Tabula und Bittgebet zur hl. Birgitta*, Bartholomäus Ghotan, Lübeck 1492, f. 16v., München, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek.

Åbo Akademi University Press
Tavastgatan 13, FI-20500 Åbo, Finland
Tel. +358 (0)2 215 4793
E-mail: forlaget@abo.fi

Sales and distribution:
Åbo Akademi University Library
Domkyrkogatan 2–4, FI-20500 Åbo, Finland
Tel. +358 (0)2 -215 4190
E-mail: publikationer@abo.fi

BIRGITTINE LANDSCAPES



Birgittine landscapes

Three monasteries in their local and regional environment
across the Baltic Sea Region c. 1410–1530

Anna-Stina Hägglund

Åbo Akademis förlag | Åbo Akademi University Press
Åbo, Finland, 2022

CIP Cataloguing in Publication

Hägglund, Anna-Stina.

Birgittine landscapes : three monasteries in their local and regional environment across the Baltic Sea Region c. 1410–1530 / Anna-Stina Hägglund.
- Åbo : Åbo Akademi University Press, 2022.

Diss.: Åbo Akademi University.

ISBN 978-952-389-022-0

ISBN 978-952-389-022-0
ISBN 978-952-389-023-7 (digital)
Painosalama Oy
Åbo 2022

*To Linnea and Paul,
In loving memory*

Acknowledgements

This study is the result of a long process that started over a decade ago when I began writing my bachelor's thesis on donations to Nådendal monastery. Through the sources from Nådendal, I ventured into the fascinating world of medieval pious donations, which is a topic that never ceases to provide new perspectives on research. Over the years, this work expanded into a master's thesis on donations in the medieval diocese of Turku and eventually to this present work on the Birgittine monasteries in the Baltic Sea region. Many people have crossed my roads on this journey, joined me in inspiring discussions, and given their vital comments that have led the work forward.

First of all, I am thankful to my supervisors. Professor emeritus Nils Erik Villstrand in Nordic History at Åbo Akademi University who has supported my work ever since my years as an undergraduate student. Professor Johanna Ilmakunnas in Nordic History became my supervisor at Åbo Akademi University in 2019 and I am ever grateful to her reading numerous versions of the text. Her competent and constructive comments have been vital to improve the manuscript. In 2016, when I began the work on the dissertation, I also had the honour of being appointed Professor emeritus Jens E. Olesen at Ernst Moritz Arndt Universität in Greifswald as my assisting supervisor. I am immensely thankful to Professor Olesen for his help with my archival work and his comments on the text, founded in his great expertise on the political history of the Baltic Sea region. Finally yet importantly, I would like to thank Professor Kirsi Salonen at the University of Bergen who has acted as my primary supervisor. Professor Salonen has guided my work through the years and given important advice based on her profound knowledge of the late medieval sources. I thank her for our many discussions, occasionally accompanied by a glass of sparkling wine, and for her great interest in reading and commenting the manuscript. Tack och skål!

This book owes much to the valuable comments of Professor Emilia Jamroziak at Leeds University and Associate professor Johnny G. G. Jakobsen at the University of Copenhagen who functioned as preliminary examiners of this dissertation. I am thankful that they agreed to read and comment my work. Their feedback gave invaluable help at the final stages of the work on the manuscript.

I am most thankful to Assistant professor Panu Savolainen at Aalto University who has drawn all the maps for this book. His illustrations provide an important contribution to visualize my research on the Birgittine landscapes.

During the work on the dissertation, I have had the privilege to meet a number of distinguished scholars. Most memorable is the meeting with late Professor Tore Nyberg at Odense University in the beginning of my dissertation journey. I am honoured and thankful for Nyberg's supportive and inspiring words to me as a young scholar. I further want to thank Professor Kurt Villads Jensen at the University of Stockholm for many engaging discussions on medieval history and for

his valuable input on my work. I also thank Professor Marko Lamberg at the University of Helsinki for encouraging me as a young student interested in medieval history to embark on a career as a researcher.

As a medievalist, the work with primary sources is vital and I am grateful to Docent Tapio Salminen at Tampere University for his help with accessing digital copies of sources from Tallinn. I am also grateful to the editors at the *Diplomatarium Suecanum* for their guidance on the medieval sources and Birgittine texts in the National Archives in Stockholm. Many thanks to Docent Sara Risberg, editor at the *Diplomatarium Suecanum* and Docent Claes Gejrot, editor in chief at *Diplomatarium Suecanum*. I am also grateful to the staff at the City Archives in Stralsund and State Archives in Szczecin for their help with the archival material concerning Marienkrone monastery. Further, I wish to thank Maija Ojala-Fulwood at Tampere University for being a supportive friend throughout the journey and for her help in finding appropriate translations to words in Middle-low German.

Academic work is a collective endeavour and I have had the opportunity to present my research at several seminars, workshops, and conferences. It has been a pleasure to participate in the activities at the Centre for Medieval and Early Modern Studies (TUCEMEMS) at the University of Turku. Many thanks to the colleagues Marika Räsänen, Reima Välimäki, Teemu Immonen, Minna Sandelin, and Anni Hella at TUCEMEMS for many engaging discussions and enjoyable social events.

In August 2018, I had the opportunity to visit the international Graduiertenkolleg Baltic Borderlands at the University of Greifswald, which gave an excellent opportunity to meet other PhD candidates working on topics related to the history of the Baltic Sea region. In March 2020, right before the Covid-19 pandemic broke out, I participated in the annual desk exchange arranged by the Swedish National Graduate School of Historical Studies and visited the Department of History at Stockholm University. There I also had the possibility of presenting my project at a seminar arranged by the Centre for Medieval Studies.

During the last phase of my work, I have also had the privilege of becoming a member of the research project *Lived Religion in Medieval Finland* at Tampere University, financed by the Swedish Literature Society in Finland. Many thanks to the colleagues Sari Katajala-Peltomaa, Marika Räsänen, Sofia Lahti, and Minna Heinonen for engaging teamwork and fun excursions to various medieval sites in Finland. I also thank the colleagues at our Swedish sister project *Mapping Lived Religion* at Linneus University.

I also wish to express my gratitude to the staff at the History Department at Åbo Akademi University: senior lecturers Ann-Catrin Östman and Laura Hollsten, and Professor Holger Weiss. Many thanks to my fellow colleagues and friends at the History Department for many lively discussions, well-needed coffee breaks and afterwork beers. Warm thanks to Marika Kivinen, Miriam Rönqvist, Kajsa Varjonen, Anna Sundelin, Kasper Kepsu, Johanna Wassholm, Andreas Granberg, Jutta Ahlbeck, Evelina Wilson, Hanna Lindberg, Oscar Winberg, Patrik Hettula, Christoffer Holm, Emil Kaukonen, Rolf Enander, Rasmus

Marjanen, Robin Engblom, Carl-Erik Strandberg, Johan Ehrstedt, Martins Kwazema, Matias Kaihovirta, Anders Ahlbäck, Kasper Braskén, Robert Louhimies, Peeter Tammisto, Fredrik Wallquist, Mats Wickström and Stefan Norrgård.

For the most part of the time working on the dissertation, I have been employed at the Age of Sweden doctoral network at the History Department at Åbo Akademi University. The work could though not have been finalized during the without the grants from the Swedish Literature Society in Finland and the Swedish Cultural Foundation in Finland. I am also grateful to the Frenckell Foundation that gave me a grant for travelling to England and attending the International Medieval Congress in Leeds in 2018.

Finally, life is not just work and I am joyful of my dear friends who have supported me throughout the process. Cordial thanks to Josefin Finne, Sanna Nyholt and Mathias Hultman, Andrea Bäck and Tony Wesander for your long-lasting friendship and support. Warm thanks to Linda Saastamoinen, Emmi Samsten, Mats Nyman, Tommy Ramstedt, Robin Isomaa, and Minna Laukkanen for many fun moments taking my mind off from work. I am also ever thankful to my relatives and family friends who have always encouraged me. Thank you Kerstin Svartnäs, Maggan and Roger Johansson, Sofia Hägglund, Anita Forssén, Tina and Leif Gran, Katarina Byggnings and Richard Skrifvars, Kjell-Erik Blom, Yasmine Blom, and Benjamin Blom. My thoughts also go to my dear uncle Johan Hägglund, who sadly is no longer with us.

Most of all, my parents Carina and Olle have always supported me. All the way from my childhood, they have encouraged me to explore my interests and keep a curious mindset. In moments of joy as well as despair, they have stood by my side. I am grateful.

*Datum Nådendal anno domini MMXXII, feria tertia proxima
ante festum nativitatis beatae Mariae Virginis
(Nådendal, Tuesday 6 September 2022)*

Contents

| | |
|--|-----|
| 1 Introduction: Saint Birgitta and her monastic order..... | 15 |
| Research questions and aims..... | 18 |
| Previous scholarship on the Birgittine monasteries..... | 27 |
| Key concepts and theoretical approach..... | 33 |
| Spiritual Economy..... | 33 |
| Monastic Landscapes..... | 36 |
| Benefactors and donations..... | 38 |
| Sources and method..... | 42 |
| Mariendal..... | 46 |
| Marienkrone..... | 49 |
| Nådendal..... | 53 |
| 2 The organization of Birgittine monasteries..... | 56 |
| Interaction: Monasteries and lay society..... | 59 |
| The Birgittine economy..... | 62 |
| Indulgences and papal privileges..... | 67 |
| 3 Mariendal: a monastery between town and country..... | 73 |
| The foundation of Mariendal..... | 75 |
| The Town Council's resistance towards the foundation..... | 79 |
| Mariendal prior to the consecration in 1431..... | 84 |
| Mariendal housing guests..... | 87 |
| Benefactors of Mariendal..... | 92 |
| Mariendal's special benefactors and friends..... | 92 |
| The role of Mariendal's spiritual confraternity..... | 96 |
| Lady Elsebe von Putbus donations to Mariendal..... | 101 |
| Mariendal in the wills..... | 102 |
| Mariendal as landowner..... | 105 |
| Relations to vassals and villagers..... | 107 |
| Mariendal's landed estates..... | 109 |
| Mariendal's relations to its neighbours..... | 113 |
| Conclusions: Mariendal a dynamic actor locally and regionally..... | 116 |
| 4 Marienkrone: an urban monastery outside the town gates..... | 118 |
| Marienkrone's foundation by the Town Council..... | 120 |
| The Birgittine sisters and brothers in Stralsund..... | 127 |
| The Dukes of Pomerania supporting the Birgittines..... | 133 |
| Donations and testamentary bequests to Marienkrone..... | 136 |
| The generous endowments of Lady Elsebe von Putbus..... | 140 |
| Councillors and merchants endorsing Marienkrone..... | 142 |

| | |
|---|-----|
| Marienkrone acting as creditor..... | 148 |
| Marienkrone's acquisition of the village Seelvitz..... | 155 |
| The purchase of Jarkvitz..... | 159 |
| Conclusions: Marienkrone as a religious and economic centre..... | 161 |
| 5 Nådendal: a rural monastery..... | 163 |
| The foundation of Nådendal..... | 165 |
| The question of Nådendal's location..... | 167 |
| Nådendal's ties to the regents..... | 171 |
| Nådendal in local society..... | 175 |
| The circle of benefactors: donors and sealing witnesses..... | 177 |
| Entrance donations and Nådendal's care for the elderly..... | 189 |
| Legal disputes and heirs contesting donations..... | 196 |
| The landed possessions of Nådendal..... | 202 |
| Nådendal exchanging estates..... | 202 |
| Nådendal purchasing landed estates..... | 208 |
| Conclusions: Nådendal, an important religious, social, and economic institution in the diocese of Turku..... | 212 |
| 6 New perspectives on the Birgittine monasteries in the Baltic Sea region.... | 214 |
| Sammanfattning på svenska..... | 222 |
| Archival sources..... | 224 |
| Edited sources, databases, and printed references..... | 226 |
| Literature..... | 229 |
| List of Abbreviations..... | 244 |

List of Illustrations

| | |
|--|-----|
| Figure 1. The Medieval Birgittine Monasteries..... | 25 |
| Figure 2. The Structure of a Birgittine Monastery..... | 57 |
| Table 1. The most frequent sealing witnesses of donations 1440–70..... | 182 |
| Map 1. Mariendal’s Landed Property..... | 106 |
| Map 2. Marienkrone’s Landed Property..... | 151 |
| Map 3. Nådendal’s Donated Property..... | 176 |
| Map 4. Nådendal’s Exchanged Property..... | 204 |
| Map 5. Nådendal’s Purchased Estates..... | 210 |

1 Introduction: Saint Birgitta and her monastic order

In 2013, in the foreword of the *Birgitta Atlas* over the Birgittine monasteries, Léon van Liebergen, president of the European Birgitta Society (*Societas Birgitta Europa, SBE*), pinpointed the relevance of Saint Birgitta's pan-European vision and her work as one of the cultural pillars of today's European Unity.¹ Saint Birgitta became the patron of the European Union in 1999 and her monastic ideal, revived by Elisabeth Hesselblad (canonized on 5 June 2016),² is a significant element of European history since the Middle Ages. The study of the Birgittines in the Baltic Sea region is accordingly equally relevant since the late Middle Ages was a period when the peripheries in northern Europe, through the trading routes and the Catholic Church, culturally became an integrated part of Western Christendom and the European cultural sphere. The aim of the present study on three monasteries is to put the Birgittines into the regional context of the Baltic Sea World and to stress their cultural significance for the European societies.

A brief introduction of Saint Birgitta is the appropriate point of departure for a thesis on Birgittine monasteries. Birgitta Birgersdotter was the noblewoman and mystic who founded the order of the most Holy Saviour (*Ordo Sanctissimi Salvatoris*), or the Birgittine Order. She was born in Uppland, Sweden, around 1303 to a family belonging to the high nobility and was on her mother's side related to the royal Folkunga dynasty. Birgitta died in Rome on 23 July 1373 where she had resided since 1349. During her lifetime, Birgitta came to receive revelations from Christ and the Virgin Mary and from these revelations; she formed her monastic rule the *Regula Sanctissimi Salvatoris* (hereafter the *Regula Salvatoris*) which received papal approval in 1370 as a constitution to the rule of Saint Augustine.³

When Birgitta was widowed in 1344, she began receiving revelations more frequently. She wrote her revelations in Swedish, and her confessors translated them into Latin. In total, the revelations encompass eight books where she touches on spiritual and devotional topics as well as politics. To understand Saint Birgitta's revelations and her monastic idea they need to be contextualised into her contemporary society. Fourteenth-century Europe saw much political and social turbulence. In 1309, the papacy resided in Avignon, in 1337 the Hundred years war broke out between England and France, whereas in Sweden, Birgitta's native country, the situation was marked by political unrest with feuds between the candidates to the throne. Moreover, the continent was ridden by the plague

¹ van Liebergen 2013, 16–177.

² She revived the Birgittine Order in 1911 as the Roman branch of the Order of Birgitta. Medieval monasteries of the Birgittine Order had after the reformation existed as autonomous convents, but Elisabeth now founded a centrally run organization, which since 1931 had its headquarters in the Birgitta House at Piazza Farnese in Rome. Werner, 2018, <<https://skbl.se/en/article/ElisabethHesselblad>> (accessed on 10 September 2021).

³ Luongo 2019, 25–52; Piltz 2003, 29–44.

epidemic in the middle of the century, which Birgitta viewed as God's punishment. She was much concerned by these issues, and the topics can be traced in her revelations that contain many political comments. She begun already as a young girl to receive revelations where Christ and the Virgin Mary appeared and spoke directly to her. Because Birgitta, through her revelations, acted as a direct channel and spokesperson of God's will, she was in a position of authority to criticize the political and ecclesiastical elites, although her noble birth and family connections also offered her a platform that contributed to her renown.⁴ In the revelations it becomes evident that she was informed on the politics of the time and that she was well educated in the Biblical texts and other ecclesiastical writings. According to Birgitta, the sinful acts of the ruling elite, the kings and the nobility, as well as of the servants of the Church were the reason for the grave state of Western Christendom.⁵

Regardless of her harsh criticism towards the pope and the secular rulers, Birgitta became, due to her charisma, well known as a prophet already during her lifetime. She corresponded with princes and queens and even with the pope in an attempt to convince him to return to Rome. In 1368, Pope Urban V indeed returned to Rome, and Birgitta, along with her children, Catherine and Birger, received an audience. Birgitta presented her plans of founding a new monastery following a rule designed in accordance with the instructions she had received from the Saviour. In 1370, the pope confirmed the *Regula Salvatoris* but only as a modified version and as an addition to the rule of Saint Augustine. Birgitta was thus successful in procuring the necessary papal approval to officially begin the monastery she had envisioned in Vadstena. Birgitta's personal connections and renown were an important factor to her success at the curia in promoting her monastic idea and also the success of the future Birgittine Order at the turn of the century.⁶

Birgitta did though not have the foundation of a monastic order in mind, but her idea was to build *one* monastery on the royal estate Vadstena in Östergötland, Sweden, which would adhere to her *Regula Salvatoris*. In 1346, King Magnus Eriksson and Queen Blanche donated the estate for the purpose of the establishment of a new monastery.⁷ As a reaction to the contemporary political and ecclesiastical crisis of the fourteenth century, Birgitta formed her idea of a monastery as a symbol for the ideal society as God's earthly kingdom. Humility and poverty were to guide the Birgittine sisters and brothers in their work, which was not to be performed by worldly vanity but for the common good.⁸ Due to the turn of events and the deposing of King Magnus in 1364, his grand plans for Vadstena as a lavishly decorated royal burial church were never realized and Birgitta's idea prevailed. The monastery Birgitta sketched out in her revelations was

⁴ Salmesvuori 2014, 1–39.

⁵ Falkeid 2019, 80–102; Nyberg 2003, 89–104; Fogelqvist 2003, 105–16.

⁶ Salmesvuori 2014, 23–28; Heß 2008, 99–204; Nyberg 2016, 179–95; Höjer 1905, 29–78.

⁷ Fritz 1992, 115–29.

⁸ Morris (ed.) 1999; Morris 1991, 93–102.

to consist of two convents, one main convent for sisters and a smaller male convent consisting of priest brothers. The primary function of the male convent was to serve the spiritual needs of the Birgittine sisters, but the brothers were also expected to preach for the laity and to hear confessions.⁹

Birgitta never came to witness her monastic order since she died in Rome in 1373, only three years after the papal confirmation of the *Regula Salvatoris*. At this time, the monastery in Vadstena was already commenced and it would not last long until new monasteries were founded across the European continent. After her death, the canonization process was initiated by her children, Catherine and Birger, and the compilation of her *vitae* was commissioned by Bishop Nils Hermansson of Linköping. The canonization process was very quick: Birgitta was canonized by Pope Boniface IX in 1391, only eighteen years after her death.¹⁰ The breakthrough of Saint Birgitta's revelations can be traced in their transmission across the continent as regents and universities ordered copies of them. The distribution of her texts commenced already in the 1370s, when the Catholic Church officially acknowledged the prophetic value of the revelations.¹¹ These and Birgitta's persona are contributing factors that the monasteries of her new monastic order rapidly gained vast popularity. In the late fourteenth century and during the first half of the fifteenth century, new Birgittines monasteries were founded across western Europe.

The political circumstances in which Birgitta lived and worked were important for the development of her monastic ideal.¹² This gave her monastic project a sense of actuality, which contributed to the rapid establishment of Birgittine monasteries after the first papal confirmation. Furthermore, the Birgittine Order became in the fifteenth century involved in the ecclesiastical politics, but the conflicts within the church neither prevented the secular nor the ecclesiastical elites to show a continued interest in the Birgittine Order.¹³ Especially in northern Europe, the bond between the ambitions of the ruling elites and their support of the Birgittines is noticeable. Vadstena not only became a religious centre, but also functioned as venue for political meetings on several occasions and the Birgittines also sent delegates to meetings of the Swedish council of the realm

⁹ In the Rule of the Holy Saviour, Birgitta gave thorough instructions for the outline of her new monastery, which was to house two convents: the major convent for women and a smaller male convent for priest brothers. The total number of women accepted into a Birgittine monastery was 60 led by the abbess, who was also the head of the monastery. The male convent was considerably smaller, housing four deacons and eight lay brothers. The twelve brothers were to symbolize the twelve apostles of Christ. The total number of members was thus 72 a number that was to symbolize the extended group of Disciples of Christ. Nyberg 1991a, 69–72; Nyberg 2016, 190. For the meaning of preaching and Sunday sermons in the medieval period, see Muessig 2002, 255–76 and Hanska 2002, 293–315.

¹⁰ Morris 1999; Andersen 2014, 205–30.

¹¹ Many critics towards the Birgittines were found among the representatives of the Church, which caused the Birgittines many problems at the great councils in the fifteenth century. See Höjer 1901, 160–223.

¹² Salmesvuori 2009, 215–21.

¹³ Cnattingius 1963; Losman 1970, 35–49.

(Swe. *riksrådet*).¹⁴ The ties between the Birgittines and the ruling elites have been emphasized in the previous scholarship, and the influential supporters of Vadstena and other monasteries are an important contributing factor to the success of the order. The Birgittines were promoted by the rulers of the Kalmar Union who founded new monasteries of the order and worked for making Vadstena the religious centre and a unifying symbol of the union that was formed in 1397 between the three kingdoms Denmark, Sweden, and Norway. Thus, the Birgittines became involved in the secular politics of the Baltic Sea region.¹⁵

The establishment of the Birgittine order followed a long tradition of monastic foundations in Northern Europe. The spread of monastic orders across the Baltic Sea region occurred in phases. From the 1140s, the Cistercians established monasteries in northern Europe and the order played an important role in the proliferation and establishment of the Christian catholic faith in the twelfth century.¹⁶ A second wave of monastic establishment was the arrival of the mendicant orders. In the first half of the thirteenth century, the Dominicans and the Franciscans spread rapidly to the north, shortly after the papal approval of the orders.¹⁷ The establishment of the Birgittine monasteries occurred about 150 years after the expansion of the mendicants and the Birgittine foundations can accordingly be considered as a third wave of monastic establishment in northern Europe, but now for the first time by a monastic order established in the North that spread southwards across Europe. Against this context, the aim of my study is to explore the connections between the Birgittines and their surrounding society. The primary focus is to study the interaction between the Birgittine monasteries and their surrounding society outside the precinct of the monasteries.

Research questions and aims

My aim is to explore the foundation processes and the further development of three Birgittine monasteries in the Baltic Sea region through their financial activities and their benefactors: Mariendal outside Tallinn (founded around 1410), Marienkrone in Stralsund (founded in 1421) and Nådendal northwest of Turku (founded in 1438). These three monasteries are chosen as comparable case studies based on three parametres: firstly, they were located within three different political spheres of the Baltic Sea region. Secondly, the character of the interactions between the monasteries and the local communities. Thirdly, how the regional and local politics affected the development of the monasteries.

The three monasteries are excellent examples of how the various environments, where the Birgittine monasteries were established in the first half of the fifteenth century, affected the organization of the monasteries and their activities in the local milieu. Previous research, primarily focused on the Cistercian Order of the high Middle Ages, has emphasized the meaning of the contexts in which

¹⁴ Berglund 2003, 145, 169, 174.

¹⁵ Olesen 1991, 169–219; Olesen 2016, 67–88; Norborg 1958, 272–83; Nyberg 1991b, 238–64; Etting 1996, 251–555; Åkestam 2017, 41–63; Höjer 1905, 99–101.

¹⁶ Jamroziak 2021, 1–2.

¹⁷ Jakobsen 2020, 192; Krötzel 2003, 19–22.

new monasteries were founded, which affected their interaction with people in the local communities and with the territorial lords. The surrounding society was important for the organization of a newly founded monastery. Despite that the monasteries adhered to rules and customaries of their respective orders, the development of the monasteries of a certain religious order could take on various organizational forms depending on if they were founded near urban centres with a more volatile economy or based on a manorial economy which may have defined monasteries that were founded far from the towns. The monasteries were accordingly flexible in their adaptation to their local environment.¹⁸ Equally important for the establishment of new orders were their connections to both ecclesiastical and secular leaders. The successful establishment of the Cistercians in northern and eastern Europe has, for example, been explained by the fact that they managed to create a personal network to German bishops who were engaged in the missionary activities of the Baltic Sea and to incorporate older monasteries into the new order. The Cistercians also became important to the princes in northern Europe for creating a religious identity for themselves and their families, which also strengthened and legitimized their position.¹⁹

This study is an attempt to broaden the focus of interaction and organization of medieval monasteries to Northern Europe and into the late medieval period. In contrast to the time of the foundation of earlier orders, the Birgittines navigated a religious landscape that was increasingly focused on individual piety of an increasingly wealthy and influential merchant class in the towns. The Birgittines were a new expression of monasticism in the fifteenth century. They adopted elements from both the contemplative ideal of the Cistercians in the reclusion of the Birgittine sisters and the outreaching theology of the mendicant orders through the public preaching of the Birgittine priest brothers.

In the context of the Baltic Sea region, Mariendal was located within the jurisdiction of the Livonian Order, which was a branch of the Teutonic Order with its centre in Prussia. Northern Estonia was a region characterized by the trade to Novgorod and the competition over the Gulf of Finland. Marienkrone was founded in the immediate vicinity of the hanseatic town of Stralsund but within the jurisdiction of the Pomeranian dukes. Nådendal was located within the Swedish kingdom where the political circumstances were delineated by the Kalmar Union of the three Nordic Kingdoms. Thus, these three monasteries were located within the different political and commercial spheres of the region. My hypothesis is that the local characteristics affected the practical organization of the monasteries, and the purpose of my study is consequently to analyse how the monasteries interacted with the local communities and the regional actors. The monasteries are representative examples on how the Birgittines adapted to the local circumstances and environment on the locations where monasteries were founded. The focus lies on the interactions of the monastic communities with

¹⁸ Berman 2020, 831–846; Lusset & Roest 2020, 931; Vanderputten 2020 a, 134.

¹⁹ Jamroziak 2011, 4–5.

persons outside the enclosure, which have only little been studied from the perspective of the Birgittine Order.²⁰

On all three locations, the monasteries were founded in a religious landscape where various older religious institutions, such as monasteries of other orders and mendicant convents, were established. It would be of relevance to study how the new Birgittine monasteries communicated with these other institutions. However, the study of such communications would demand a different approach which is not feasible within the frames of the current topic of research where the focus lies on the relation between the Birgittines and the lay society on locations where monasteries were founded.

The regional focus of the study brings a new approach to the study of the Birgittine Order and its interactions with the laity. The inner structure of the monasteries and their daily routines followed the prescriptions of the *Regula Salvatoris* and the other Birgittine legislative texts. These routines were, more or less, the same regardless of location.

The main research questions are:

- Who endorsed the Birgittines, and which actors initiated the foundation of the Birgittine monasteries?
- How did the local circumstances affect the practical organization and sustenance of the Birgittine monasteries?
- What was the societal role of the monasteries, and how was it shaped through the interactions with the laity?

These questions are relevant when studying the role of the monasteries in the local communities. Even though the Birgittine Order was an international organization following the Birgittine statutes, the financial organization and practical administration of the monasteries was formed also by the local circumstances. Accordingly, the actions of the monasteries on the local level are possible to trace and analyse through documentation on their landed possessions. The locality of a monastery, the origin and special interests of its founders, local customs and laws regulating the management of property are factors to consider when studying the Birgittine monasteries.

The Birgittine Order, with its centre in Vadstena spread quickly across the European continent after the papal approval of a monastery in Vadstena in 1370. Until the middle of the fifteenth century, the main region of expansion was

²⁰ Tore Nyberg, whose research is further presented in the section on previous scholarship, is a researcher who has both focused on the inner development of the Birgittine Order as well as the societal position and actions of some Birgittine monasteries. His extensive studies on the actions of the monasteries were though primarily focused on the foundations in the perspective of contemporary politics rather than, for example, social and financial matters. See e.g., Nyberg 2016, 79–195; Nyberg 1965; Nyberg, 1991.

around the Baltic Sea. Accordingly, the establishment of the order across this region is of importance for the study of how the Birgittines adapted to the local environment when monasteries of the order were founded in new areas. In recent scholarship, the Baltic Sea region has been emphasized as an interconnected region during the late Middle Ages. The region is largely defined by the trading routes of the hanseatic network stretching all the way from the North Sea with the Norwegian coastline and Scandinavia in the north, with Novgorod in the east, through the Baltic, and connecting these areas with northern Germany. Through the Hansa towns the region was linked to southern Europe and the Low Countries.²¹ In other words, not only commodities and people travelled through the trading routes, but also ideas, innovations and texts. Additionally, this was Saint Birgitta's native territory, and via these same routes the Birgittine ideas and her cult were established.²²

The rapid establishment of Birgitta's cult and the Birgittine monasteries in or near Hansa towns during the early fifteenth century occurred much because Birgitta's visions and the Birgittine liturgy appealed to the modern urban religiosity.²³ The Birgittine devotion with an emphasis on spiritual reform, the Passion of Christ, and bridal mysticism had much resemblance to the main themes of the religious ideas in the *Devotio Moderna*, which had gained popularity in the Low Countries and northern Germany. Thus, the rapid establishment of the Birgittines in the Baltic Sea region and beyond is to be understood against this context. The order represented modern values that appealed to both the urban elites of the Hansa towns, as well as the political and social elites across the region.²⁴

Two centuries before the Birgittine expansion across the region, the Dominicans had established no less than 80 new convents throughout the Baltic Sea region. Johnny G. G. Jakobsen argues that such a rapid expansion would not have been possible without the support from the societal elites.²⁵ As mentioned above, an important contribution to the establishment of the Cistercian Order across the region in the second half of the twelfth century and in the beginning of the thirteenth century was its success in creating personal networks to the ruling elites.²⁶ A new religious movement could thus not gain influence without supporters from both inside the church and among the laity.²⁷ This also applies to the spread of the Birgittine Order and the foundations of new Birgittine monasteries in the fifteenth century. The Birgittine expansion would not have been possible without the endorsement and assistance from the territorial lords and social elites. The initiative of founding new monasteries of the Birgittine Order usually came from external parties who wanted to establish their own Birgittine monastery and not from within the Birgittine Order. Birgittine monasteries were

²¹ Andersen et al., 2014, 1–20; Bärsch 2014, 21–48; Jezierski & Hermansson (eds), 2016.

²² See e.g. Heß 2008, 99–204.

²³ Hutchison 2019, 268–88; Gejrot 2013, 155–180; Bainbridge 1997, 55–76; Rychterová 2019, 247–68.

²⁴ Bollmann 2014, 231–60; Andersen 2014, 205–30.

²⁵ Jakobsen 2016, 22–33; Jakobsen 2021, 469:1–20.

²⁶ Jamroziak 2011, 1–8; Jamroziak 2013, 69–77.

²⁷ Jamroziak 2013, 49–54.

placed both near urban centres and on the countryside. Whereas the Birgittines encompassed the ideal of isolation and the *stabilitas loci*, they were not located far off from trade routes or towns as their spiritual work was also directed towards the laity. Thus, just as the case with the Dominicans, the Birgittine expansion would not have been successful without external help. As Jakobsen puts it: someone had to be willing to pay for the foundation of a new convent, while the Dominican Order, the diocesan bishop, as well as the urban magistrates had to approve of it. The situation was quite similar with the Birgittines, as these same factors had to be fulfilled with both approval from the ecclesiastical and territorial authorities as well as the securing of the economic assets of the monastery.

The Birgittine monasteries in the Baltic Sea region can approximately be divided into two categories based on the characteristics of the locations where they were founded: rural and urban. In this context, rural means that the monasteries were not founded in or in the immediate vicinity of a town. The Birgittines can be described as an urban phenomenon in the sense that they often were located near a town, or if they were not, a town was founded near the monastery. In the Baltic Sea region, the scenarios varied regarding the evolving relations between the Birgittines and the urban communities. In the Nordic realms, the typical course of action when a new Birgittine monastery was founded, was that the nobility with support of king and council donated an estate that formed the centre of the monastic demesne upon which the actual monastery was constructed. After the initial financing of the monastery was secured, the ruler awarded it town privileges. As Jakobsen argues, the town foundations at the Birgittine monasteries was a practice unique for them. In Denmark, which was the Nordic kingdom with the highest number of monasteries, sixty per cent were urban foundations. The monasteries were usually founded in or near well-established merchant towns, or in recently founded towns. Nevertheless, only in the case of the Birgittines, towns were founded at the monastery.²⁸ This was the case in Vadstena, Maribo, Nådendal and Mariager. The town functioned as an important administrative and legislative centre for the tenant farmers living on the estates belonging to the monastery, thus it also became a natural local marketplace.

However, even though the places where the Birgittine monasteries were founded received town privileges, these towns remained small and the environment around the monasteries can still be described as rural, which is why I have made the distinction between the rural and urban Birgittines. The rural monasteries, like Vadstena, were founded by the nobility and built on an estate donated by a regent. In the present study, Nådendal represents this kind of monastery, founded in a rural area by the Swedish council of the realm (*riksrådet*) in 1438. The monastery was first endowed with an estate belonging to the crown and subsequently the town of Naantali (in Swedish *Nådendal*)²⁹ was founded to provide for the monastery and visiting pilgrims.³⁰

²⁸ Jakobsen 2016,22–33; Jakobsen 2021, 469:1–20.

²⁹ I use the name in Finnish for the town Naantali, as it still is an existing entity while I use the medieval name Nådendal for the monastery.

³⁰ DF 2398; Klockars 1979, 130–34.

On the southern shores of the Baltic Sea region, the Birgittine monasteries were founded near Hansa towns. As was the case of Marienkrone which was founded by the Stralsund Town Council. Marienkrone was built only 200 meters from the town gates and did consequently develop a more urban character. This also meant that the majority of the monastery's inhabitants originated from the urban elite in the adjacent town.³¹

The monastery of Mariendal can be described as somewhere in between the countryside and the town of Tallinn. Its founding history is complex and involved persons of different political status and social rank. The monastery was a project initiated by the Livonian Order and possibly some individual merchants, while the Tallinn Town Council was not involved. The monastery was built upon land given to it by the Livonian master. Mariendal also received much support from the noble families in northern Estonia of the counties Harjumaa (Ger. Harrien) and Virumaa (Ger. Wierland). The Tallinn Town Council was though sceptical towards the foundation and saw the monastery as a possible threat to the autonomy of the town because it feared the Birgittines were part of a renewed interest in the region led by the ruler of the Kalmar union. Thus, Mariendal's character lies somewhere in between Nådendal and Marienkrone as it had both rural and urban supporters.³²

Furthermore, all three monasteries were located in areas that were not only connected to Scandinavia through trade, but also politically and ecclesiastically. Nådendal was a Swedish monastery as the diocese of Turku pertained to the church province of Uppsala. Mariendal in northern Estonia was located in a region, which from 1219 to 1346 was part of the Danish kingdom. The diocese of Tallinn remained under the Danish church province of Lund even after King Valdemar IV sold the counties of Harjumaa and Virumaa to the Teutonic Order in 1346.³³ Marienkrone was located in the Duchy of Pomerania that had close connections to Scandinavia through King Erik of Denmark, Sweden, and Norway who was born in Darłowo (Ger. Rügenwalde) and a son to Duke Wratislaw VII of Pommern-Stolp (1350–95) and Maria of Mecklenburg.³⁴ Marienkrone came to own large possessions of land on the island of Rügen, which was part of the diocese of Roskilde that also belonged to the church province of Lund.³⁵

The social landscape around a monastery functioned as a base for recruiting new members. A monastery was integrated into the social landscape from where it received financial support from both local and more distant benefactors. The bonds between a monastery and the local community can thus be described as mutual. Those on the outside supported the monastery through donations and smaller gifts, and the monastery, served the community through its spiritual work. Those who intended to found a new monastery had to consider factors

³¹ Bollmann 2014, 31–260; Hoogeweg 1925, 741–44.

³² Markus 2013, 93–108.

³³ Rebas 2019, 123–38.

³⁴ He was adopted by Queen Margaret I of Denmark who was the main political actor behind the establishment of the union between the three kingdoms.

³⁵ Büttner 2007.

such as the principles and the way of life of the various religious orders and the way of life according to their monastic rules.³⁶

The Birgittines across the Baltic Sea region were founded both in areas without long traditions of monastic life with merely a few older monasteries and convents, for example, in the diocese of Turku and in regions with many monasteries of different orders as was the case in Northern Germany. The potential competition with other religious houses of the pious gifts from the laity did accordingly vary depending on the location. The Birgittines, representing a new monastic order, were generally successful in attracting donations and testamentary bequests. Accordingly, the Birgittine monasteries grew prosperous. As demonstrated by Steven Vanderputten and Emilia Jamroziak, monasticism was constantly redefined and adopted to changing religious ideals and new societal contexts throughout the medieval period. The linear narrative of corrupt old orders that were replaced by new and reformed ones is to be regarded as obsolete and partly created by the new orders.³⁷ The local circumstances, the experiences of the inhabitants in the monastic communities and the economic realities were important factors determining the perseverance of a monastic community. In some cases, in Mariager in Northern Denmark and in Munkaliv in Norway, the Birgittines took over older Benedictine monasteries that led a diminishing life. The success of the transformed Birgittine foundations at these places must be viewed against the local situation and the preferences of the founders in turning older and no more functioning monasteries into Birgittine foundations.³⁸

As Virginia Bainbridge maintains, the Birgittine Order was founded between old and new ideals. The order followed a long monastic tradition but represented the religiosity of the fifteenth century.³⁹ New forms of monastic life have always been developed through the interaction with the contemporary religious ideals. Birgitta's idea, from her observations of her contemporary society, was to create a monastery that would be the ultimate model based on previous monastic experiences. Birgitta's monastery was to function as a pious ideal to her contemporaries.⁴⁰

After Vadstena received its papal confirmation in 1370, new Birgittine monasteries were rapidly founded across the Baltic Sea Region. In 1460, no less than eleven new Birgittine monasteries had been founded across the region: Vadstena (1370), Marienbrunn (Gdańsk 1396), Mariendal (Tallinn c. 1410), Maria Triumph (Lublin 1412), Marienwohlde (Mölln 1413), Maribo (1416), Marienkrone (Stralsund 1421), Munkaliv (Bergen 1426), Nådendal (Naantali 1438), Mariager (1446), Marienfriede (Elbląg 1458). (See Table 1)

³⁶ Jamroziak 2013, 92–123.

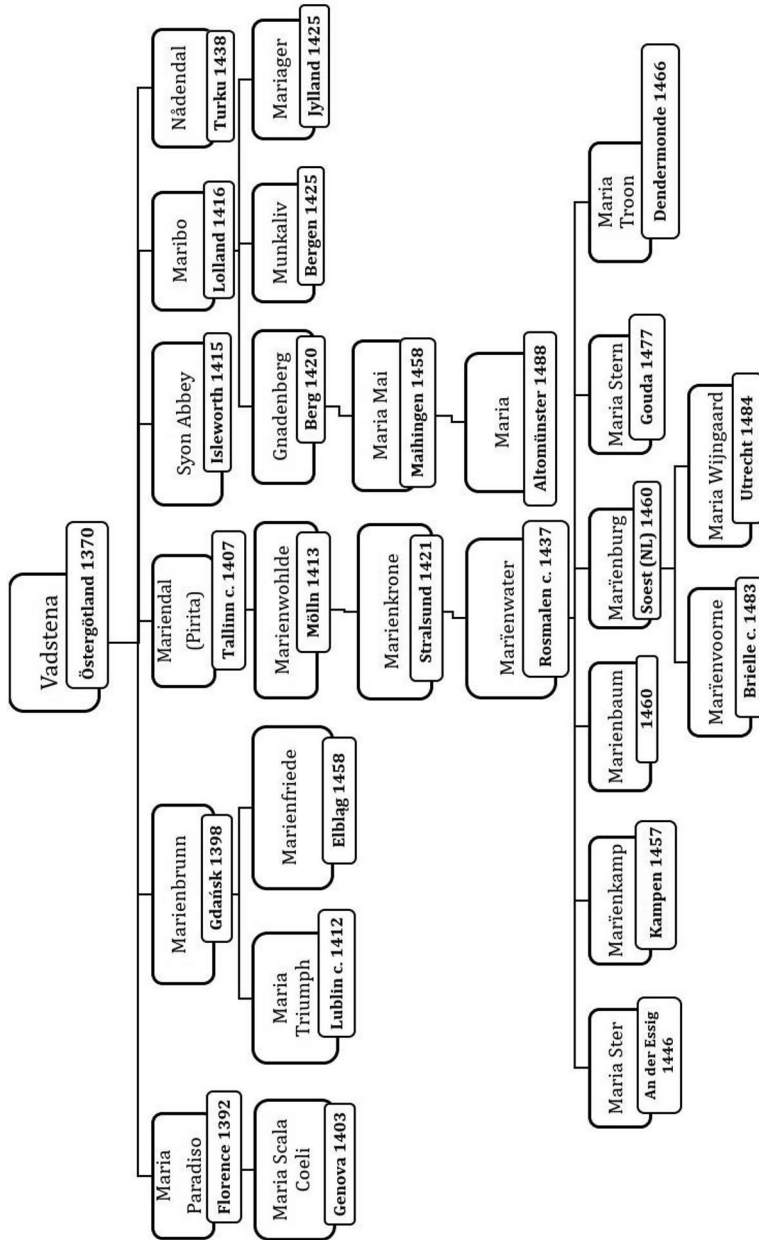
³⁷ Vanderputten 2020 a, 101–3, 178–80, 193–99; Jamroziak 2013, 19–28.

³⁸ Jørgensen 1991, 231–79; Gunnes 1991, 221–30.

³⁹ Bainbridge 1997, 55–76.

⁴⁰ Nyberg 2003, 89–104.

Figure 1. The Medieval Birgittine Monasteries



Reference: Nyberg 1965; Höjer 1905; Sander Olsen et al. 2013, 8–9.

The first Birgittine monastery to be founded after Vadstena was Paradiso in Florence, which thus became the first of the two Italian Birgittine monasteries founded in the medieval period.⁴¹ The first monastery founded in the Baltic Sea region was Marienbrunn in Gdańsk in 1398, which became the motherhouse of the two other Polish monasteries: Marie Triumph, and Marienfriede. Mariendal, founded around ten years later under Vadstena's supervision, became the motherhouse of the hanseatic foundations Marienwohlde and Marienkrone, which became the motherhouse of the Birgittine monasteries in the Low Countries. Nådendal, located within the Swedish realm, was founded with Vadstena as a motherhouse. The Birgittines were popular among the regents of the Kalmar Union who founded the monastery Maribo in Denmark with assistance from Vadstena. Maribo was the motherhouse of the Norwegian Birgittine monastery Munkaliv founded in 1425 in Bergen, and later, in the 1440's, the second Danish Birgittine monastery Mariager was founded on northern Jylland with Maribo as mother convent. The order was also established in England with Syon Abbey and in Bavaria with Gnadenberg, Altomünster and Maria May. Until the middle of the fifteenth century, new Birgittine monasteries were rapidly founded primarily in the countries and towns around the Baltic Sea.

The timeframe of this study is set from the foundation of Mariendal around 1410 until approximately around 1520 at the eve of the Reformation. Accordingly, the period studied here covers the Catholic history of the three monasteries. The three monasteries did though persevere for some time after the introduction of the Reformation: either as a heavily reduced demesne or as converted Lutheran institutions. For instance, the Catholic monastery Nådendal existed until 1591, even though the Reformation was introduced in the Swedish realm already in 1527.⁴² When the Reformation reached Stralsund in 1525, the Birgittine priests were driven away, and the sisters were moved to the buildings of the former Dominican Saint Catherine's convent. They were housed at the Dominicans at least until 1543 and were eventually merged with the beguine sisters in Stralsund and transformed into the Lutheran foundation "Sankt Annen und Brigitten-closter" which was active until the nineteenth century.⁴³ At Mariendal, the monastery lived on as a Catholic foundation for some time after that the Reformation reached Tallinn in 1524.⁴⁴ This monastery was also later turned into a Lutheran foundation for the education of young women.⁴⁵ However, the Reformation period and how it affected the Birgittines at different locations falls outside the aims of this present study and has therefore been excluded.

My analysis is diachronically structured in three thematic chapters each exploring the history of one monastery: Mariendal, Marienkrone, and Nådendal. The chapters are thematically organised beginning with the foundation period and a discussion on the actors involved in the foundation process, then moving

⁴¹ These two monasteries were also involved in the conflict on the Birgittine double monasteries at the Council of Constance. See Cnattingius 1963, 113–55.

⁴² Klockars 1979, 183–92.

⁴³ Hoogeweg 1925, 732–57.

⁴⁴ Kreem 2018, 432–62.

⁴⁵ Rajamaa 2018, 292–321.

on to thematic sections on the benefactors of the monasteries and the economic activities. The thematic structure brings an overview over the interactions of the monasteries, thus enables a comparative approach on their role in the local communities, making room for an analysis of traits both unique and similar in their activities. In the chapter ‘The Organization of Birgittine Monasteries’, I give an overview of the organization of the Birgittine monasteries in theory and practice before turning to the in-depth analysis of the three monasteries.

Previous scholarship on the Birgittine monasteries

The Birgittine research is a vast and interdisciplinary field, which can be divided into two main categories: on the one hand, studies on Saint Birgitta, the Birgittine spirituality, and the Birgittine literature, and, on the other hand, studies on the Birgittine Order and the monasteries. In 2019, a companion to the research on Saint Birgitta was published in the Brill series *Companions to the Christian Tradition*.⁴⁶ The volume addresses the key topics within the field of Birgittine research with an emphasis on the theology, iconography, and philology of Saint Birgitta and the Birgittines, while the monasteries are represented only in one chapter focusing on Vadstena monastery.⁴⁷ The volume reflects the field in general since the monasteries have not received as much attention as, for example, the theological or the linguistic aspects of the Birgittine scriptures. The history of the Birgittine monasteries, from the Middle Ages until the present day, was though in focus of the *Birgitta Atlas*, published by the European Birgitta Society in 2013. This volume, although partly quite inadequately edited, is probably the most encompassing overview of the history of the Birgittine Order and its monasteries. It does though not bring up new research but merely gives an outline, with maps and tables over the development of the Birgittine Order and the history of each monastery. As such it provides an important source of information.⁴⁸

The scholarship on the Birgittine monasteries goes centuries back to the early modern period. In 1764 the first comprehensive study on the monasteries outside Sweden was published by the Swedish-German historian and jurist Christian von Nettelbla. In his *Vorläufige kurzgefaßte Nachricht von einigen Klöstern der H. Schwedischen Birgitta auserhalb Schweden besonders in Teutschland* Nettelbla presented twelve Birgittine monasteries, among others Mariendal and Marienkrone. He was especially interested in the foundation process of the monasteries and was, for instance, the first scholar to conclude that Marienkrone was an entirely urban foundation.⁴⁹ Ever since the eighteenth century, the Birgittine Order has lied in focus of research, but unlike, for example, the Cistercian Order, the Birgittines have not actively participated in writing the history of the order from within. This has much to do with the fact that many of the oldest monasteries of the order, including Vadstena, were closed during the reformation.

⁴⁶ Oen (ed.), 2019.

⁴⁷ Fritz 2019, 132–58.

⁴⁸ Sander Olsen et al., 2013.

⁴⁹ Nettelbla 1764.

The rapid expansion with new foundation and the general success of the Birgittine Order has been explained by the active petitioning, by persons within the order and by other dignitaries, at the papal Curia and at the great reform councils. The Birgittines were actively taking part of the ecclesiastical politics of the great councils in the fifteenth century and the order sent its representatives to them. The Birgittine activities were founded in the interest of Saint Birgitta to unite the church during the schism and both she and the order supported the Roman Pope.⁵⁰ Torvald Höjer was the first scholar to do research on the inner politics of Vadstena and the emerging Birgittine order. His study encompasses the life of Birgitta and her contemporary society and the establishment of Vadstena and the Birgittine Order. Höjer was the first to emphasize the significance of Papal indulgences and privileges granted the Birgittine Order for its further development. Höjer's work is still of great significance as he much focused on the importance of the political ambitions of Saint Birgitta and the contemporary political activities of the Order. His work has later inspired scholar such as Hans Cnattingius and Tore Nyberg to investigate the Birgittine politics of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.⁵¹

Hans Cnattingius published the first extensive study in English on the Birgittine Order *Studies in the Order of St. Bridget of Sweden I. The Crisis in the 1420's* in 1963. He focused especially on Pope Martin V's prohibition of the double monasteries and the inner struggles of the Birgittine Order at the time of the councils. His study on the ban and what it meant for the order is important for the understanding on the stagnation the Birgittines saw in the 1420s and 1430s. During this period, the order tried to maintain status quo, but no new monasteries were founded. This ban is not visible in the sources from Mariendal and Marienkrona and seems not to have affected the actions of the monasteries in the local community. However, the ban hindered the foundation of new monasteries and caused much problem for the Birgittines at the councils in Constance and Basel. For instance, the foundation of Nådendal was possible only after the prohibition was lifted in 1435.⁵²

The scholar who has published most extensively on the Birgittine Order is Tore Nyberg. His doctoral dissertation from 1965 on the foundation of Birgittine monasteries *Birgittinische Klostergründungen des Mittelalters* explored the foundation of Vadstena's first daughter monasteries and some of the subsequent foundations. This is the most comprehensive study on the foundations of Birgittine monasteries and the actors involved in the process. Nyberg put the foundation into a broader social and political context, but he did not discuss the economy of the monasteries or their further history after the foundation period. His study on the foundation thus brought much new important information on the foundations from the inner perspective of the Birgittine Order.⁵³ Apart from his

⁵⁰ Cnattingius 1963, passim; Losman 1970, 35–49; Fredriksson 2019, 103–31.

⁵¹ Höjer 1905.

⁵² Cnattingius 1963, 169–75

⁵³ Nyberg 1965. Nyberg published extensively on topics covering most aspects of the Birgittine Order. He also launched and edited the journal *Birgittiana* that published 27 issues during

dissertation, his research on the monastery Marienbrunn in Gdansk has been an important reference in my study as he there focused on the connections between the Birgittines and the Teutonic Order.⁵⁴

Many of the works on the Birgittine monasteries focus on Vadstena, both because it was the first monastery to be established and that it came to maintain its central position among the Birgittine monasteries, but also because the sources from Vadstena are relatively comprehensive. In 1898–99, Carl Silfverstolpe published a study on the social provenience of the Vadstena sisters where he concluded that most of the women who entered the monastery originated from the nobility. According to his view, persons belonging to the lower social ranks were accepted merely as a manifestation of pious deeds by the noble benefactors of the monastery who donated for the sake of the entry of people of lower social rank.⁵⁵ This view has though been nuanced by Curt Wallin who has concluded that the many donations, pilgrimages and visits of magnates to Vadstena create an impression of the monastery being a foundation predominantly for the nobility. However, the sisters of noble origin decreased in number from thirty per cent in the foundation period to only ten per cent towards the end of the Catholic era. Accordingly, the noble provenance of the sisters was not as dominant as considered by older research. This is an interesting observation as the documentation on members from other monasteries is rather scattered. From Nådendal, for instance, many donations were made for entering women of the local nobility and the burgher elite in Turku. The observations by Wallin reveal that even though the nobility may be dominating in the sources as benefactors, it does not mean that the support from persons outside the nobility was insignificant.⁵⁶

A new approach to the research on the Birgittines was presented by Lars-Arne Norborg in 1958 in his doctoral thesis on the structure of Vadstena's economy. Norborg's main focus lies on how the economy was organized in theory and in practice with a comparison between the papal bulls granting Vadstena its privileges and the charters of donation, sales and exchanges. Norborg performed a thorough reading of the sources that is visible in his detailed reading and comparison of the text of the papal bulls granted on behalf of Vadstena and the Birgittine Order in the 1370s. His comparison of the bulls brought a new understanding on the financial organization of Vadstena monastery and presented an explanation to how the monastery could evolve into the largest landowner in the Swedish realm even though the Birgittine statutes were strict regarding excessive wealth. Norborg's research on Vadstena's economy is an important contribution to the research on how the Birgittines were acting in their local environment and is still the most comprehensive study over the monastery's economic

the period 1996–2013 and encompassed research on all aspects on Saint Birgitta and the Birgittine Order.

⁵⁴ Nyberg 1991b, 161–225; Nyberg 1973, 7–16.

⁵⁵ Silfverstolpe 1898.

⁵⁶ Wallin 1991, 291–322. Regarding the sisters in Nådendal, see Klockars 1977, 65–88.

structure. However, his emphasis on contrasting the rule with the sources exaggerated the contrast with ideal and practice in the monastery's economy, see below in chapter 2.⁵⁷

The Birgittine statutes and the *Regula Salvatoris* placed the abbesses as the heads of the monasteries, and they had the main responsibility for the economy. This task required skills in the management and in book-keeping which meant that the abbesses were women who had received education either already before joining the Birgittine community, or in the monastery if they had entered at a young age. Birgitta Fritz has recently studied the inner life of Vadstena monastery and its economy, as well as the interactions with the outside world. An important element in the interaction of the monasteries with the surrounding society was their family networks. The abbesses usually originated from the high nobility or the merchant elites of the towns and had the required skills in running and administering the monastery.⁵⁸

When a woman entered a Birgittine monastery and gave her vows to become a nun, it did not mean that she thereafter was cut off from her family relations on the outside. The importance of family networks of the Birgittine sisters has been in focus of research of Volker Schier and Corine Schleif. They have studied and edited the letters sent in the end of the fifteenth century by the Birgittine nun Katerina Lemmel in the Bavarian monastery Maria Mai to her cousin. Katerina originated from one of the patrician families in Nuremberg and entered the monastery in 1513 after becoming a widow. Even after she entered the monastery, she kept her shares in the family company and her letters to her cousin deal with the economy. She reinvested her incomes from the family company into the monastery and its construction. In the letters, she convinced her relatives to make donations to the monastery. The link between the benefactors and the Birgittines were important, intercession was though not cynically use by the Birgittines to attract financial support, but the spiritual care of the souls of benefactors wa an important task that the monasteries fulfilled. In the practice the Birgittines followed a long and established tradition. This is the reason why Katerina often reminded her cousin, and through him the other relatives, how diligently she and the other Birgittine sisters prayed for them and that the Birgittine community was thankful for their support. These letters give a unique glimpse into the importance of the connections between the members of a Birgittine monastery and their family and kin. They demonstrate that the bond between the monastery and its benefactors was continuously re-assessed actively maintained. Katerina's case manifests the importance of family networks and how she as a sister inside the convent actively tried to inspire her relatives and family outside the monastery to make financial contributions and that they would not forget their relative in the monastery. The research by Schier and Schleif emphasizes how important

⁵⁷ Norborg 1958.

⁵⁸ Fritz 2019, 32–158. Ruth Rajamaa has also studied Vadstena as a pedagogic institution for the Birgittine sisters. Rajamaa 1992; Hedström 2009.

the background and family ties were to the women entering the Birgittine Order.⁵⁹

Not only the family ties of Birgittine sisters were of importance for the prosperity of the monasteries. The endorsement of the Birgittines by the secular rulers is well known within the Birgittine research. Their support rendered the order an elevated position among the religious institutions in Scandinavia, but this also influenced the further development of the order. As Jens E. Olesen has emphasized, the Birgittine monasteries grew into important regional religious centres and attained a political role in Scandinavia as the establishment and dissemination of the order coincided with the founding of the Kalmar Union. Vadstena Abbey had benefactors on different sides of this political struggle, which afforded it a central position in Union politics.⁶⁰ Louise Berglund has shown in her dissertation on contemporary politics reflected in the sermons from Vadstena, the monastery can be viewed as a political centre during the late Middle Ages.⁶¹ Päivi Salmesvuori and Birgitta Fritz have emphasized the importance of the circle of people around Birgitta who endorsed her revelations and established her *fama* as a mystic.⁶² The political interest and comments in Birgitta's text was a tradition that was continued by the Birgittines in Vadstena. According to the Vadstena Diary and the contemporary sources the monastery was regularly a site for political meetings, and persons connected to the Swedish council of the realm visited the monastery and donated to it.⁶³

The importance of family ties as a key factor in the promotion of monasteries has also been established in previous research. Several persons related to King Erik of Pomerania (1381/2–1459) showed an interest and support of the Birgittines. For example, Erik's cousin, the Holy Roman Emperor Sigismund (1368–1437), gave his approval of the foundation of the monastery Marienwohlde outside Lübeck.⁶⁴ Furthermore, Erik's sister Catherine of Pomerania (c. 1390–1426) was married to the count palatine, Johann von Neumarkt (1383–1443), who initiated the Birgittine monastery Gnadenberg near Nuremberg. Their son Christopher was the king of the Nordic Union in 1441–48, and during his reign he proceeded the establishment of Gnadenberg. He can furthermore be regarded as the

⁵⁹ Schleif & Schier 2009; Schier et al. (eds) 2019.

⁶⁰ Olesen 2016, 67–88; Olesen 1991, 169–219. The political situation in Northern Europe during the fifteenth century was dominated by this Union, which consisted of the kingdoms Denmark, Norway and Sweden. The Union was formed in 1397 at a meeting in Kalmar between representatives of the three kingdoms. It lasted (with some short interruptions in the end of the fifteenth century) until 1523 when Gustav Eriksson Vasa was elected king of Sweden. One impetus for the establishment of the Union was to block the hanseatic expansion and to establish a strong royal authority in Denmark, Norway, and Sweden. However, conflicting interests between the monarchs and factions of the nobility resulted in more or less constant struggles within the union throughout the period. Lindkvist 2012, 45–58; Etting 1996, 251–55.

⁶¹ Berglund 2003.

⁶² Salmesvuori 2014; Salmesvuori 2012, 17–23 and Fritz 1992, 115–129.

⁶³ *Diarium Vadstenense*, edited by Gejrot 1987 (henceforth DV).

⁶⁴ Dormeier 2019, 215–52.

founder of the monastery Mariager in northern Denmark, and he also claimed the title of patron of Nådendal monastery.⁶⁵

Erik's spouse Princess Philippa (1394–1430) was a sister of the English King Henry V (1386–1422) who founded Syon Abbey, west of London. Philippa was a young girl when she arrived in Scandinavia and Vadstena came to be an important religious space for her. She also became one of the most prominent benefactors of the monastery, if not the most significant supporter. Her support of Vadstena was also a means for her to manifest her position as a queen who for long periods of time acted as regent when King Erik was away on his journeys. As the historian Louise Berglund and the art historian Mia Åkestam have argued, Philippa's lavish gifts of valuables and relics to Vadstena were a symbol for her power as queen; and she directed her pious gifts almost exclusively to the Birgittines in Vadstena and the abbey church. Her example demonstrates how the support of royal benefactors were not only important to the Birgittines, but as well to the royals as a way to strengthen and legitimize their position.⁶⁶

The royal benefactors brought the Birgittines fame and central position in the religious as well as the political landscape. The order managed to keep its central position even when dynasties changed. Virginia Bainbridge argues in her research on Syon Abbey that a considerable number of the benefactors served in the royal household and in the administration of the Lancastrian dynasty. Most of the English benefactors originated from the upper gentry or the merchant elite, just as in Vadstena. Not only the Lancastrian dynasty supported the Birgittines in Syon, but also the Tudor dynasty continued the tradition of royal patronage. The monasteries were thus used as symbols and cultural as well as religious centres for the emerging states in the late medieval and early modern Europe.⁶⁷ An important aspect to take into consideration when researching the position of the monasteries in the local environment is that the benefactors who were inscribed in the Birgittine praying community were prominent persons. Arguably, being included in the benefactor community of the Birgittines was prestigious and can also be viewed as a means for families aspiring for increasing influence to support the Birgittines.⁶⁸

In this overview over the previous research on the Birgittine Order, I have focused on the general studies on the history of the Birgittines. The previous research on Mariendal, Marienkrone, and Nådendal will be further discussed in each subchapter on the monasteries.

⁶⁵ Olesen 2016, 67–103.

⁶⁶ Berglund 2009, 21–32; Åkestam 2017, 41–63.

⁶⁷ Bainbridge 2017, 128–43. See also Claes Gejrot's edition on the *Martiloge of Syon Abbey*. Gejrot (ed.) 2015.

⁶⁸ Gustavs Strenga has recently also underscored the meaning of the confraternity of the Birgittines in Mariendal, where the monastery was a uniting factor for not only the laity, but also other Religious Orders such as the Cistercians. Strenga 2020, 212–31.

Key concepts and theoretical approach

The key argument of my thesis is centred around the reciprocal relations between the Birgittines and the laity on the locations where the monasteries were founded. These relations are approached from the perspectives of spiritual economy, the spatiality of the monastic landscapes, and the interactions of monasteries with the local benefactors and authorities. While these perspectives are entangled to each other, they allow an encompassing approach to the study of the relations between the monasteries and the lay communities. A wider perspective than the study of donor-recipient relations is necessary in order to widen view on the relations between the monasteries and the persons who in one form or another came into contact with them.

Spiritual Economy

Spiritual Economy is a concept that in the last two decades has come into wider use in the research on religious institutions and their actions in the local environment. Economy in this context is to be understood in a broad sense as a system where the religious and worldly spheres of medieval society were inextricably linked to each other. When it comes to the governance, the ecclesiastical institutions were part of the social and religious landscape. The monasteries took part in the development of agricultural economy through the assets that individual members brought with them as prebends, but also through the donated property. As always in a medieval context, the religious and material spheres were intertwined. The Birgittines as landholders were part of the late medieval commercialisation of economy. As Nancy Warren has stated, regarding the English Birgittines, that Syon Abbey was increasingly turning its demesne from direct exploitation towards leasing land to farmers. This practice was part of a general trend in late medieval Europe and is also distinguishable at the other Birgittine monasteries.⁶⁹

The concept of spiritual economy offers a tool for the study of the actions by monasteries in the management of their estates. It encompasses not only the donations for intercession, but also through other forms of property management. The Cistercians are well-known for their economic and agricultural systems.⁷⁰ They often used lay brothers and sisters to farm the granges and outlying farmland far from the monastery, but in some cases they used hired labour as well. In the late medieval period, the system of collecting annual rents from farmland became more common instead of the monasteries directly cultivating the land themselves. The use of tenant farmer thus became common place in monastic economy.⁷¹ The holding and management of a monastery's demesne thus implied a certain degree of economic and practical elements in the organization of monastic life, even though the primary focus of the inhabitants was the spiritual service.

⁶⁹ Warren 2001, 57–59.

⁷⁰ Röhrkasten 2020, 121–42.

⁷¹ Berman 2020, 831–47.

The monastic investments were possible through donated assets. In this manner the property acquired through pawns, pledges, and purchases also became part of a monastery's spiritual economy. The economic actions of the monasteries, at the core, were based on the idea of exchanging wealth into spiritual services. The collective wealth in a monastic community functioned to sustain the livelihood of the monastery's inhabitants and assuring that they could perform their spiritual duties. As James A. Palmer emphasizes, piety was interlinked with the political culture and strategic choices of the ruling elites in the Middle Ages. Medieval politics, as for example at the fifteenth century reform councils attended by ecclesiastical leaders as well as secular rulers, saw a union of the spiritual authority and the earthly power. The prayers and masses held by the priests and the religious communities on behalf of their distinguished benefactors, but also on behalf of the entire Christianity, were part of the spiritual economy. The incomes from bequests and donations given by the laity for intercession were reinvested in earthly property from which the proceedings further could be used for alms and the sustenance for the religious who performed the prayers and masses. Thus, the practice of religious gifts created an intricate web of social relations and the economical maintenance of the religious institutions. The place of the priests and religious communities in this web was to create a link between this world and the next through their intercession for the souls of benefactors.⁷²

One of the main ideas behind donations of landed property to religious institutions was to secure the sustenance of the those who were working for the spiritual wellbeing of their benefactors and the entire Christianity. The monasteries and churches were, Palmer argues, "institutions of religion that could change earthly wealth into spiritual currency."⁷³ The spiritual currency here designates the private prayers and masses generated by the religious communities, not only priests but also religious women who lived in beguine houses and semi-monastic communes.⁷⁴ The earthly wealth that individuals changed into spiritual currency in form of intercession could by the monasteries be turned back into material wealth. In this manner, the Birgittines as well as other religious institutions could secure their financial sustenance.⁷⁵

In the late Middle Ages, the practice of founding masses and prayers for intercession was prevalent and part of the common individual religious practice. The commissioning of intercession became increasingly commercialized in the late Middle Ages, but the phenomenon was well-established in Western Christianity since the early Middle Ages and was based on the contractual agreement between the laity and the religious that a certain sin could be remedied by the performance of a number of devout spiritual acts. The main principle was that many masses were better than one. Further, it was generally believed that the prayers by people who had dedicated their lives to the service of God were more efficient than the prayer by lay persons. Making a pious donation to support a religious

⁷² Palmer 2019.

⁷³ Palmer 2019, 126.

⁷⁴ Palmer 2019, 102–66.

⁷⁵ See Warren 2001, 57–58.

community was the fundamental principle to secure the wellbeing of the soul in the afterlife. Additionally, the donation practices brought social prestige to the benefactors, but this did not hinder the fact that donor genuinely thought that their donations for intercession would help their souls in the afterlife. For those who had the possibility, the dispersion of pious donations over a wide range of clerical institutions and religious houses was a way to secure prayers for themselves and their loved ones. This practice was an ever increasing phenomenon in the late medieval period when the economic upswing made it possible for more people, especially in the towns, to invest in the welfare of their souls.⁷⁶

The demographical crisis of the plague in the mid-fourteenth century affected the religious culture and believers became increasingly occupied in worries of the afterlife. This phenomenon is observable in the multiplication of religious bequests for the commissioning of private prayers and masses. According to the seminal study by Jacques Chiffolleau on the wills in Avignon, the general trend was an increasing countability in the number of prayers and masses that persons commissioned for easing the passage of the soul through Purgatory. The mental change is also seen in the visual art and the expression of emotions, such as the suffering Christ and the Virgin Mary as consoler. The Church adapted to the cultural change, which was manifested in a privatization of religion. The sacred economy became more tangible and saw an inflation in the number of prayers and masses that individuals commissioned for themselves. The religious culture became calculated and cumulative as the number of masses, prayers, psalms, pilgrimages, and indulgences were counted based on the principle “the more the better”.⁷⁷ The cumulative nature late medieval pious bequest must though not be regarded merely as a shrewd calculation of the late medieval donors in maximizing the effect of their investments, but rather be founded in the beliefs and lived religious practices.

The Birgittines were part of this spiritual economy through the donated wealth that was exchanged into prayers in the monasteries. The abovementioned letters of the Bavarian Birgittine nun Katerina Lemmel to her cousin are an excellent example of this practice where a member of a Birgittine community could use her family connection for the common good of the monastery. She motivated her relatives to financially support the monastery against the explicit religious favours.⁷⁸ Lester K. Little described the relation between the monasteries and their benefactors in the following way: “In a gift economy, goods and services are exchanged without having specific, calculated values assigned to them. Prestige, power, honour, and wealth are all expressed in the spontaneous giving of gifts.”⁷⁹ Little’s interpretation of the gift exchange was an important contribution to the scholarly debate in problematizing the relation between economy and religious institutions.

⁷⁶ McLaughlin 1994, 12; Jamroziak 2013, 94–101.

⁷⁷ Chiffolleau 1980.

⁷⁸ Schier et al. (eds) 2019.

⁷⁹ Lester K. Little 1978, 4.

In the economic organization of the Birgittine monasteries, the Cistercians monasteries were an important role model. The Cistercians were pioneers in developing their agriculture. They started to reinvest the donated property and were involved in multifaceted economic and judicial relations with the neighbours to estates owned by the monasteries. The monastic agriculture and sustenance became tied to investments in arable land, the management of the estates, and the collection of the produce. The management of a monastery's demesne became more complex, and the agricultural surplus also made the monasteries to partly abandon their own principles and become increasingly involved in giving credits through the acceptance of mortgages. Monasteries were lending money to persons who pawned their estates for a limited time until they could resolve the estate. In this manner, monasteries became involved in the rent economy. During the time that an estate was pawned, the monastery functioned as its manager who collected the annual rents.⁸⁰

Monastic Landscapes

The medieval monasteries were visible in the landscape through the land they owned, and many persons came into contact with them in the role of neighbour or proprietor. In the late Middle Ages, monasteries commonly leased the land and collected incomes in form of rents and revenues from their estates cultivated by tenant farmers instead of directly managing the land themselves.⁸¹ The monastic demesne was part of the economic and cultural landscape and the monasteries were one of the agents forming the landscape.⁸²

What defines a monastic landscape? In *The New Cambridge History of Medieval Monasticism in the Latin West*, Hedwig Röckelein describes the monastic landscape in the following manner:

A monastic landscape might comprise material and physical, geographic and spatial, spiritual and religious, mental and visual, institutional and social, and symbolic, and semantic dimensions. Monastic landscapes also have their own aesthetic, literary, metaphorical, and emotional implications. Some researchers define a monastic landscape as the physical environment of a single monastery, of several monasteries in a geographically or politically defined area, or of a particular religious order. It can also include the dependent settlements, the road systems and infrastructure, parish churches, social networks, and the institutions of power at play within this monastic landscape.⁸³

The term monastic landscape can thus imply many elements and definitions. In *The Oxford Handbook of Medieval Christianity*, Wendy Davies uses the term *monastic landscapes* to describe a monastery's presence in its region. The interactions of the monasteries with the local communities are visible through the charters concerning landed property, such as donations, wills, pawns, purchases, or disputes on landed property. Some of the monasteries were more engaged in

⁸⁰ Röhrkasten 2020, 121–42; Berman, 831–847.

⁸¹ Warren 2001, 59–62.

⁸² Jamroziak 2021, 8. in reference to Schich 2016, 353–65 & 1998.

⁸³ Röckelein 2020, 816–817.

accepting mortgages and acting as creditors, while other monasteries based their economy on donations of landed estates.⁸⁴

Against this context, I understand the monastic landscape both as the geographical areas where the Birgittines owned land and as the space within which they operated and interacted with their benefactors and political authorities. This definition encompasses both the physical landscape in which the Birgittines had an impact as landowners, and the sociopolitical landscape within which they operated. Thus, the *Birgittine landscape* is the key concept in my study, referring to the Birgittine areas where the monasteries of the order influenced the shaping of the landscape and interacted with the persons living there.

From the ideological perspective of monasticism, this type of economic engagements was not entirely unproblematic and did also rise criticism. Being bound to property and material possession, especially for the female religious, was often viewed with suspicion because material possessions were thought to lead astray from God by putting the mind on material objects. Nancy Warren has concluded that female monasteries tended to be object of more strict observance and visits by the bishops. Warren further argues that the Birgittine rule was adapted to the late medieval societal context, which also granted the monastery a sense of actuality and modernity.⁸⁵ In practice though, the management of landed estates was inevitable to any monastic community.

Persons who joined a monastic community were expected to give up all their personal property when they swore their life to religious poverty. According to the rule of Saint Benedict, which was the most influential of the medieval monastic rules, the members could not possess property of their own, whereas the communal property was essential to the livelihood of the inhabitants in a monastery. As an institution, the monasteries could possess land and accept donations of land from their benefactors, but also make invest surplus wealth in landed property. These assests were used for maintaining monastic life, the feeding of the poor, renovations of the monastic buildings, housing pilgrims, and so on.⁸⁶ The number of estates belonging to the monastery would accumulate over time through the donations and thus a new monastery would initially be poorer than an older one. Donated estates also brought seigneurial rights, such as incomes from tolls on mills, bridges, and ferries. Accordingly, the possession of land made the monasteries powerful and self-sufficient.⁸⁷

⁸⁴ Davies 2014, 132–47.

⁸⁵ Warren 2001, 7–47, 57–69.

⁸⁶ “If he has any property, let him either give it beforehand to the poor or by solemn donation bestow it on the monastery, reserving nothing at all for himself, as indeed he knows that from that day forward he will no longer have power even over his own body.” Doyle (ed.,) 1947, §58.

“As regards their property, they shall promise in the same petition under oath that they will never of themselves, or through an intermediary, or in any way whatever, give him anything or provide him with the opportunity of owning anything. Or else, if they are unwilling to do this, and if they want to offer something as an alms to the monastery for their advantage, let them make a donation of the property they wish to give to the monastery, reserving the income to themselves if they wish.” Doyle (ed.) 1947, §59.

⁸⁷ Milis 1992, 18–23; Wollenberg 1992, 51–66.

The running of landed estates, the contacts with pertaining farmers, and the responsibility of managing landed property also meant that the religious communities interacted with inhabitants on the estates and on the locations where the monasteries owned land on a regular basis. Not all interaction between the monasteries and the lay community were of the nature of the donor-recipient. The land owning rendered the monasteries a prominent position in the local society, not only on the religious level, but also in the worldly matters.⁸⁸ Accordingly, the monasteries had a multi-layered role in the society bound both to the performance of their sacred duties and to the socioeconomical responsibilities towards those who lived on the monastery's land. A monastery's space thus stretched far beyond its outer walls.

Benefactors and donations

The term *benefactor* is another central concept in this study. According to the Oxford English Dictionary a benefactor is: 1) "One who renders aid or kindly service to others, a friendly helper; one who advances the interests of a cause or institution, a patron." 2) "One who makes a benefaction to a charitable or religious institution; one who makes a bequest or endowment." and 3) "a well-doer".⁸⁹ Within the frames of the present study, the term encompasses primarily those persons who endorsed the Birgittine monasteries by making donations to them. A benefactor can though also be defined in a wider sense, as a person who supported a Birgittine community through awarding it privileges and rights to collect taxes, for example, when a regent took a monastery into his or her protection. The Birgittine benefactors were accordingly all those who either through gifts or personal favours supported one or perhaps even multiple monasteries.

The principle of making pious donations can be traced back to the Sermon on the Mount in the Gospel of Matthew where Jesus exhorts his disciples to give up their worldly possessions and distribute them among the poor: "Jesus answered, 'If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.'"⁹⁰ Being poor was a relative concept in the Middle Ages (as it still is today), it could of course denote those who were involuntarily poor and living on the margins of society, but it could also encompass the poor inhabitants of a monastery who voluntarily had rejected all their worldly possessions by joining the monastic community.⁹¹ Those in the monastery were following Christ's command of rejecting material belongings and wealth, but also, those who gave to the monasteries were paradoxically following the same ideal by giving away property to religious people who had rejected their material wealth. Even though most donors would only donate a proportion of their personal wealth and not become truly impoverished by doing so, one could argue that the act of giving away material assets was a pious act

⁸⁸ Warren 2001, 66.

⁸⁹ Oxford English Dictionary (OED), < <https://www.oed.com/>> (accessed on 2.11.2021).

⁹⁰ Matthew 19:21.

⁹¹ Mäkinen 2019, 1066–72.

sacrificing the material belongings for a devout purpose.⁹² By making donations to the poor persons in a monastery, the donors could follow Christ's message by giving up at least some of their worldly possessions.

The practice of donating property for a pious purpose was a collective phenomenon, because the spiritual favours the donors received from it also encompassed their friends and family, and, in extension, the entire Christian community. Charters of donations typically named the persons who primarily would benefit from the donation, but commonly the documents also added the phrase "and for all Christian souls".⁹³ Wealthy persons were expected to give to the church and to the poor as a duty that followed their elevated societal position. The act of donating to a church or a monastery was considered to have a "trickle down" effect and would benefit not only the donors, but also the entire Christian community, including those who could not afford to make such donations themselves. Thus, an element of generosity is characteristic to the practice of religious donations, although the intercession was commissioned primarily for the donors and their families. One must though assume that the sincere piety of the donors varied, some were perhaps more motivated by convention than others who had genuinely devout motives to donate. Joel T. Rosenthal argues that the degree of involvement and dedication of individuals varied all the way from merely meeting the expectations and conventions to a deep devotional commitment. Consequently, the personal devoutness or religiosity of the benefactors is not possible to assess merely from the act of donation, but the donations reveal social patterns in the lived religious culture and the interaction of donors with the religious institutions of their time.⁹⁴

The donor relationship between laypersons and monasteries has especially been in focus of research since the 1980s. Many of the now classical studies on medieval gifts are often focused on the social significance of donations in high Medieval France. Stephen D. White has explored the gifts to monasteries in western France during the eleventh and twelfth centuries. He focused on the so-called *laudatio parentum*, which is the custom when family and relatives renounced all their legal claims of property donated to a monastery.⁹⁵ Family and social relations were also in focus of Barbara Rosenwein's research on the monastery Cluny in a quantitative analysis of the complicated process of claims and quitclaims of donated property, often initiated by the heirs of donors. Rosenwein established that donations to monasteries in this context functioned as kind of social glue in maintaining and strengthening social and political relations. At Cluny landed property was donated, retrieved, and donated again by heirs in an intricate system of reciprocal relations, not only between the donors, but also among the family and kin of donors. In her argument, Rosenwein established what she termed the give-and-take situation at Cluny, which involved individuals as well as social

⁹² Milis 1992, 90–1.

⁹³ Rosenthal 1972, 16.

⁹⁴ Rosenthal 1972; Arnold 2005 178–90.

⁹⁵ White 1988.

groups such as family, kin, neighbours, saints, and monks. The gifts were, for example, a means of creating bonds of loyalty among the noble families of the region. The essence of these relations lied in giving the property to the patron saint of the monastery: Saint Peter. The donated property was often adjacent to other estates owned by the donors or their family, and thus the saint could be interpreted as becoming their neighbour by his monastery owning the neighbouring land to the estates of the donors. Having a saint as neighbour also brought a great prestige.⁹⁶

The social prestige that the donations rendered, demonstrated the prominent position of the donor. A donation was a prestigious event with the drafting of the donation charter, which was attended by witnesses such as relatives and friends of the donors, possibly also, if the donors were prominent persons, dignitaries in form of kings or bishops. In this way, the donations reinforced the personal ties among the benefactors, as they generally originated from a certain social group.⁹⁷ By tracing the relations of donors and their connections to the witnesses of their donation, the community of benefactors around a certain religious institution is possible to outline. Identifying witnesses and their relations to the donors are means of studying the social connections within the Birgittine benefactor community based on persons mentioned in the charters.

Emilia Jamroziak demonstrates that the spiritual counter-gifts performed by the Cistercian monks was a custom that concretized the reciprocal relation between donor and recipient. Jamroziak has stressed that the ways of becoming a benefactor were diverse and prolonged negotiations preceded the actual transaction of gift and counter-gift. In the case of the Cistercians, an actual material counter-gift in form of a smaller sum of money could sometimes be transferred back to the donors. Such gifts must not be viewed as clandestine bargains, but rather be regarded as symbols of long-lasting bonds between the monasteries and their benefactors. Jamroziak further argues that the space inside the monastery where these transactions took place also mirrored the significance of the relationship. How far into the precinct of the monastery that the donors were allowed, depended on their status as benefactors.⁹⁸ All these practices manifests that donations were a multifaceted and complex phenomenon, which was based on the pretext of material donations in exchange for prayers that lasted over centuries, even though it took on slightly different forms and customs depending on the context.

Space is a central aspect of my analysis of the Birgittine interaction. The locations where the donations took place are important factors in the donation process. For example, the donations could either be made at a monastery or the monastery's representatives could be sent to another location to accept a donation. An analysis of space and its meanings helps us to understand the practices of donations and how that affected the interactions with persons in the local society.

⁹⁶ Rosenwein 1989.

⁹⁷ Silber 1995.

⁹⁸ Jamroziak 2004, 63–70; Jamroziak 2010, 37–58; Jamroziak 2013, 94–95.

By donating to a monastery and in this way giving it financial support also made the donors part of the benefactor community. Being included in this community brought social and religious benefits. The donations implied that the donors and their family and kin became linked to a certain religious institution and the other benefactors who were part of this context. This could be a means of making social advancement, showing allegiance, or tying peaceful bonds after solving a conflict.⁹⁹ This can also be translated into the social context around the late medieval religious institutions as certain groups often were associated with a particular chapel, convent or monastery, even though they may have endowed other religious institutions as well with smaller gifts. The persons showing an interest for the Birgittines could arguably also be viewed in terms of a community of Birgittine benefactors. The Birgittines kept written records, such as the Syon Martiloge, where the names of the special friends of the monasteries were inscribed.¹⁰⁰ This was how the monasteries kept track on whom they were to especially pray for. When the group of benefactors grew over time, the importance of keeping records increased as a collective physical memory of those who were part of the Birgittine benefactor community. When an individual donated to the Birgittines, he or she became part of the wider community of benefactors who were included in the prayers of the Birgittine sisters and brothers. This was a community that, to some extent, stretched over social groups, geographical regions, as well as over generations.¹⁰¹

The prayers of a monastic community formed a tie between the lay benefactors outside the monastery and the monks or nuns within its precinct. Prayers for the dead were one of the main motives of laypersons to donate and support a monastery. The lay benefactors often gave very detailed instructions of who was to be included in the prayers, when these prayers were to be said and for how long time. Apart from the donors, other persons as well were included in the religious benefits, such as spouses and parents, and they were usually mentioned in the donation charters. Added to this, some donors explicitly mentioned that their prayers also were to include a larger group, such as those persons the donors had erred and would make amends for, or all Christian souls. Hence, an altruistic element was characteristic to the personal prayers ordered by laypersons.¹⁰²

Connected to the commissioning of prayers is the cult of saints, an inseparable part of medieval society that encompassed both rich and poor. The saints were intermediaries between the worshippers and God, and persons travelled to their relics and places of worship for various reasons. They hoped for the saint's assistance in the cure of illnesses, safe travels, childbirth, or intercession for the soul after death, and thus it encompassed almost every part of earthly life as well as the afterlife. As God's servants, the saints would not themselves do miracles, but they owed their supernatural powers to God. Accordingly, they exceeded the gap

⁹⁹ Esmark 2002.

¹⁰⁰ Gejrot 2015.

¹⁰¹ Gejrot 2015; Rosenwein 2016, 379–86.

¹⁰² Rosenthal 1972, 11–30.

between the mortal world and the transcendental world beyond.¹⁰³ In the case of the Birgittines, every church of a Birgittine monastery was to receive relics of Saint Birgitta. These were lowered down in the main altar at its consecration, which made every Birgittine foundation a local pilgrimage site for the worshippers of the foundress of their order. Especially Vadstena, as the first Birgittine monastery, received daily large crowds of pilgrims, but pilgrims would also visit other monasteries.¹⁰⁴

Sources and method

The documents that form the main source material for this study are charters concerning the foundations of the monasteries, the benefactors, and the possession of real estate. The sources are preserved in archives around the Baltic Sea region. Although many documents are published in source editions, I have consulted the original documents whenever possible. The number of documents from the monasteries varies from approximately two to three hundred documents (including entries in copy books) from each monastery plus scattered chronicle accounts.

The surviving sources from the monasteries are unevenly preserved and, as usually is the case within medieval studies, one must assume that many documents have been lost. The Baltic Sea region has seen many wars that have looted, divided, and pillaged archival collections.¹⁰⁵ Even though the remaining sources merely compose a part of the material that once has existed, the documents allow a thorough analysis on the interactions of the monasteries and their economic activities because the majority of the documents concern the landed possessions and transactions.

For this study, I have consulted charters of privileges, donations, sales, pledges, mortgages, exchanges of property, as well as charters concerning disputes on landed property. The majority of these charters are originals, whereas a small proportion of them also consist of contemporary or later copies. The charters were standardized type of document and followed certain formulas, which means that the sources from the different monasteries are comparable to each other and that the surviving sources from the monasteries are similar even though some local variations are distinguishable.¹⁰⁶ The types of sources somewhat different from the three monasteries, depending on the local contexts and

¹⁰³ Bartlett 2013, 3–22.

¹⁰⁴ As, for example, it is told in the letter of the abbess and general confessor of Vadstena to the monastery Marienkrone where they explain that Vadstena could not help Marienkrone financially to solve the conflict with its Bishop due to the large expenses of feeding the large crowds that daily gathered in Vadstena. 27 September 1514, Or. papp. RA 0102, SDHK 37624.

¹⁰⁵ Esch 1985, 529–70; Fritz 1980 (2009); According to the legal historian Alexander Rogatschewski, one hundred charters are stored in the Russian National Library in St Petersburg concerning the monastery Sankt Petri in Mölln near Lübeck, the same town where the Birgittine monastery Marienwohldede was located. The documents have ended up in St Petersburg as spoils of war but none of them seem though to concern the Birgittines. Rogatschewski 2012, 119.

¹⁰⁶ Guyotjeannin et al. 1993.

the different archival entities and collections. At Marienkrone, for instance, the monastery regularly used public notaries for settling matters regarding donated and pawned estates. Whereas from Mariendal and Nådendal, only one notarial charter is preserved, respectively.¹⁰⁷ Such variations are due to different practices in drawing up administrative documents in different regions. The different types of sources mirror the local context and can be used to distinguish the character of the interactions between the monasteries and the local communities.¹⁰⁸

Not only the charter text is important for my analysis but the whole material aspect of the charter as well, such as the seals. Therefore, I have explored the materiality of the documents in order to find information in the originals that the source editions sometimes have omitted. The charters, formulated as open letters, present a source type that concerned a larger group than the parties directly involved in the property transaction. This group is, for instance, visible through the witnesses who attended the occasion when the charter was written and perhaps also hanged their seal under it in order to testify that the written account of the charter was legal and correct. The present witnesses are thus also an important element to consider when studying the letters of donation. Those persons who often were called in as witnesses can be viewed as being included in the benefactor community consisting of laypersons giving their support to the local Birgittine monastery.¹⁰⁹ Especially concerning Nådendal, the men who frequently sealed charters of donation are possible to trace. This group of frequent witnesses consisted of persons who represented both the secular and the ecclesiastical authority, such as district judges, law-speakers, bishops, or provosts. Therefore, when looking at the extended group of people mentioned in the charters, it is possible to outline the community of benefactors around this monastery.

I have also incorporated to my study the spatial aspect of the documents: if they were written on site in the monastery with the monastery's representatives present, or somewhere else as, for example, in the nearby town, or maybe at the estate of the donors/sellers. When the charters were written outside the monastery, the issuing place also had consequences on who attended as representatives to the monastery. On site in the monastery, the general confessors and members of the male brothers were attending as witnesses, whereas the procurator and the lay brothers were representing their monastery in charters written on other locations. Hence, a trusted layman could also be appointed to represent a monastery on locations outside the monastic precinct. The question of location and representation has not before been thoroughly discussed regarding the Birgittines. Previous scholarship on monasteries has shown that location and representation were important aspects in the communication between a monastery and the laity. The location where the property transactions took place reveal the

¹⁰⁷ **Marienkrone:** StAS Umarienkrone, nr. 25, 32, 34, 44, 59, 81, 119, 130. Uppsala University Library, UUB C 109 (the instrument is glued to the inside cover of a codex). **Mariendal:** 17 August 1412, Manuscript Collections, Uppsala University Library. **Nådendal:** 27 October 1462, Manuscript Collections, Uppsala University Library; DF 3187.

¹⁰⁸ Salminen 2016; Kersken 2009, 339–50; Fritz 1972–1973; Fritz 2009 (1980).

¹⁰⁹ Johns 2016, 79–90; Bjarne Larsson 2010, 44–45.

quality and nature of the bonds between the monastery and the other party. When the benefactor was a prominent person, he or she could be let further into the precinct of the monastery than a layperson of lower social rank.¹¹⁰ At the Birgittine monasteries, important persons could receive an audience with the general confessor and some of the brothers in the reception hall of the brothers' convent, while smaller businesses and settlements with locals would take place at the gate of the brothers' convent, or in the parlour of the male convent. The local preconditions also determined the space where the monastery's representatives met with the other parties and authorities.¹¹¹

Apart from the charters, I have also used other types of sources for the study of the activities of the monasteries. These sources concern the foundation processes and the correspondence between monasteries. The most important is the Vadstena Diary, a memorial book compiled by the brothers in Vadstena covering the period from the early fourteenth century until the mid-sixteenth century. It contains brief notices on the daily life in the monastery, on visitors, political events, but also Vadstena's connections with the other monasteries of the order. Several entries concern connections between Vadstena and the three monasteries studied here, which makes the diary an important source to current events concerning the monasteries and their correspondence with the motherhouse in Vadstena. The diary has been edited by Claes Gejrot, with comments on the manuscript and a Swedish translation of the Latin text.¹¹²

Another important source to the correspondence between Vadstena and other monasteries is the copybook of the Vadstena brother Johannes Hildebrandi, which has been partly edited by the Peter Ståhl. The entire volume of the *Liber Epistularis* contains c. 400 letters, while the edition comprises the first 109 letters. The letters in the *Liber Epistularis* consist both of Hildebrandi's correspondence with the Cathedral Chapter of Linköping (where he was a canon before joining the brother's convent in Vadstena) and of correspondence with other Birgittine monasteries, written both in Latin and in vernacular.¹¹³ For this present study, Hildebrandi's correspondence with other Birgittine monasteries are of interest.¹¹⁴ The original manuscript with signum C 6 is included in the C-collection in Uppsala University library (UUB). This collection comprises volumes from the library of Vadstena Abbey and it contains in total 770 manuscripts of which approximately half were produced in Vadstena. Another volume in the

¹¹⁰ Jamroziak 2010, 37–58.

¹¹¹ Walta 2013, 283–342; Fritz 2019, 150–51.

¹¹² Gejrot 1987; Gejrot 1996. Gejrot has also made an edition of the memorial book compiled at Syon Abbey, the so-called Martiloge of Syon abbey. Gejrot, *The Martiloge of Syon Abbey. The Texts Relevant to the History of the English Birgittines*. Added to his editorial work, Gejrot has also published articles on the inner politics of the Birgittine Order and the correspondence between Vadstena and other monasteries and edited several anthologies on the topic. See for example Gejrot 2013, 155–180; Gejrot et al. (eds), 2013; Gejrot et al. (eds) 2010; Gejrot 2008, 91–108; Gejrot 2000, 71–81; Gejrot 1990, 195–214.

¹¹³ Ståhl (ed.) 1998.

¹¹⁴ Ståhl (ed.) 1998. Letters nr. 39, 63, 64. Additionally, some folios that are of interest here have not been included Ståhl's edition. UUB C 6 f. 49v–50r, 53r, 67v, 83v, 85v, 91v. See also. Hedlund & Andersson-Schmitt 1988.

Vadstena collection that is relevant to this study is C 31: a compilation of the privileges for Vadstena and the Birgittine Order.¹¹⁵

Some general remarks on the principles I have used regarding names on locations and the monasteries are also necessary and also important because the medieval names of places often have changed over time. The places where the monasteries were founded have in many instances changed name, or their name varies according to which language is used. I have chosen to use the medieval vernacular names of the monasteries, because they are the names used in the medieval sources. I use the medieval name Mariendal, instead of its modern Estonian name Pirita. Likewise, the Swedish name Nådendal is used instead of the Finnish name Naantali. For the geographical locations that still exist today, the modern vernacular names are used: Tallinn instead of Reval, Turku instead of Åbo, Gdańsk instead of Danzig and Szczecin instead of Stettin. The Finnish name Naantali is used when referring to the town and not the monastery.

Another important remark concerns the value assessment and the currencies mentioned in the charters. The most common currencies are local variants of mark, for example, Riga, Stralsund, Lübeck, Stockholm, or Turku marks. Other currencies mentioned in the sources are the English noble (a gold coin frequently used in Turku), and Rhine florins and guilders. Depending on the location, the mark was divided differently. In the German language areas, the mark was divided into schillings and pennies (Ger. *pfennige*), while the Swedish marks were divided into pennies (Swe. *penningar*) and ortigs (Swe. *örtugar*). The value of a mark depended on its weight in silver; the general trend was though that the content of silver decreased over time. In the Hansa towns, the general division of a mark was 1 mark = 16 schilling = 48 witten = 192 pennies. How many pennies one mark made in the diocese of Turku varied over time and depended on whether the value was given in Stockholm/Swedish or Turku marks. The Riga mark was the most common currency used in Tallinn where 1 mark = 4 ferding = 36 schilling = 48 ortigs = 144 artige. According to Reinhard Vogelsang, who has published editions of Tallinn's account books (*Kämmereirechnungen*), the value of one Lübeck mark approximately corresponded to 1 1/4 or 1 1/6 of the Riga mark. The weight in silver of one Lübeck mark was approximately 223 g, while the silver weight of one Riga mark 208 g and the Swedish mark 211–213 g. The value of the Stralsund mark is more uncertain but has been estimated to 233 g.¹¹⁶ The value of the currencies was fluctuating, which makes it impossible to calculate the value of sold property at a given point. However, relevant for this study

¹¹⁵ UUB C 31 f. 23r–26v, 227r.–228v. Copy of privileges for Nådendal and statutes from the general meeting at Marienkronen in Stralsund 1429. UUB C 107–111, four volumes containing copies of Psalter lectures by Michael de Bononia. The volumes probably originate from Marienkronen as the first folio of C 107 has been signed by brother Henricus Schakken who was a member of the male convent in Stralsund. To the back cover has a mortgage letter been glued, issued by a Laurentius van Lunden. The last folio of C 109, 266r, also gives Marienkronen as the place of production for the manuscript. A notary instrument signed by the notary Petrus Cyrow in the Kammin Diocese has been glued to the back cover. See also Hedlund & Andersson-Schmitt 1989.

¹¹⁶ Sprandel 1975, 196–201; Hauschild 1973, 12–13.

is the nature of the interaction and the location of the transactions rather than making estimations of the price and actual value of the transactions.

Mariendal

The source material from Mariendal is kept in several archives, primarily in the City Archives of Tallinn, the National Archives of Estonia in Tartu, and the National Archives in Stockholm. The situation reflects the turbulent history of Estonia when much medieval material perished already in the wars during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, which means that medieval documents from Livonia are scarce. As Estonia was subjugated to the Swedish realm during the period 1561–1710, some archival material is thus still preserved in the National Archives in Stockholm. Concerning the Estonian nobility, the surviving sources are now stored in the National Archives in Tartu. The correspondence between the grand masters of the Teutonic Order and the Livonian Order was until the Second World War preserved in the National Archives of Königsberg (Ger. Kaliningrad) but is now stored in the Prussian Privy States Archives (*Geheimes Staatsarchiv Preußischer Kulturbesitz*) in Berlin.¹¹⁷

The most important archives concerning Mariendal are those in Tallinn, Tartu, and Stockholm. When it comes to Tallinn, the source situation is very good, as the holdings of the Town Council's medieval archive is one of the most well-preserved archival entities in the Baltic Sea region.¹¹⁸ The collection includes some documents from the correspondence between Mariendal and the Tallinn council, consisting of concepts of the council's letters as well as letters sent from Mariendal to the Town Council. These documents consist of both parchment charters, paper missives, and sixteenth century copies of documents. The collections of the city archives were ordered by the archivists Gotthard von Hansen and Otto Greiffenhagen who in 1924–26 categorized the material into a) manuscripts and books (*Codices und Bücher*) and b) acts (*Akten*). The catalogue they compiled include archival material covering the period from 1237–1889. The documents concerning Mariendal are included in the category B.k. *Katholische Kirche* (The Catholic Church) and more precisely in the folder B.k.4–I. This folder is included in the archival entity of the Town Council (*Tallinna Magistraat/Revaler Magistrat*) which has the archival number 230. Based on the catalogue, approximately fifty documents concerning Mariendal in the Tallinn city archives are of interest for this study.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁷ The medieval sources regarding the landowning and the privileges of the Livonian nobility were originally preserved in private family archives, which at the turn of the twentieth century were gathered in the Archive of the Livonian Nobility (Archiv der Livländischen Ritterschaft) in Riga and in the Curonian Regional Archives (Kurländisches Landesarchiv). Considerable part of the documents stored in Riga were unfortunately lost in the Second World War. The surviving sources from this archive are now preserved in the National Archive of Lithuania. Thumser 2018, 146.

¹¹⁸ For an overview of the history of the Archive and its medieval holdings, cf. Salminen 2016, 91–109; Salminen 1998, 451–70.

¹¹⁹ Greiffenhagen & Hansen 1924–6; Salminen 2016, 91.

The main challenge when studying the benefactors of Mariendal is that most of the sources concerning the ecclesiastical institutions have been lost and this is also the case for the archives of the nobility (*Estländischen Ritterschaftsarchiv*). However, the surviving sources from this archive are now kept in the National Archives in Tartu. The collection contains a handful of documents concerning the relationship between the monastery and the vassal families as well as some letters of privilege issued by the Livonian Master on behalf of the monastery.¹²⁰

Some documents issued by the Commander of the Livonian Order on Toompea Hill in Tallinn have also ended up in Stockholm in the archival entity of *Ericssbergsarkivet* which was donated to the Swedish National Archives by the Bonde family in 1948.¹²¹ The medieval section of this archival entity consists of one hundred documents, mostly parchment charters, and among them, fifteen documents originate from Mariendal. These documents contain errands and settlements concerning landed estates between the monastery and persons belonging to the nobility. The documents are therefore central to the study as they give important information on the interactions between Mariendal and its noble neighbours.¹²²

Additionally, some Swedish sources concerning Mariendal were compiled in the Vadstena copybooks with correspondence between the two monasteries. The most important source in this respect is the *Vadstena Diary* and the copybook of Johannes Hildebrandi. Another copybook from Vadstena, kept in the National Archives in Stockholm, volume A 20 or ‘The large copy book of Vadstena abbey’ (*Vadstena klostrets stora kopiebok*) contains some entries on Mariendal’s foundation period.¹²³ Regarding the foundation, a notary instrument, now in the manuscript collections of Uppsala University Library, has provenience from Mariendal. The document was issued by the notary Henricus Fabri at the Cathedral of Tallinn confirming the bull issued by Pope John XXIII where the pope acknowledged the foundation of Mariendal and granted it the Birgittine privileges. Marks on the document reveal that it has been used as wrapping for a compendium of some sort and the backside of the document has been re-used as a calendar.¹²⁴ In the 1930’s, the city archivist of Tallinn, Paul Johansen rediscovered a calendar fragment which he identified as Birgittine and originating from Mariendal. This fragment included notes on deceased members and benefactors of the monastery. When Johansen found it, the fragment was used as wrapping for a volume titled “Privilegia Livonensium” in the Swedish National Archives containing copies of the fourteenth century enfeoffments and privileges granted the Estonian nobility by the Danish Kings Erik and Valdemar.¹²⁵ The notary instrument and

¹²⁰ These have also recently been digitized in the Pägamendid database <<https://www.ra.ee/pagamendid/index.php>> (accessed on 11 April 2021).

¹²¹ Ericssbergsarkivet RA 0107.08, Riksarkivet, Stockholm. See also Axelsson 2000, 3–4.

¹²² The regests of these documents are found in the database *Svenskt Diplomatariums Huvudkartotek* (SDHK) <<https://sok.riksarkivet.se/sdhk>> (accessed on 11 April 2021).

¹²³ Manuscript A 20, f. 46 r–v, 162 r–v, 170r – 171v, 248r – 249v, Riksarkivet, Stockholm.

¹²⁴ Henricus Fabri, 17 August 1412, notary instrument, Manuscript Collections, Uppsala University Library.

¹²⁵ Johansen (ed.) 1939.

the calendar fragment are fortunate examples of how some documents accidentally have been preserved through their secondary life as covers of administrative records.

In some cases, it is difficult to geographically locate the places mentioned in the medieval documents because the Estonian counterpart of the German names given in the documents is not always identifiable. To trace the estates mentioned in the documents concerning Mariendal, I have used Paul Johansen's edition of the *Liber Census Daniæ*, or the Danish Census Book, as a reference. The Census book was a register of land taxation issued by King Valdemar II (1202–41) containing a register over incomes from the royal estates in Estonia. Even though compiled nearly two hundred years prior to the foundation of Mariendal, the list is yet of relevance as it lists the estates then belonging to the Danish crown and many of these estates still existed in the fifteenth century. Johansen also included comments on later documents concerning the estates, which serves as a valuable reference in tracing the estates. Additionally, he included both the medieval place names in German and their Estonian counterparts. This has made it possible to locate the pertaining estates and villages to Mariendal, which has been vital for my research on the Birgittine landscape in Estonia.¹²⁶

Many of the documents on Mariendal have been included in the source editions of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The medieval sources of Estonia and Livonia were then compiled and edited by Friedrich Georg von Bunge who also worked with organizing the Tallinn City Archives. His *Liv-, Est-, und Curländisches Urkundenbuch* (LECUB) is a valuable entry to the medieval sources from Livonia. Even though its system of registers and the editorial principles are archaic, the LECUB series are a valuable point of departure for research on medieval Livonia.¹²⁷ Bunge edited the first six volumes covering the period until 1423 and the work was then continued by Hermann Hildebrand and Leonid Arbusow senior. The editions were published in two series covering the period 1093–1471 (LECUB I: vol. 1–12) and 1491–1510 (LECUB II: 1–3). The editorial work was conducted between 1853 and 1914. Due to the First World War, the sources from the period 1472–94 were left unedited. However, the editorial work has been continued in recent years with modern editing standards by Klaus Neitmann, Matthias Thumser, and Madlena Mahling, who have issued the volumes thirteen and fourteen of the LECUB I-series, and now the editions stretch to the year 1484.¹²⁸

In addition to the LECUB, the edition *Est- und Livländische Brieflade. Eine Sammlung von Urkunden zur Adels- und Gütergeschichte Est- und Livlands. Abt. 1: Dänische und Ordenszeit* by Georg Friedrich von Bunge and Baron Robert von Toll includes documents concerning Mariendal.¹²⁹ Even though antiquated, the source edition is valuable to the modern researchers as von Bunge and von Toll

¹²⁶ Johansen (ed.) 1933.

¹²⁷ Salminen 2016, 94–6.

¹²⁸ von Bunge (ed.) 1853–75; Hildebrand (ed.) 1881–1910; Arbusow (ed.) 1905–14; Neitmann et al. (eds) 2018 & 2020.

¹²⁹ von Bunge & von Toll (eds) 1856–7.

accessed sources that since have been lost or their whereabouts are unknown. Furthermore, the account books of Tallinn,¹³⁰ and the town Book of Tallinn contain some scattered entries mentioning Mariendal.¹³¹

The wills of Tallinn merchants, which are kept in the city archives, are as well relevant for the study of Mariendal's benefactors. The bequests to the ecclesiastical institutions reveal the popularity of the parish churches, chapels, convents, and monasteries in and near Tallinn. These have previously been studied by Kadri-Rutt Hahn who also has compiled extensive tables over all the legates to the churches and monasteries by the Tallinn burghers. I have used her tables as a reference to my study on wills mentioning the Birgittines.¹³²

Marienkron

The sources concerning Marienkron are less dispersed than the sources from Mariendal. Many documents from the monastery were though unfortunately destroyed in the town hall fire of 1680 as Marienkron's archive was then kept there.¹³³ The Stralsund City Archives (*Stadtarchiv Stralsund*, StAS) has c. 2 600 holdings of medieval documents from the period prior to the Reformation.¹³⁴ The documents concerning Marienkron are to be found under the archival category Rep. 10 U. *Urkunden Kloster Marienkron*. In total, 231 documents are listed under this category in the database *Ariadne*, which is the archive portal for all the archives in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern.¹³⁵ The documents, however, cover the timespan 1297–1625, which means that some of the documents fall outside the period of the monastery's existence. The documents dated to the period before the monastery's foundation in 1417–21 concern mainly landed estates that later were transferred to Marienkron through donations, sales, or pawns. They are, however, relevant for this study because these documents followed the transactions and give information on the economic activities of the monastery and its interaction with the local community. Accordingly, approximately eighty documents relate directly to the activities of Marienkron and the majority of them are original parchment charters written in Middle Low German. Additionally, the archival entity also includes a few eighteenth-century copies of charters from the monastery.¹³⁶

In the eighteenth century, the city archivist Johann Albert Dinnies compiled documents concerning Marienkron into handwritten editions of the documents then stored in the Stralsund City Archives. He compiled his first volume in 1771

¹³⁰ Vogelsang (ed.) 1976 & 1983.

¹³¹ Plaesterer (ed.) 1930.

¹³² Hahn 2015.

¹³³ Hoogeweg 1925, 732–33.

¹³⁴ Lusiardi 2000, 31.

¹³⁵ Archivportal Mecklenburg-Vorpommern <<https://ariadne-portal.uni-greifswald.de/>> (accessed on 11 April 2021).

¹³⁶ For Marienkron's archival entity in the Stralsund City Archives, see <<https://ariadne-portal.uni-greifswald.de/?arc=2&stc=2-18198&cls=2-18198-311824>> (accessed on 11 April 2021).

and named it *Diplomatarium Coenobii Mariae Coronae ordinis St. Annen und Brigitten (Urkundensammlung zum Kloster St. Annen und Brigitten)*.¹³⁷ Some years later, around 1780, he compiled an extended version and named it *Diplomatarium Coenobii Mariae Coronae Ordinis S. Brigittae. Sammlung der bei dem Kloster St. Annen und Brigitten zu Stralsund befindlichen älteren Urkunden Siegeln, Namenslisten, Ordensregeln, Auszug der Matrikel des Klosters, Klostergesetze*.¹³⁸ Based on this work he published an article in 1783 on the history of Marienkrone with some edited documents as appendix and excerpts of documents in the footnotes.¹³⁹ The editions by Dinnies are an important reference over the landed possessions of Marienkrone in the study of the Birgittine landscape around Stralsund.

Another historian, who was active in the interwar period, was Hermann Hoogeweg who in 1924–25 in two extensive volumes published overviews over all the medieval monasteries in Pomerania. His *Stifter und Klöster der Provinz Pommern Bd. 1–2* contains the history from the foundation to the dissolution of no less than fifty monasteries, including Marienkrone, plus the history of the three military orders in the region (the Templars, the Johannites, and the Teutonic Order). His work presents a valuable reference to the monastic history of Pomerania and concerning Marienkrone he did not only consult the Stralsund City Archives, but also the Ducal Archives in Wolgast, that since then have been divided.¹⁴⁰ Hoogeweg referred to a wide arrange of documents and sources in his overview of Marienkrone's history, but they are sometimes difficult to trace in order to determine their modern location since the signatures he used are now obsolete. Some of the archival entities in Pomerania, just as in Estonia, have been divided or relocated after the Second World War. The ducal archive of Wolgast used to be stored in the State Archives in Szczecin (*Archiwum Państwowe w Szczecinie*) but it has now been divided between the archives in Szczecin and the Regional Archives in Greifswald (*Landeshauptarchiv Greifswald*) because the geographical area that comprised the Duchy of Pomerania now stretches between Germany and Poland.¹⁴¹

The editions by Dinnies are the only source editions of documents concerning Marienkrone. However, apart from the charters preserved in the archives, some entries that concern the interaction between Marienkrone and the inhabitants of Stralsund have been noted in the copybooks from the town. The medieval town books (*Stadtbücher*) of Stralsund are wellpreserved and cover the period 1270–1848 in fifteen volumes. The volumes mainly contain communal property transaction registers where the entries have been written in Latin or Middle-low German. For the history of Marienkrone, mainly the fourth (1419–55), fifth (1455–92), and sixth (1492–1522) volumes contain entries on the monastery. Affairs concerning debts, mortgages, sales, purchases, and divisions of inheritance of the

¹³⁷ Johann Albert Dinnies, *Diplomatarium Coenobii Mariae Coronae ordinis St. Annen und Brigitten (Urkundensammlung zum Kloster St. Annen und Brigitten)*, StAS HS 0332.

¹³⁸ StAS HS 0389.

¹³⁹ Dinnies 1783.

¹⁴⁰ Hoogeweg 1924–5; cf. Jamroziak 2021, 7.

¹⁴¹ Łazarek & Rodig 2005.

Stralsund burghers were noted in the town books. Only a few entries concern Marienkrone, but nonetheless they are informative regarding some sales and donations that were made to the monastery.¹⁴²

The situation with the copybooks in Stralsund is very fortunate as not only the town books are preserved but also the *Liber Memorialis* (henceforth LM) of Stralsund is still extant. The volume is a so-called *denkelbuch*, which was a common type of copy book that was maintained by the town administrations. In contrast to the town books, the Stralsund *Liber Memorialis* has been edited by Horst-Diether Schröder during the period 1964–88. The edition was published in six volumes while the original manuscript of the LM is one volume consisting of 301 folios. The copybook contains entries of businesses involving the Town Council in Stralsund and the Stralsund burghers. The first plans of the foundation of a Birgittine monastery were noted in the LM. Additionally, Schröder's edition contains a register of place names and persons, which also has facilitated the work of identifying the individuals mentioned in charters and the LM.¹⁴³

Apart from the City Archives in Stralsund, a few documents concerning Marienkrone are stored in other archives. The regional archives of Greifswald hold some documents concerning sales and purchases of landed rents by members of the von Putbus family on Rügen with Marienkrone.¹⁴⁴ Some copies of letters dealing with the conflict between Marienkrone and the Bishop Peter Walckow in 1514 are now kept in the Szczecin State Archives. The folder containing the copies also includes some other copies of letters regarding the monastery's earlier activities that involved the dukes of Pomerania, as well as seventeenth-century correspondence between the Town Council in Stralsund and the dukes. Especially interesting are the copies of the letters issued on behalf of the Birgittines by the Danish king Christian II and his mother Christina in 1514 where they acted as intermediaries along with Duke Bogislaw X of Pomerania.¹⁴⁵

A special trait among the sources from Marienkrone is that the monastery on a regular basis used notary instruments in confirming errands concerning its landed estates. In total, ten notary instruments are included in Marienkrone's collection in the Stralsund City Archives and an additional instrument has been

¹⁴² Unfortunately, since these books are neither edited nor digitized, I have only accessed parts of the fourth and fifth volumes during my visit to the Stralsund City Archives in September 2018.

¹⁴³ Schröder (ed.) 1964–88.

¹⁴⁴ LandesA Greifswald, Rep 38d, Herrschaft Putbus, nr. 753: 12 January 1434, 13 November 1442, 17 January 1448, 27 March 1496. Apart from the regional archive in Greifswald, some documents concerning Marienkrone are as well kept in the city archives of Lübeck. Cf. Hasse (ed.) 1905, nr. 417, 20 March 1469.

¹⁴⁵ Archiwum Państwowe w Szczecinie, Herzoglich Wolgaster Archiv, Sign. 1772. (Old signature AKW Rep. 5 Tit 67.) Even though Marienkrone belonged to the diocese of Schwerin, have I not been able to find any further documents concerning the monastery in the Central Regional Archives in Schwerin, apart from one conflict regarding a rent between Marienkrone and a widow and a burgher named Lütke von Oldenburg in. Landeshauptarchiv Schwerin, LHAS, 2.12-3/2-34, 1520/1521.

glued to the cover of volume C 109 in Uppsala University Library.¹⁴⁶ A notary instrument was a document issued by a professional notary, giving additional legal security in, for example, transactions of landed property. According to an estimate made by Norbert Kersken, only circa 230 medieval notary instruments concerning monasteries have been preserved in archives in the southern Baltic Sea region, and almost half of them concern the Cistercians. The number of notary instruments from Marienkrone is thus relatively high.¹⁴⁷ Four of the notaries hired to draft instruments on behalf of Marienkrone's property transactions came from the diocese of Cammin, but instruments were as well written by clerical notaries in the dioceses of Schwerin, Verden and Havelberg. However, only one instrument was written by a notary in the Schwerin Diocese to which Marienkrone adhered, which may seem a little strange as one would expect the monastery to use notaries from its own diocese. Cammin was the diocese of the Duchy of Pomerania, and the use of notaries from that diocese can possibly be connected to the ducal authority in Pomerania. Marienkrone was located on the land pertaining under the jurisdiction of the Pomeranian dukes. The dukes also granted Marienkrone its privileges giving the monastery right to sell and purchase landed property in the duchy. Thus, the explanation why nearly half of the notary instruments from Marienkrone were written by notaries from Cammin may be linked to the ducal authority.¹⁴⁸

Just as is the case of Mariendal, the wills by Stralsund burghers are also relevant to the study on Marienkrone's position in the sacral topography of Stralsund. The town archives contain in total 920 preserved wills from the period prior to 1520, which is a relatively high amount compared to other Hansa towns.¹⁴⁹ The monastery became a popular sacred institution among the burghers to include in their wills, and the bequests to Marienkrone can be used to trace the group of benefactors of the monastery. The Stralsund wills have been the focus of previous research on medieval Stralsund. The historian Johannes Schildhauer published a study in 1992 on the wills reflecting the everyday life in the town.¹⁵⁰ However, the most exhaustive study on the medieval wills in Stralsund has been published by Ralf Lusiardi who mapped all the bequests to the sacred institutions in and around Stralsund in order to track their social and religious meaning for the town's inhabitants.¹⁵¹

Apart from charters and documents concerning the landed possessions of Marienkrone, several medieval and sixteenth century chronicles from Stralsund do also mention the monastery. The chronicles are of relevance here as they give accounts on the foundation, the refurbishments at the end of the fifteenth century, the visitation by the Bishop of Schwerin in 1508, as well as on how the refor-

¹⁴⁶ StAS UMarienkrone, nr. 25, 32, 34, 44, 59, 81, 119, 130. Uppsala Universitetsbibliotek, UUB C 109. Hedlund & Andersson-Schmitt 1989, 132.

¹⁴⁷ Kersken 2009, 340.

¹⁴⁸ StAS, UMarienkrone, nr. 25, 32, 34, 44, 81.

¹⁴⁹ Lusiardi 2000, 31.

¹⁵⁰ Schildhauer 1992.

¹⁵¹ Lusiardi 2000.

mation affected the monastery in 1524. These chronicles were edited in the nineteenth century by Rudolf Baier and Gottlieb Mohnike. In 1893, Baier issued the edition *Zwei Stralsundische Chroniken des fünfzehnten Jahrhunderts* containing two fragments of chronicles from the fifteenth century on the history of Stralsund. The Chronicle that he titled *Chronik B* is a fragment of a chronicle telling the history of the town Stralsund and the region of Pomerania. The special attention it paid to the Birgittines, and ecclesiastical matters, made Baier draw the conclusion that the author of the chronicle possibly was a Birgittine brother at Marienkrone.¹⁵² Several chronicles of the sixteenth century also mention the monastery and the most important of them is Johann Berckmann's chronicle of Stralsund, which he wrote in the middle of the century. He was a former Augustine friar, which may explain his interest in the Birgittines (as the Birgittines also were adhering to the rule of Saint Augustine).¹⁵³

Nådendal

In comparison to Mariendal and Marienkrone, an overview over the sources from Nådendal is much easier since nearly all documents concerning the monastery are kept in the Swedish National Archives in Stockholm. According to Ville Walta's inventory of the archival material and his study on the monastery's archival principles, Nådendal's archival entity, consisting of 274 charters, is relatively well-preserved. This makes it the largest collection from a medieval institution in the diocese of Turku. The documents in Nådendal's archival entity are dated from 1353 to 1537. As the monastery was founded in 1438, the documents of earlier date concern estates that later came into the monastery's possession.¹⁵⁴

The medieval sources from the area corresponding to modern day Finland have been edited at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth by the state archivist Reinhold Hausen.¹⁵⁵ In 1890 he published an edition of the medieval copy books of the Cathedral of Turku titled *Registrum Ecclesiae Aboensis eller Åbo Domkyrkas Svartbok* (henceforth REA) which contained entries concerning the cathedral chapter and the fabrica, as well as the altar prebends of the cathedral, but it also include some entries referring to Nådendal.¹⁵⁶ In the period 1910–35, Hausen published the eight-volume source edition *Finlands Medeltidsurkunder* (henceforth FMU) stretching from the early Middle Ages until 1530.¹⁵⁷ Additionally, Hausen compiled a collection of the medieval seals with a depiction of the seal and an identification of its owner.¹⁵⁸

Hausen's editions are now compiled in the database *Diplomatarium Fennicum* (henceforth DF) maintained by the National Archives of Finland.¹⁵⁹ The original

¹⁵² Baier (ed.) 1893.

¹⁵³ Mohnike & Zober (eds) 1833.

¹⁵⁴ Walta 2013, 283–342.

¹⁵⁵ Regarding Hausen's editorial work, see Saarenpää 2019.

¹⁵⁶ Hausen (ed.) 1890. The copy books of the Cathedral of Turku were compiled in the second half of the fifteenth century. For their compilation and functions, see Kallio-Hirvonen 2021.

¹⁵⁷ Hausen (ed.) 1910–1935.

¹⁵⁸ Hausen (ed.) 1900.

¹⁵⁹ Diplomatarium Fennicum < <http://df.narc.fi/> > (accessed on 12 April 2021).

FMU-signa of documents have been kept in the database, but the links to the corresponding posts in the database *Svenskt Diplomatariums Huvudkartotek* (henceforth SDHK) and digital photos of the original charters have been added.¹⁶⁰ Thanks to the vast digitization projects of the national archives in Helsinki and Stockholm, I have been able to study the original charters through the digitized copies of them. A continuous work with updating and maintaining the database is conducted when new documents concerning medieval Finland are found in archives across the Baltic Sea region and Europe. An ongoing work with publishing modern editions of the charters from Nådendal is also underway within the project *Nådendalsdiplomen* at the National Archives in Helsinki.¹⁶¹

The situation regarding the sources from Nådendal is accordingly relatively fortunate. Strangely enough, we can thank the Reformation for the survival of these sources from Nådendal, and other monasteries, that were collected and brought to Stockholm on the order of King Gustav I Vasa (1496–1560). The royal chancery had an interest in confiscating the monastery's estates, which happened in 1554, and therefore the documents on Nådendal's estates (and from other monasteries) were of interest and relevant to the post-reformatory administration, which is why many documents on the landed estates are preserved.¹⁶²

Additionally, a register inventory over Nådendal's estates was compiled around 1530 and is now kept in the Royal Library in Stockholm.¹⁶³ Walta, who has made a thorough study of the register and compared it with the preserved documents from Nådendal has concluded that only forty of the three hundred documents mentioned in the register are based on documents that have been impossible to track to any of the preserved sources.¹⁶⁴

Most of the documents concerning Nådendal are original parchment charters, many also with the seals still intact. Added to these, a fair number of documents were written on paper and some copies of original charters. Most of the charters from Nådendal concern donations and the circle of benefactors is identifiable based on the persons mentioned in the charters. Added to the actual donors, the sealing witnesses are also important in this context. Accordingly, in the case of Nådendal, a more thorough study on the group of benefactors is possible than at the two other monasteries analyzed in this study.

Moreover, a few documents concerning Nådendal are kept in the Finnish National Archives in Helsinki, these belong to the collection of letters of Påval Scheel († 1516) who was provost at the Turku Cathedral in the beginning of the fifteenth

¹⁶⁰ Svenskt Diplomatariums Huvudkartotek < <https://sok.riksarkivet.se/sdhk> > (accessed on 12 April 2021).

¹⁶¹ < <http://df.narc.fi/info/project#nadendalsdiplomen> > (accessed on 12 April 2021).

¹⁶² Walta 2013; Berntson 2003.

¹⁶³ Ms A 934, The Royal Library, Stockholm.

¹⁶⁴ Walta, 2013, 287, 317–42. The Early Modern period saw a rise in the antiquarian interest in the medieval documents then stored at the Tre Kronor-castle in Stockholm. Editorial work was then begun by Johan Hadorph (1630–1693), director-general of the Central Board of National Antiquities, in Uppsala. Thanks to his and others' work with making copies, many documents from the castle-archives were lent to Uppsala prior to the great fire at the royal castle in Stockholm in 1697 and has, if not as originals, at least been preserved as copies. Fritz 1980 (2009).

century. Three letters dated in 1515 were written by his niece Kristina Magnusdotter, who was a novice in Nådendal, give a rare glimpse into the connections between a person inside the monastery and her relative on the outside.¹⁶⁵

The towns Turku and Stockholm had close connections and, therefore, some entries in the memory books from Stockholm, *Stockholms Stads Tänkeböcker* are relevant to this study.¹⁶⁶ These mainly concern those who lived in Stockholm with connections to Turku and thus had dealings with Nådendal. Some entries concern property the monastery owned in Stockholm; others regard conflicts related to these estates.¹⁶⁷

The sources from Nådendal include some wills by persons who endowed the Birgittines with pious bequests alongside other religious institutions in the diocese. The number of medieval wills from the Turku diocese is quite low and, accordingly, the wills do not play as significant role in tracing the benefactors of Nådendal as they do in the cases of Mariendal and Marienkrone.¹⁶⁸ The number of preserved wills presents a significant difference between the environment where the monasteries were located. The many testamentary bequests to Mariendal and Marienkrone is a result of their closeness to the Hansa towns and the practices among the urban elites to commemorate the most important ecclesiastical institutions in and near their town. These documents have also to a higher degree been preserved in the archives of the town administrations. Nådendal's benefactors predominantly originated from the nobility, who also made wills and probably included Nådendal among the beneficiaries, but these documents that have been stored in family archives have generally not been preserved over the centuries.

¹⁶⁵ DF 5799, 5843 & 5852. Pával Scheel had a network stretching all over the Baltic Sea region and his correspondence has been digitized and is now found in the Diplomatarium Fennicum database.

¹⁶⁶ Edited by Hildebrand et al. 1917–44. See also Lamberg 2000.

¹⁶⁷ The entries were also included by Hausen in the FMU and are accordingly also to be found in DF 3609, 4539, 5820.

¹⁶⁸ The medieval wills have been studied by Rantala 2018, 66–87; Lehomaa 2000, 59–65; Kallio 2011.

2 The organization of Birgittine monasteries

Birgittine monasteries were large households that could house over a hundred persons. According to the *Regula Salvatoris*, the maximum number of sisters and brothers in the two convents was seventy-five (sixty sisters and twenty-five brothers, see table 2).¹⁶⁹ Apart from the sisters and brothers living inside the enclosure, there were also other persons living in the monastery. They were servants, elderly (who were cared for by the monastery), and guests such as pilgrims and prominent persons staying for shorter periods. The Birgittines thus had to be prepared to house and feed a large number of persons on a daily basis. To support its sustenance, the Birgittine household consisted of farmland producing crops and livestock, as well as fishing waters, mills, and forests. Life in the monastery was accordingly financed through the production and revenues of its estates. The farms were not worked directly by the monastery but by tenant farmers, or in some regions in the central and eastern parts of Europe, such as Livonia, the farmer population was mainly based on serfdom.¹⁷⁰

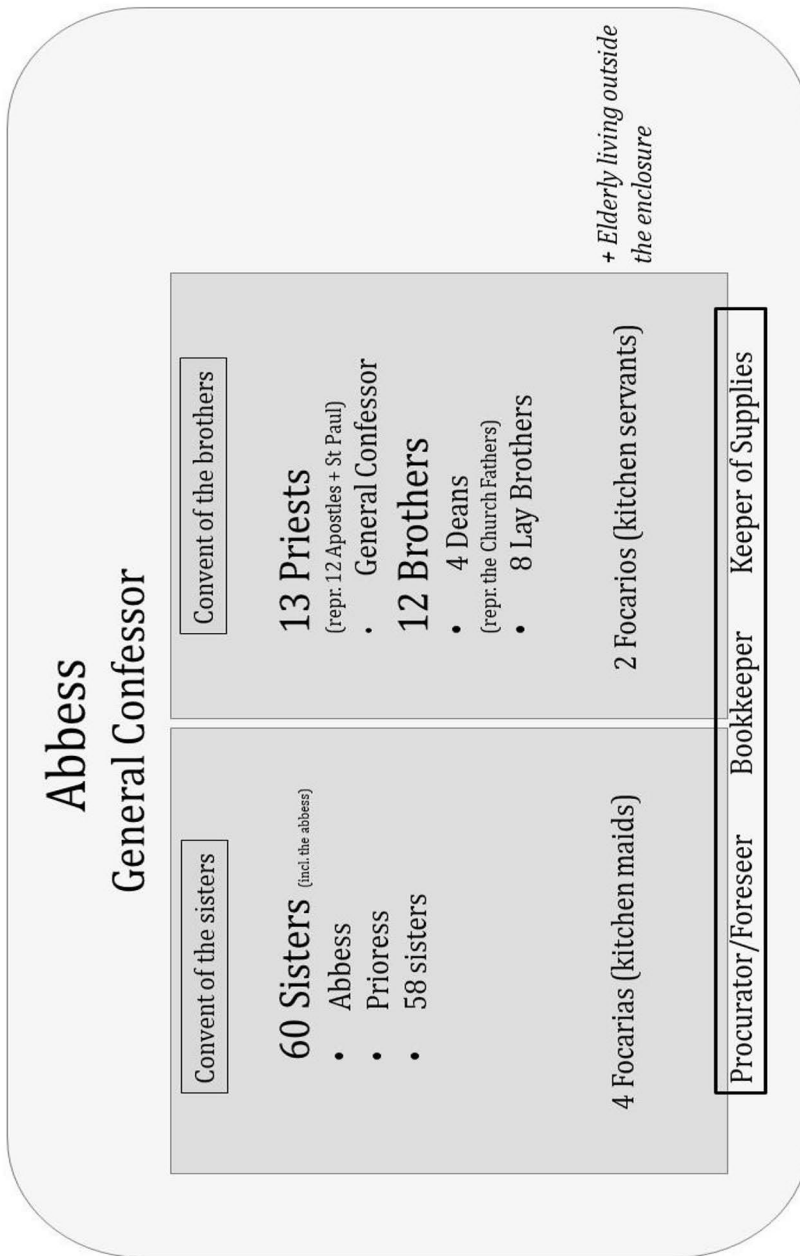
During the Middle Ages, the monastic rules presented an ideal for the organization and shaping of communal living as well as setting the structure of the observance. The monastic regulations had a legislative character and established practices inside a monastery. The rules described the basic principles, which were complemented by additions, statutes, and customaries that were adapted to the needs of the individual orders and monasteries. Furthermore, the monastic regulations set the terms of communication regarding interactions with the outside world: with other monasteries, ecclesiastical and lay authorities, commoners and tenants, as well as lay donors and families of the monastery's inhabitants. The rule was followed and adhered to as an ideal, but the environment and preconditions of an individual monastery set its practical conditions. Moreover, even though life and the practices in the monasteries of a particular order resembled each other in the sense that all Birgittine houses respected the same rule and statutes following a daily, weekly, and annual rhythm, they differed from each other in practices and routines regarding how life in the monastery was sustained financially and materially. The local preconditions shaped the organization of practical affairs and the daily businesses, setting the frame of how a monastery acted in the local community.¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁹ Nyberg 1974, 42–110.

¹⁷⁰ Fritz 2019, 143; Warren 2001, 55–69; Norborg 1958; Vilkuņa 2011, 123; Cnattingius 1963, 21.

¹⁷¹ Melville 2016; Pansters 2020, 1–36; Clark 2020, 37–76.

Figure 2. The Structure of a Birgittine monastery



The total number of members in the monastery was thus 72 (60 sisters + 12 brothers) symbolizing the disciples sent forth by Jesus plus thirteen priests symbolizing the apostles and Saint Paul. References: Regula Salvatoris Ch. 10, 14, 15; Reuelaciones Extravagentes Ch. 12 & 35; Wadstena Kloster-reglor Ch. 8-17; Nyberg (ed.) 1974, pp. 42-110.

The high Middle Ages saw a diversification of monastic life, which created a need to regulate the forms of communal life in the monasteries. The fourth Lateran Council in 1215 prohibited the foundation of new monastic rules, which is why the *Regula Salvatoris* was merely confirmed as an addition to the rule of Saint Augustine by Pope Urban V in 1370.¹⁷² The Birgittine Order is thus formally referred to as the *Ordo Sancti Augustini Sancti Salvatoris nuncupati*: The Order of Saint Augustine named after the Holy Saviour.¹⁷³ Saint Birgitta wrote the *Regula Salvatoris* as a revelation, divided into thematic chapters where Christ instructed her on the organization of a monastery dedicated to his name. The rule contains general descriptions regarding how a Birgittine monastery would be organized, all from the acceptance of new members, the vestments, the daily routines, the servants, the distribution of alms for the poor, the construction of buildings, and last but not least the financial organization. However, a need for more specific guidelines into the monastic life and practical issues of the Birgittine Order rose quickly since the *Regula Salvatoris* was formulated in a general manner. Saint Birgitta's friend and confessor, the Cistercian Prior Petrus of Alvastra monastery, was assigned by Birgitta herself to write some specifications to the rule, which were named the *Addiciones Priori Petri ad regulam Sancti Salvatoris*.¹⁷⁴ When the Birgittine Order expanded and new monasteries were founded all over Europe, a need of clarifications to the rule and its additions were needed in order to keep the order and its monasteries conform. This is why additional customaries, such as the *Liber Usuum* for the brothers and the *Lucidarium* for the sisters, were compiled based on the *Regula Salvatoris* and on the additions.¹⁷⁵ The rapid establishment of new monasteries and the general formulations of the *Regula Salvatoris* opened up for different interpretations of it, which led to inner struggles within the order, both between monasteries and between the male and female convents.¹⁷⁶

On 1 May 1413, Pope John XXIII issued the great bull of privileges concerning the Birgittine monasteries, known as the *Mare Magnum*. The bull confirmed all the previous bulls on the foundation and constitutions of the Birgittines and is regarded as the official papal confirmation of the Birgittine Order in the sense that it allowed the order to expand with the foundation of new monasteries. Even though several monasteries of the order besides Vadstena had been founded at this point, the order began to outspread quickly only after the issuing of the large bull of privilege.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷² For the Rule of Saint Augustine and the restrictions at the Fourth Lateran Council, see Ponesse 2020, 393–428. Regarding the Fourth Lateran Council and its impact on monastic life, see Vanderputten 2020 a, 112–115; Melville 2016, 180–185; Melville 2020, 801.

¹⁷³ Nyberg 2016, 178; *Regula Salvatoris*, Eklund (ed.) 1975, 99–228.

¹⁷⁴ The text is usually referred to as either the *Addiciones* or the *Constituciones* as the alternative title *Addiciones seu Constituciones ad regulam Saluatoris* were used already in the early history of Vadstena, but both abbreviations thus refer to the additions of the rule compiled by Petrus Olai of Alvastra. Vitalis 1995, 47–56. Tore Nyberg compiled an edition of the *Addiciones* in 1974. Nyberg, 1974, 2–110; Hedlund 1991, 361–75.

¹⁷⁵ Risberg (ed.) 2003; Hedström 2013, 351–69;

¹⁷⁶ Gejrot 1990, 195–214; Cnattingius 1963.

¹⁷⁷ Höjer 1905, 137–42.

Interaction: Monasteries and lay society

The Birgittine monasteries were major landowners in their regions. However, their means of acquiring estates varied depending on the connections between the monasteries and the local communities. In some regions, the financial support and the acquisition of landed property was granted by donations (Nådendal monastery and partly Mariendal), while at other locations the monasteries were more involved in buying land and accumulating wealth by acting as creditors through the acceptance of pawned estates (Marienkrona and partly Mariendal). The landed property brought certain practical issues regarding the running and supervision of the estates belonging to the monastic household. The economy of the Birgittine monasteries is consequently important for the understanding and examination of their relation to local communities and the socioeconomic role of the Birgittines in their regional context.¹⁷⁸

Through the surviving documents concerning transactions and disputes on landed property, the interactions between the monasteries and laypersons can be studied, and also the practices concerning the landed estates. The management of estates and the interactions with laypersons in relation to the landed property enabled the Birgittines to lead a life inside the enclosure of the convents. Even though the Birgittine sisters and brothers were not supposed to own material property of their own, their life in the monasteries was not poor.¹⁷⁹ The members of a monastic community, especially in the case of female monasteries, often originated from the wealthiest strata of society. They were used to a certain standard of living and were not accustomed to rough manual labour. Birgitta was aware of this situation when she designed her monastic rule, which is why she ordained that four lay sisters and two lay brothers (Lat. *focarias/focarios*) would be accepted in every monastery. The *focarias* and *focarios* would live outside the enclosure of the convents as servants and they did the toughest manual labour serving in the kitchens, attending to the daily needs of the two convents. The sisters and the lay brothers inside the male convent were still involved in manual labour such as gardening, handicrafts, and manuscript production, although a considerable part of the day was dedicated to the religious service. The laypersons outside the enclosure who performed the practical management and labours, secured that the inhabitants of the monastery had the possibility to fulfil their religious tasks.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁸ The monasteries can be described as companies in the sense that they were large landowners and acted as such by making investments through buying, selling and exchanging property, and through accepting pawns and donations. This was the approach taken by Lars-Arne Norborg in 1958 in his research on Vadstena's economy. His study on the origin, location and function of the monastery's estates remains the only more systematic study of the economy of a Birgittine monastery. Norborg 1958.

¹⁷⁹ The *Regula Salvatoris* prohibited personal possession of valuables and other items. *Regula Salvatoris* ch. 2.

¹⁸⁰ *Reuelaciones Extravagantes*, Hollman 1956 (ed.), ch. 35; Lamberg 2011, 93–108. As Henrik Vitalis also has asserted, the sisters in Vadstena were not content with the first version of the additions to the rule by Prior Petrus Olavi, as they thought he prescribed a too heavy burden

Furthermore, the *Regula Salvatoris* emphasized the public duties of the Birgittine priest brothers. Apart from attending to the spiritual needs of the Birgittine sisters, they were expected to preach to the laity.¹⁸¹ The public service was an advantage of the order, making it attractive to potential monastic founders, as the foundation of a Birgittine monastery could be motivated by the benefit of the common good in local society, as was, for example, the case when Nådendal was founded.¹⁸² The Birgittine monasteries although adhering to the cloistered lifestyle, were integrated into their local context and interacted regularly with people outside the monasteries.

Life in a Birgittine monastery for the individual sister or brother, following a long tradition monasticism, was not as secluded from interactions with their family and the surrounding society as it would seem according to a literal interpretation of the *Regula Salvatoris*. Life in the monastery was simply not possible without contacts with the outside world, persons who joined a Birgittine monastery did often keep contact with their family either through letters or by visits of family members. The *Regula Salvatoris* regulated that the sisters could communicate with relatives on the outside through a barred window in the wall of the convent parlour, at certain days and hours, with the allowance of the abbess, and under the surveillance of another sister. In the same manner, the male convent also had a meeting room they could communicate with people outside the monastery. The convents also had gate messengers who could inform the inhabitants of the monastery of visitors who had errands to them. The meeting rooms were important for the dealing with, for example, the acceptance of testamentary gifts.¹⁸³

Furthermore, the contacts to the families were of economic importance to the monastery as many of the women (and men) who entered the Birgittine monasteries came from wealthy families. Some of the Birgittine sisters had joined the order after entering widowhood, and some of them kept control over their property and using it for the economic benefit of their monastery. This was, for example, the case of the wealthy widow and businesswoman Katerina Lemmel who entered the Bavarian Birgittine monastery Maria May in 1516. She used her assets in the family company to make refurbishments of the monastery, and her correspondence to her cousin Hans Imhoff reveals that she repeatedly encouraged her relatives to make financial contributions to the monastery in return for intercession:

With a short reading from a good lection we consume a spiritual supper every night before we go to compline. And it is announced to us who our benefactors are and for whom we should pray, as well as for whatever other needs. You too

of work such as baking and brewing. Their complaints called for a revision of the additions. Vitalis 1995, 52. As a contrast to heavier work was also writing and text production considered as manual labour. See also Walta 2014, 36.

¹⁸¹ *Revelaciones Extravagantes*, ch.15.

¹⁸² DF 2265; *Regula Salvatoris* ch. 13

¹⁸³ *Regula Salvatoris*, chapter 7; *Revelaciones Extravagantes*, chapter 29; Fritz, 2019, 150–51.

are often mentioned, together with your wife and children and all your household. The Reverend Mother requires that we pray for all of you and for the other cousins and for all our good friends. [...] I also thank you very kindly for all the love and friendship you have shown to our worthy convent and to me, and for having made an effort with all the other cousins.¹⁸⁴

As becomes evident from the quote, the relation between the Birgittine sister speaking on behalf of her monastery and her cousin can be described as a mutual relation consisting of material donations in return for immaterial spiritual rewards. Katerina carefully emphasized how diligently all the convent and herself prayed for her cousin and all of his family in return for all good favours he had showed the monastery. Her case is an outstanding example of the importance of the connections between a Birgittine sister and her family outside the monastery. This was most probably a common scenario at other monasteries as well. Correspondence and wills endowing individual members of a Birgittine monastery reveal that the Birgittine sisters and brothers could keep regular contacts with the outside world. Moreover, the Birgittine brothers sometimes received permission to leave their enclosure, and to break the *stabilitas loci*, in order to represent their monastery in court or to visit other monasteries of the order. Accordingly, the Birgittines were regularly communicating with those outside the precinct of their monastery.¹⁸⁵

The economic transactions and practices are an excellent means of tracing the interactions between the Birgittine monasteries and the local communities. The relation between a monastery and its adjacent town was synergetic. The monastery provided spiritual services, health care, and employment while the lay community with the benefactors and tenant farmers secured the monastery's finances. In the southern parts of the Baltic Sea region, the cause of action when founding a new Birgittine monastery was entirely different from in the Nordic kingdoms. Here the monasteries were founded in pre-existing major trading towns that were members of the Hanseatic League. Furthermore, the Hansa towns were considerably larger than the towns founded at the Birgittine monasteries, which meant, as I argue in the following chapters, that the model of the monasteries regarding their economy and their relations depended on the location where they were founded. The Birgittine monasteries in Scandinavia can be characterized as rural, since their adjacent towns were of humble size compared to the more urban monasteries on the southern coast of the Baltic Sea that can be defined as more urban due to their locations near the Hansa towns. The Birgittine landscapes thus saw a diversification.

¹⁸⁴ “Deß geleichen leut mon pald kümplet, so ge wir in die geistlichen colaczen all nacht. Er wir zu der cümplet gen, da list mon vns etwas gucz ein wenig vnd verkunt wer vns gucz tut vnd fur wen mon piten soll oder ander nottorf aüch. Du pist auch oft darinen vnd dein weib vnd kind vnd all die dein, das die wirdig muter befielcht fur euch alle zu peten vnd fur die anderen vetterns vnd fur alle vnsser gut freunt. [...] Ich danck dir auch gar freuntlich aller lib vnd freuntschaft, die du dem wirdigen cofenten vnd mir beweist, vnd dastu also gemüt pist mit den vettern.” Letter from Katherina Imhoff to her cousin Hans Imhoff, 26 March 1517, ‘Letter 11’, Schier et al. (eds) 2019, 90–91.

¹⁸⁵ Lamberg 2011, 93–108; Schleif & Schier 2009.

The Birgittine economy

Monastic wealth was throughout the Middle Ages an object of reform and was continuously in the focus of reassessment and reform of the monastic lifestyle. Orders, like the Cistercians, have also used the narrative of repudiation of wealth as a major factor in the stories of their origin. However, the dichotomy between new reformed monasteries embracing a simple lifestyle without excess and the old “corrupt” orders has often been heavily exaggerated.¹⁸⁶ The Birgittines were part of this long tradition of reassessment of monastic life and the search for alternative ways to organize a reculsive life focusing on the service of God and the spiritual wellbeing of the Christian community. Saint Birgitta’s main inspiration is considered having derived from the Cistercians and possibly also from the Premonstratensian double monasteries that she probably became familiar with on her pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela in 1341–42.¹⁸⁷

According to the *Regula Salvatoris*, a Birgittine monastery was to build its financial sustenance upon revenues of landed estates. It is important to consider the model of the financial organization of Birgittine monasteries in the *Regula Salvatoris* because many of the sources that are relevant for this study concern the economy and administration. In the *Regula Salvatoris*, the economy is especially in focus in its twentieth chapter. According to it, the activities of a new monastery could begin only when the construction of the convent buildings were finished. Only then could the first members take up life in the monastery. Moreover, the first generation of brothers and sisters were to bring as much property with them that would be enough for maintaining their livelihood in both good years and bad:

All persons who wish to enter the order in the recently founded monastery should bring as much money in revenue with them, and put it under the authority of the abbess, that it will suffice for their sustenance in bread and beer in bad years as well as good. The wealth that is indeed voluntarily donated by the people of the realm will provide for all other livelihood, vestments and necessities for the household that is all provided for by the abbess. When the number of persons in the monastery is complete after its foundation and anyhow when there are personal prebends in bread and beer for all years, then the monastery will not after this accept estates altogether revenues of those persons entering the order or of any other persons.¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁶ Vanderputten 2020 b, 599–617; Melville 2016, passim; Jamroziak 2013, 43–54.

¹⁸⁷ Nyberg 1965, 9–22.

¹⁸⁸ “Omnis persona dictarum primo fundacium monasterium hanc religionem introiens tot pecuniarum redditus secum inferat et potestati abbatisse subiciat, quot in omni anno tam sterili quam fertili sufficiant sibi ad panem et potum. De pecunia vero a populo regni voluntarie contribuite alia victualia, vestes quoque et necessarias domos abbatissa omnibus prouidebit. Deinde numero personarum primarum fundacium monasterium completo et qualibet persona prebendam panis et potus omni anno habentes, nequaquam postea ab aliis intransibus religionem seu ab aliis personis predia vel redditus monasterio tribantur.” *Regula Salvatoris* ch. 20. Markus Lindberg has compared the sources from Vadstena regarding the food supplies and food production and concluded that the Birgittine rules concerning food in the monastery well reflected the reality. Lindberg 2017, 184–90.

The *Regula Salvatoris* thus limited how much wealth a monastery could accumulate in its possession. As seen in the quote above, the Birgittine economy would be based on personal prebends financed by the first generation of sisters and brothers and these were subsequently to be inherited by the following generations. After it had acquired enough for sustaining the persons inside, the monastery would accordingly not accept more gifts for prebends. It would not hereafter accept any more donations of land or rates of interest from laypersons who wished to contribute to the foundation. When a sister or brother died, their prebend was to be inherited by the next person who entered the convent. Thus, when the first generation of sisters and brothers had brought with them their prebends, then the monastery would own just enough property so that it could provide bread and beer for its inhabitants in both good years and bad. According to Birgitta's ideal of poverty, the living standards would not contain any excess and the decorations of the monastery would be kept to a bare minimum.¹⁸⁹

At the end of the year, the incomes were to be balanced and the surplus was given as alms to the poor. Consequently, the monastery would not be obliged to visitation by royal guests, which was customary in the Swedish realm. However, even though the monasteries were exempted from the obligation of housing royals, Vadstena and other monasteries would in practice accommodate prominent guests on a regular basis. The Vadstena Diary, for instance, bears witness to the many visits of kings and queens who from time to time stayed in the monastery.¹⁹⁰ Regarding other expenditures, such as necessities, vestments, and movables that the monastery and its inhabitants needed, would be bought through the incomes of voluntary pecuniary gifts by the people of the realm. Still, the *Regula Salvatoris* allowed a limited possibility for a continuous acceptance of voluntary (minor) gifts from laypersons.¹⁹¹

As all monastic rules, the *Regula Salvatoris* presented an ideal picture under ideal circumstances. Such legislative texts were followed and implemented as far as possible, but the monasteries also had to be able to implement a level of pragmatism and adapt to their surrounding context. The acceptance of pious donations from generous laypersons presents a good example, even though *Regula Salvatoris* stipulated that they would not continue to accumulate wealth, it could also be precarious to not accept donations from donors who wished to give their property to the Birgittines. Another example is the enormous running costs of housing the large number of people that visited the monasteries. Thus, although there are discrepancies between the ideal of the Birgittine texts and the practices

¹⁸⁹ *Regula Salvatoris* ch. 20. The statutes in the regula regarding the initial donations to a Birgittine monastery has previously been discussed by Lars-Arne Norborg in his doctoral dissertation. Norborg 1958, 5–6.

¹⁹⁰ Vadstena's symbolic value as a religious centre of the Scandinavian kingdoms was manifested in the visits by newly elected regents to Vadstena. The queens were key figures in the royal support of the monastery. DV 120, 123, 169, 221, 222, 238, 239, 374, 406, 322, 330, 412, 518, 548, 559, 560, 593, 601, 614, 621, 622, 624, 640, 641, 658, 686, 719, 782, 789, 797, 862, 884, 932, 946, 958, 1065, 1066.

¹⁹¹ *Regula Salvatoris* ch. 19 & 20.

in the daily running of the monasteries, they must not be exaggerated and they did certainly not mean that the monasteries did not follow their rule.

The discrepancies regarding the economy in the *Regula Salvatoris* and the actual practices in the monasteries was in focus of Lars-Arne Norborgs research. He compared the rule with the papal privileges that subsequently were issued after the confirmation of the *Regula Salvatoris*. The papal bulls *Hiis quæ divini* 1370 and *Hiis quæ pro divini* of 1378 contained more generous regulations of landed property that enabled Vadstena and other Birgittine monasteries to accumulate more wealth. The outline of life in the new monastery in Vadstena was regulated in the bulls together with the economic aspects. According to Norborg, the two documents had great impact on the future monasteries of the order.¹⁹²

Both bulls confirmed the strong female leadership of the monastery with the abbess being responsible for the economy. The bulls did though not prescribe the creation of personal prebends of the persons who first entered the monastery to secure the sustenance of the future generations. According to Lars-Arne Norborg, the crucial point was that they did not limit the amount of donations the monastery could accept. Furthermore, the bull of 1378 prescribed that the revenues of landed estates not only were to cover bread and beer but also could additionally be used for other expenses such as vestments, provisions, or the maintenance of the monastery's buildings. Whereas chapter twenty of the *Regula Salvatoris* prescribed that these expenses would be covered by the voluntary gifts from the laity. Norborg interpreted the extended use of revenues as a means to prolonge the initial donation period. Instead of personal prebends, the two bulls prescribed that the entire monastery was subject of donations and thus the estates were all managed as communal property.¹⁹³ One can argue that Norborg somewhat exaggerated the discrepancies between the two bulls and the rule. In the end, the different formulations between the rule and the bulls did not reflect fundamentally different attitudes to how the monasteries were organized. The alternative formulations to the accumulation of wealth may have been founded in the more pragmatic realization that the strict limitation according to the rule could not be implemented literally.

Thus, the question remains what the formulation of a monastery being "sufficiently donated" actually intended. Again, it can be argued that it was founded in the circumstances of organising life in a new monastery. The initial construction phase with temporary wooden building would enable that the monastic life could be commenced soon after the foundation, but the construction of stone buildings

¹⁹² This bull has been interpreted as a reformulation of an earlier bull. One of the major discrepancies between the two bulls is that the earlier bull approved of the foundation of *two* monasteries of the Augustine Order in Vadstena, one for women and one for men. These monasteries were linked through the privileges of the Augustine Order and its rule as well as the Birgittine constitutions as an addition to these. While the later bull on the contrary, approved of *one* monastery in Vadstena consisting of two convents that were strictly separated from each other through the building regulations that were prescribed in the *Regula Salvatoris*. Accordingly, the later bull established the monastic model that Birgitta had in mind when she constructed her monastic rule. Höjer, 1905 65–71; Nyberg 1965, 43–59; Norborg 1958, 5–10.

¹⁹³ SDHK 9751; Nyberg 1965, 43–46; Norborg 1958, 6–10.

would be a more lengthy and costly project. At Vadstena, and at many other locations, construction work and renovations were continuous, which thus could serve as a motive to accept donations. Continuous construction work can also be observed at all three monasteries studied here. The church in Nådendal was inaugurated as late as 1462, twenty-four years after the monastery's foundation. The church was replaced already in the late fifteenth century with the majestic building that still stands on the location.¹⁹⁴ At Marienkrone, the monastery saw a continuity in the renovations at the monastery, which are referred to in several entries in an excerpt of the town chronicle. Added to this, Marienkrone received testamentary bequests that were directed to the construction work at the monastery throughout the fifteenth century.¹⁹⁵ At Mariendal, the construction work at the brothers' convent was still conducted in the beginning of the sixteenth century. Consequently, at all three monasteries the building projects were constant and could motivate persons to make donations to support the construction work at the Birgittine churches. Consequently, the ongoing constructions at the monasteries could possibly also be used as an inspiration for donations and bequests.¹⁹⁶

Another impact the Birgittines had on the lay communities was the so-called Our Lady's pence (Swe. *Vårfrupenningen*), a tax originating from Birgitta's revelations and levied from every inhabitant of the Swedish realm above the age of sixteen. In chapter 32 of the *Revelationes extravagantes* Christ informs Birgitta that every person from the age of sixteen was to pay tax for the construction of the monastery that Birgitta planned in Vadstena. Every unmarried man and woman (including widowers and widows) were to pay one mark annually to the Birgittines. Persons devoted to serve God, such as clerics and the inhabitants of monasteries, were exempted from this tax. Servants, that is, those who were not in control of their own income, were also exempted from it.¹⁹⁷ This tax was officially confirmed in the bull *Etsi ex debito* on 2 June 1401 issued by Boniface IX who also extended this revenue to encompass all future monasteries. The bull stated that all inhabitants above sixteen years of age in the realms where the monasteries were founded were to pay the tax of one coin to finance the construction of their Birgittine monastery. In how large extent this tax actually was collected in different regions is not known, but nonetheless it was a generous privilege for the Birgittine Order.¹⁹⁸

The economic organization of a new Birgittine monastery was also addressed in the *Addiciones* by Prior Petrus. Especially the chapters eleven to thirteen focus on economy. These mainly include some brief specifications regarding how the abbess should manage the estates and how often she would report the accounts to a council consisting of the general confessor and senior members of the two convents.¹⁹⁹ The management of estates according to the *Regula Salvatoris* and

¹⁹⁴ Klockars 1979, 76–77.

¹⁹⁵ Chronicle B in Baier (ed.) 1893, 15–47; Will by burgomaster Otto Voge, 21 March 1475, StAS, Test. 1, Nr. 696.

¹⁹⁶ Raam & Tamm 2006, 19–21.

¹⁹⁷ *Reuelaciones Extravagantes*, ch. 32.

¹⁹⁸ SDHK 15635.

¹⁹⁹ Hedlund 1991, 362; Nyberg, 1974, 2: 71–74; Höjer, 1901, 73.

other Birgittine legislative texts set the framework and guidelines for how the monasteries of the order would be managed.

The practical organization of the economy and the management of estates have been described in more detail in a mid-fifteenth century manuscript containing the regulations of Vadstena.²⁰⁰ The manuscript dated to 1451–52 contains a vernacular version of the *Regula Salvatoris* but also some specifications on the economic organization of the household and the monastery's property. It does as well concern the management of estates and the practicalities in running the landed property of the monastery. Chapters thirteen to seventeen contain a description on the tasks of the procurator (Swe. *syssloman*), the keeper of supplies (Swe. *gårdsmästaren*) and the bookkeeper (Swe. *intäktesman*). The regulation is though not too clear regarding the division of responsibilities between the three offices. It seems that the monastery often just appointed a procurator in the running of the daily tasks. The appointment of the other two positions could be filled to primarily facilitate the duties of the procurator. Possibly, all of the three offices were, however, not always appointed since their duties were rather similar.²⁰¹

According to the regulations of Vadstena, the procurator should, whenever possible, be appointed among one of the eight lay brothers of the male convent, but if none of them were suitable for the task, then the abbess could appoint a layman for the task. The procurator was to regularly report to the abbess regarding the management of the monastery's estates. The regulation further states that he in all major tasks was to ask advice from the abbess and obey her instructions. He act without first asking for her approval only in the performance of smaller tasks. His main assignment was to cure for the worldly affairs and to be the monastery's representative in errands that the brothers and sisters inside the enclosure could not perform. His duty was to ride across the monastery's estates, measure them, collect the revenues, and help the abbess in drawing up the accounts. The procurator assured that the monastery's estates were cultivated, that the farms were kept in good shape by the tenants, and that the farms were not desolated for any longer period of time. The procurator could also act the role of representative for the monastery in court whenever necessary.²⁰²

The regulation of Vadstena serves as a model of how a Birgittine household could be organized.²⁰³ The practical running of the monastery demanded skills in

²⁰⁰ Ms A 24 in the Swedish Royal Library. Also edited in Lindström 1845, 1–82. The text was probably an expression of the inner reforms of Vadstena in the 1440s after attempts by the male convent to gain more influence over the monastery's economy.

²⁰¹ Ms. A 24, f. 12v–17r, The Royal Library, Stockholm; Among the monasteries Mariendal, Marienkrone, and Nådendal, a keeper of supplies is only mentioned once in the sources from Nådendal. DF 3909.

²⁰² Ms A 24, f. 13r–14r, The Royal Library, Stockholm. A parallel can here be drawn to Nådendal when the regent Karl Knutsson on 31 January 1440, in his charter of protection of the monastery, granted its procurator the right to buy all the necessary supplies and food for its sustenance from all over the kingdom "wherever they could find it". This liberty was of course needed, as the monastery, founded two years earlier, did not yet possess enough landed property to provide for its sustenance. DF 2322.

²⁰³ Gejrot 1990, 196.

bookkeeping and accounting, which also took time from other tasks in the monastery. This is one reason why Birgitta assigned the abbess to be responsible for the economy, because these tasks otherwise would have taken too much focus from the spiritual responsibilities of the general confessor and the brothers. Because the abbess could not leave her convent, she was authorized to appoint one of the lay brothers or a trusted layman to conduct the practical management of the estates. According to the *Regula Salvatoris*, the brothers were to be relieved of material concerns as much as possible. The strong female leadership was though not easy to accept for the male convents, which is why the authority of the abbess at times was challenged.²⁰⁴

As the abbess could not leave the enclosure of her convent, her leadership was depending on reports by the male officials that acted as representatives. This left her authority in a vulnerable position and she had to choose reliable men as her councillors in the practical management of the estates. The Birgittine statutes and the papal confirmations of the Birgittine monasteries firmly established the role of the abbess as the leader, but the General Confessors and the male convents did nonetheless in practice exercise a considerable influence over the further development of the Birgittine Order. The Birgittine brothers travelled to the papal curia, oversaw the foundation of new monasteries, and participated in the general chapters of the order.²⁰⁵

Indulgences and papal privileges

An important factor that contributed to the Birgittine success and the rapid expansion of the order in the Baltic Sea region were the generous papal indulgences granted the Birgittines. The order was confirmed in several steps and was awarded three types of papal privileges: privileges confirming the Birgittine constitutions, confessional privileges (the right to absolve sins), and indulgences for pilgrims and visitors to Birgittine churches on certain feast days.²⁰⁶ Many of these papal privileges were first granted Vadstena, and in extension to the entire order, during the period from 1391 to 1414. The papal privileges following the

²⁰⁴ Fritz 2019, 143; Silfverstolpe (ed.) 1898; Larsson (ed.) 1971. Norborg who has studied the productivity of the Vadstena estates has estimated that the average farm of Vadstena was 5–8 times larger than the average farms of the region. The monastery's farmlands were usually managed by tenants (landbor) that paid revenues to the monastery. Norborg 1958, 140–71.

²⁰⁵ Especially the early history of the order was marked by inner struggles as the male convent in Vadstena, through papal intervention, tried to strengthen its position and making the General Confessor the head of the monastery by giving him the title prior. Related to this inner power struggle were the attempts at the same time to limit the bishop's influence by removing his visitation rights. The attempts of the male convent to increase its power on the cost of the abbess and the bishop were not successful, but it led to the deposition of the first Abbess Ingegerd Knutsdotter (who was a grandchild of Saint Birgitta) in 1403. Norborg 1958, 272–83; Nyberg 1991, 238–64.

²⁰⁶ Many of these were copied into the Book of privileges in Vadstena, the so-called *Liber Privilegiorum*. Manuscript A 19, The National Archives, Stockholm. Nyberg 1971, 6.

foundation of the order defined the terms of life in the monasteries in addition to the *Regula Salvatoris* and its constitutions.²⁰⁷

When a new Birgittine monastery was founded, papal privileges such as indulgences were granted to it. The indulgences were a means of shortening the time that the soul had to spend in Purgatory. Christians who visited the monastery on certain feast days would receive a certain amount of indulgence, for example, forty days.²⁰⁸ Upon the foundation, a Birgittine monastery received all the privileges of the Augustine Order, among them the right for the priest brothers to absolve sins on the same level as the diocesan bishop (sins that otherwise had demanded a person to seek absolution from their bishop). The confessional privileges served as a means for the Birgittines to authorize their new order, but the privileges could also stimulate the flow of pecuniary gifts to the monastery. Furthermore, Vadstena and the other Birgittine monasteries received papal privileges that were specific to them, for instance, in 1373 they received the right to celebrate mass before sunrise during the dark winter months. On 4 January 1379, no less than ten bulls were issued by Urban VI on petition of Birgitta's daughter Catherine. These bulls were partly issued on behalf of Vadstena to protect its property and threatening all transgressions to it with excommunication.²⁰⁹

The most important indulgence was the so-called *Ad Vincula* indulgence. On 30 July 1378, Pope Urban VI granted visitors to Vadstena the same indulgence as those who visited the church of San Pietro in Vincoli in Rome on the feast day of Saint Peter in chains (August 1).²¹⁰ According to Torvald Höjer, the origin of this generous indulgence can be traced back to Saint Birgitta herself who in a revelation was promised by the Saviour that the visitors to her church would receive the same indulgence as the visitors of San Pietro in Vincoli in Rome. This grand privilege awarded the Birgittines a central position among the religious institu-

²⁰⁷ Höjer 1905, 132–42.

²⁰⁸ The institution of indulgence can be traced back to 1095 when pope Urban II granted all persons who fought in the first crusade full relief from sin, and he stated that this would serve as a substitute for all other forms of penitence. In the end of the century, pope Innocence II extended the privilege to also include all those who contributed to the crusade by donating money to it or giving their expertise to the mission. In due time, the indulgences could be granted by the pope without also for other purposes than the crusade movement. The practice of awarding new churches and monasteries privileges of indulgence became common practice in the end of the thirteenth century. Schaffern 2006, 11–36; Swanson 2006, 215–240; Jenks 2018, 13–40.

²⁰⁹ The laity were then forbidden to take the monastery's property into possession, and they could not put claims on the gifts and bequests that were given to Vadstena. Vadstena was also liberated from paying tithes in conformity with the privileges of the Cistercians. Furthermore, Vadstena was liberated from paying a fourth of their incomes to the diocese, which was customary, during the period of construction until the monastery became solvent. To erect buildings near the monastery without its consent was also prohibited. Finally, persons who were harassing pilgrims and other visitors to Birgitta's grave were threatened with excommunication. SDHK 10390, 11387, 11390, 11392, 11395, 11397, 11399, 11401, 11403, 11406, 11408; Nyberg 1965, 46; Nyberg 1971, 1–44; Höjer 1905, 91–100.

²¹⁰ SDHK 11279.

tions in Scandinavia and was a contributing factor for Vadstena becoming a renowned centre of pilgrimage and a subject of pious donations.²¹¹ In the letter of indulgence, Urban VI refers to the fact that the church in Vadstena was the resting place for Birgitta's relics as a place where "God worked many miracles". The petition for the *Ad Vincula* indulgence, from the Birgittine point of view, was an attempt to promote the ongoing canonization process of Birgitta, but it was possibly also motivated by the prospect of receiving more donations. The *Ad Vincula* indulgence was later extended to the new monasteries of the order.²¹²

Added to the *Ad Vincula* indulgence, the Birgittines were also awarded with two other prominent indulgences: the privileges of the Augustine eremites and the *Portiuncula* indulgence to be read on the Laetare Sunday in spring. The *Ad Vincula* and *Portiuncula* indulgence were so-called *indulgentiae ad instar* that were plenary indulgences, which meant that those who attended mass in a Birgittine church on these days were absolved from all sin committed by then. The indulgences put the Birgittines in an especially advantageous position and attracted pilgrims to the Birgittine churches. The indulgences brought income to the monasteries and were an inspiration to the foundation of the new monasteries of the order. In return of the indulgence, the visitors to the monasteries were expected to give a helping hand to the *fabrica*. The indulgence and confessional privileges are one explanation to the rapid establishment of the order in the Baltic Sea region during the beginning of the fifteenth century.²¹³

The Birgittines were in general very successful in acquiring papal privileges and indulgences even though these privileges also caused many problems in periods. Most of the Birgittine privileges were issued during the Great Western Schism, which caused the order much difficulty at the major reform councils of the fifteenth century. Pope Martin V sought to reform the abundance of indulgence privileges issued after the death of Pope Gregory XI in 1378. All the grand indulgences of the Birgittines were hence threatened. Through Birgittine delegations to the Council of Constance and through repeated petitions to the papal curia, they succeeded in keeping their indulgences. However, the lavish privileges of the order continued being questioned by other orders and by the secular clergy at the locations where Birgittine monasteries were founded.²¹⁴

Another severe threat to the Birgittines was the ban of the double monasteries in 1421, which caused a state of crisis for the order in the 1420s and 1430s. The future of the Birgittine Order became insecure as long as the so-called bull of separation was in effect. The ban put the future of the Birgittine Order at risk, as it would have meant the end of the existing monasteries. The bull of separation proclaimed that male convents at double monasteries had either to move into another male monastery or to found their own monastery, while the Birgittine

²¹¹ Höjer 1905, 98–99.

²¹² SDHK 11279.

²¹³ Höjer 1905, 142–49

²¹⁴ For a more thorough discussion on the Birgittine indulgences and privileges cf. Höjer, 1905, 142–49, 171–7, 201–9, 217–21; Nyberg, 1971, 1–44.

female convents were allowed to stay on their original location. This was fundamentally against Birgitta's original idea of how life in her monastery was to be structured. Through petitions the Birgittines were, however, able to exempt the already existing monasteries from the ban. This meant that status quo was maintained, but an expansion of the order was hindered during this period. The ban of the double monasteries was finally annulled in 1435 when Martin V's successor Pope Eugene IV came to office. After this date, the order saw a new expansion through the latter half of the fifteenth century.²¹⁵

Besides the Birgitta relics, the indulgences made the monasteries attractive for pilgrims. The generous privileges also put the Birgittines in a favourable position as they motivated laypersons to donate.²¹⁶ The church authorities and the networks of the monasteries could use the indulgences to promote the Birgittines, but the privileges of the order could also cause jealousy and suspicions from other religious houses and people connected to the ecclesiastical authorities. The bishops played an important role in either promoting the Birgittines in their diocese, or they could hold a more critical position towards the monasteries. In these conflicts, the indulgences could also become an easy target of the criticism. Even though the immediate crisis of the order was settled in the 1420s, the indulgences of the order were continuously questioned at the curia and the Council of Basel.

The general strategy of the Birgittines when the indulgences were threatened was to keep a low profile and not announce them publicly. The Birgittines guarded the privileges closely and several examples from Vadstena witness how the motherhouse instructed the daughter monasteries in how to handle their copies of the charters of papal privileges. In 1420, Vadstena wrote to the daughter monastery Mariendal giving it reprimands for announcing the *Ad Vincula* indulgence. Mariendal was urged to keep secret its copy of a letter issued by the Bishop of London for the English Birgittines at Syon Abbey. The reason for Vadstena wishing for secrecy and precaution was that the Birgittine Order at this point was threatened at the Council of Constance.²¹⁷ Another example is from Nådendal in 1445 when the General Confessor Magnus Unnonis in Vadstena wrote to Nådendal instructing the daughter monastery to be cautious with the privileges and the monastery was not to show the scriptures to any outsider, instead, if someone for some reason asked for them, the documents were to be read aloud. This has been interpreted as a precaution to hide possible gaps and weaknesses in the privileges from outsiders.²¹⁸ Both examples are dated to times in the order's history when the indulgences were under threat. The reprimands to Mariendal are dated to the difficult times at the Council of Constance when the

²¹⁵ Cnatingius, 1963.

²¹⁶ Nyberg 1971, 1–44; For indulgences and pilgrimage, see also Webb 2006, 241–76.

²¹⁷ Riksarkivet, Stockholm, A 20 fol. 171r-v

²¹⁸ "Priuilegia eciam vestra nemini in scripto exhibere debetis, sed, si necesse fuerit, ea puncta, de quibus agitur et exacta fuerint, exigentibus legite, nec puncta huiusmodi nisi iudicialiter compulsi in scripto aliquatenus porrigatis, ne sic diuulgata depereant aut vilescant et magis cedant posteris vestris in dispendium quam commodum et leuamen." DF 6649. Lamberg 2013, 160.

most generous indulgences were questioned. At the later date when Nådendal was instructed to be cautious with the handling of the documents, the indulgences were again brought up for discussion at the Council of Basel. The Birgittine Order evidently hoped that the danger of losing the privileges could be prevented by not drawing too much attention to them.²¹⁹

As the indulgences attracted many visitors to the Birgittines, they also sometimes caused jealousy among the secular clergy on the locations where the monasteries were founded. In 1418, the Birgittine monastery Marienwohlde became involved in a conflict with the secular clergy in Lübeck over the *Ad Vincula* indulgence. Vadstena then urged the other monasteries to lay low and not read their indulgences publicly. Both Mariendal and Marienkrone seem to have acted against this recommendation as they received a warning from the motherhouse against drawing too much attention to the indulgences. The Birgittines turned to King Erik in Denmark and King Henry V of England asking them to send envoys to the Curia to speak on behalf of the order to keep the important indulgences.²²⁰

Turning to the rulers was a strategy implemented by the Birgittines on several occasions when the order or an individual monastery became involved in a conflict with the ecclesiastical authorities. In 1514, Marienkrone was involved in a vehement conflict with the bishop in its diocese, Peter Walckow of Schwerin. The Vadstena Diary notes that on 11 September 1514 two brothers from Marienkrone arrived in Vadstena. They were crying and bringing with them “many letters” concerning the bad news that Bishop Peter had put their monastery under interdict. The reason for his action was that the Birgittines had read of some indulgences against the bishop’s threat of sanctions. The two brothers from Marienkrone now asked for Vadstena’s help and that the monastery would send some representatives to settle the conflict with Bishop Peter. Some weeks later, two brothers were sent from Vadstena to help Marienkrone. They took the road over Denmark where they asked the Danish King Christian II (1481–1559) and his mother Queen Christina (1461–1521) to mediate in the conflict by sending letters to Bishop Peter and to the dukes of Pomerania and Mecklenburg. From the letters sent by Vadstena and the Danish king and queen to duke Bogislaw X of Pomerania (1454–1523), it becomes evident that the conflict had started when the provost Reinmar Hane at the parochial church of Saint Nicholas inside Stralsund had alarmed the bishop of all the indulgences that were being read at the Birgittine monastery. The letter from Vadstena asserted that Pope Julius II had confirmed the grand privileges and plenary indulgence for Marienkrone, and the bishop and the clerics inside Stralsund had accordingly acted against the Curia when they hindered the Birgittines from announcing their indulgences.²²¹

According to Johann Berckman’s chronicle, Marienkrone was not only put under interdict for announcing the indulgences, but the Birgittines had also denied the bishop the right to make a visitation to the monastery. The chronicler does

²¹⁹ Nyberg 1971.

²²⁰ Höjer 1905, 175–80; Losman 1970, 123–31.

²²¹ DV 1030 & 1031; Staatsarchiv Szczecin, AKW 1772 f. 32r–34r, 36r–37v.

not mention if the bishop was denied access due to the conflict over the indulgences or for some other reason. However, the relations between the bishop and the Birgittines were strained. Neither the letters from the regents nor the delegates from Vadstena succeeded in settling the conflict with Bishop Peter upon their audience at his residence in Schwerin. Bishop Peter demanded a compensation of 3 000 ducats from Marienkrone in order to lift the ban. As neither Marienkrone nor Vadstena were able nor willing to pay the sum for lifting the ban, they turned to the Papal Curia in Rome for help. The Duke Bogislav's representative in Rome, the chaplain Zufelt Wartenberch, tried to settle the conflict. Through his middling, the Vadstena Diary recorded that Marienkrone paid 300 florins to lift the ban and the conflict was settled in favour of the Birgittines. Bishop Peter, Reinmar Hane, and their accomplices ("euorum complicum") were forbidden to pose any further hinder to the Birgittines under threat of a fine encompassing 4 000 ducats.²²²

This example from Marienkrone shows how the Birgittines put much effort in protecting their indulgences. Losing them would have meant a considerable decrease in income to the monastery and in visitors on the major feast days in autumn and in spring. Marienkrone was located just outside the town gates and the monastery's generous indulgences could attract visitors and benefactors from the town. Against this context, the parish churches within the town were concerned that pious gifts poured out from the town to the benefit of Marienkrone.

The indulgences were undoubtedly part of the success of the order in the fifteenth century and the vehement struggles for keeping the indulgences and papal privileges was a question of survival and success. The example from Marienkrone shows that the Birgittines had an influential network through the regents as well as at the curia and the order used these contacts in times of crisis. An important element in retrieving the papal indulgences was its networks of local and more distant ecclesiastical authorities. The indulgences were thus a result of the efforts of the Birgittine network to promote Vadstena and the emerging order. However, as discussed above, the indulgences were not unproblematic and could also be a source of conflict in the interaction between the Birgittines and ecclesiastical authorities, other religious houses, and sacred institutions, both locally and on a general level.

²²² Mohnike & Zober (eds) 1833. Szczecin State Archives, AKW Sign. 1772, f. 29; DV 1034 & 1037. Hoogeweg 1925, 737–38.

3 Mariendal: a monastery between town and country

Further, around the feast of the Lord's Ascension, came two honourable men to Vadstena declaring that they and ten others since long firmly had decided to found and construct a monastery dedicated to Saint Birgitta of the order of the Holy Saviour. And from the Master of the Livonian Order, they had first obtained a permission and an appropriate location around half a mile from the town of Tallinn. They also told that there were 16 maidens who have a firm wish to enter and 6 priests. Therefore, they asked the brothers of some privileges and relics of Saint Birgitta as well as a copy of Cantus Sororum.²²³

The excerpt is an entry in the Vadstena Diary from 5 May 1407 where two men, who are not further presented, are described having arrived in Vadstena petitioning that a Birgittine monastery was planned half a mile outside Tallinn. As becomes evident from the entry, the preparations for the founding of the monastery were quite far progressed. The Livonian master had already granted a location for the new monastery and sixteen women and six priests were prepared to take up the religious life. Even though the plans seem quite advanced at this stage, the foundation of a Birgittine monastery near Tallinn nonetheless came to cause much debate during the following years.

The monastery eventually received the name Mariendal (Lat. *Vallis Mariae*),²²⁴ and was one of the earliest Birgittine foundations after Vadstena. Mariendal, became an important start for the branch of Birgittine foundations in the Hanseatic region. Soon after its own foundation, it became the motherhouse of Marienwohlde near Lübeck in 1413 which, in its turn, was the motherhouse of Marienkrone.²²⁵ The Birgittine foundation in Tallinn was the only monastery to be founded in the late medieval period in Livonia. However, both the Cistercians and the Dominicans were previously established there during the twelfth and the thirteenth century, respectively.²²⁶

²²³ "Item, circa festum ascencionis Domini duo discreti viri venerunt ad Watzstena asserentes se et alios decem cum eis propositum firmum diu habuisse fundare et construere unum monasterium beate Birgitte de regula sancti Salvatoris. Et tunc primitus impetraverant licenciam et locum a magistro militum cruciferorum de Livonia satis decentem prope civitatem Refla situatum ad dimidium miliare. Retulerunt eciam, quod xvi virgines sunt ibi firmam habentes voluntatem intrandi et vi presbyteri. Ideo pecierunt a fratribus aliqua privilegia et reliquias beate Birgitte cum Cantu Sororum" DV 149, 5 May 1407.

²²⁴ 29 May 1411, Manuscript Collections, Uppsala University Library. LECUB I:6 nr. 2987.

²²⁵ Marienbrunn in Gdańsk was founded already in 1398, which was the motherhouse of the Birgittine foundations in Prussia and Poland: Maria Triumph (Lublin 1412) and Marienfriede (Elbląg 1458). However, Mariendal begun the actual hanseatic expansion of the order.

²²⁶ For further information on the ecclesiastical institutions in medieval Estonia, See also Kala 2018, 224–58.

Fifteenth century Tallinn was a prosperous Hansa town whose wealth derived mainly from its trading connections with Novgorod. The town was characterized by its two jurisdictions. The area of Toompea (the Cathedral Hill) was the administrative centre of both the ecclesiastical and territorial authorities: with the residence of the bishop of Tallinn and the local representative of the Livonian Order, the Commander (Ger. *Komtur*), whose castle was located there. The population of the Cathedral Hill also consisted of some noble families who resided there, but nevertheless its size remained small.²²⁷ The lower town, beneath Toompea, formed an independent administrative unit governed by the Town Council. Since 1248 the Lübeck town law (*Lübisches Recht*) of the Hansa Towns was implemented there, while the upper town on Toompea belonged under the jurisdiction of the rural feudal laws.²²⁸

The Livonian Order, commanded by the Livonian Master, was a branch of the Teutonic Order²²⁹ and was the territorial overlord of northern Estonia with the counties of Harjumaa and Virumaa. The two counties were in 1346 sold to the Teutonic Order by the Danish King Valdemar IV (1320–75). Whereas the region since the early thirteenth century was governed through a system of fiefs and vassals who had far-reaching privileges and authorities. The legislation in Northern Estonia originated from the Holy-Roman Empire, even though the territory belonged to the Danish kingdom from the early thirteenth century until 1346. The reason for the implementation of the legislation was the fact that the regional law codes in Denmark did not recognize the system with fiefs and vassals, which was applied in Estonia. Customarily, according to the Livonian model of feudal law, confirmed by King Erik VI (1274–1319) in 1314, a new King renewed and affirmed the fief holders when he came to power. This so-called *Feudal Law of kings Erik and Valdemar* was the basis of the far-reaching privileges of the vassals also after the territories were sold to the Teutonic Order. Thus, the monasteries such as Mariendal, in their role as landowners, were also encompassed by these privileges as landowners.²³⁰

Ecclesiastically, medieval Livonia was divided into the three dioceses Tartu (Ger. Dorpat), Saare-Lääne (Ger. Ösel-Wiek), and Courland (Est. Kuramaa/ Ger. Kurland) that belonged to the church province of Riga, while the diocese of Tallinn, that encompassed northern Estonia, belonged to the Danish province of Lund. Throughout the medieval period, the Livonian Order attempted to gain control over the bishoprics and the right to appoint their own candidates as bish-

²²⁷ Johansen & von zur Mühlen 1973, 81–94.

²²⁸ In 1219 Estonia, as a conquered territory, was placed directly under the authority of the Danish King Valdemar and was under Danish rule until 1347 when the Danish king sold Estonia to the Teutonic Order. Regarding the legal practices of the Danish kings in Estonia, see Vogt 2013, 237–44.

²²⁹ The Teutonic Order led by its Grand master, had its mainland in Prussia and headquarters at the fortress Marienburg south of Gdańsk (Danzig). The order had its origin in the crusading movement of the twelfth century to the Holy Land and the knights were sworn brothers adhering to the rule of Saint Augustine. For the origins and history of the order, see Kreem 2002.

²³⁰ Olesen 2019, 87.

ops. It did though merely reach various success in these attempts as the archdiocese of Riga remained strong throughout the Middle Ages. Even when the archbishops and bishops were recruited from the Teutonic order, they led their own political agendas.²³¹ This political context also came to affect the foundation of Mariendal because the new monastery was granted its location by the Livonian Master, but the Birgittine monasteries were under the observance of the bishops. At the time of Mariendal's foundation, the Bishop of Tallinn, Johannes Ochmann († 1418), had good relations to the Teutonic Order, which was advantageous to the Birgittines.²³²

The Tallinn diocese was also the smallest of the medieval dioceses in Livonia consisting of merely twenty-five parishes.²³³ Tallinn comprised of two parishes: Saint Nicholas and Saint Olav, whose churches dominated the ecclesiastical space of the town. Added to these, the other religious institutions of the town were the Dominican convent Saint Catherine and the Cistercian nunnery of Saint Michael. Additionally, the town housed some chapels and hospitals, such as the Church of the Holy Ghost (Est. Püha Vaimu kirik) and its hospital. On Toompea, the cathedral dedicated to the Virgin Mary, also functioned as the parish for the inhabitants of the upper town. With its around twenty guilds and confraternities, Tallinn was quite an average town in the Hansa network of the fifteenth century.²³⁴ In the sacral topography, Mariendal was the third monastery to be established in and around Tallinn. Due to its location around four miles east of Tallinn, Mariendal was somewhat distant to the inhabitants of the town compared to the churches, mendicant convents, and the Cistercian nunnery inside the town walls. Nevertheless, the Birgittines were regularly included in their wills and became an integrated part of the town's sacred topography.

The foundation of Mariendal

As an answer to the request of founding a Birgittine monastery near Tallinn, Vadstena sent two brothers to supervise the construction in September 1407.²³⁵ The foundation of the monastery has received much attention in previous research and important inputs have especially been made in the last decade regarding the founders of the monastery. The main question has concerned the origin of the idea and initiative to the foundation of a Birgittine monastery near Tallinn since the preparations of the monastery were already quite advanced when the founders turned to Vadstena.²³⁶

²³¹ Kreem 2018, 259–77; Mäesalu 2020, 30–58; Mäesalu 2017; Mäesalu 2015, 28–55.

²³² Markus 2012, 13–18.

²³³ Kala 2018, 224–58.

²³⁴ Hahn 2015, 221–59; Kala 2013, 251–76.

²³⁵ When a new monastery was founded, brothers and sisters were sent from the motherhouse to supervise the construction and instruct the neophytes. The travelling Birgittines have previously been discussed by Claes Gejrot, see Gejrot 2000, 71–81.

²³⁶ Liiv 1936, 26–39; Rajamaa 2018; Rajamaa 2007, 88–92; Kreem and Markus 2007, 60–71; Markus 2012, 13–18; Markus 2013, 93–108; Raam 1984; Kühnert 1936, 71–80; *Pirita klooster* 1940, 95–98; Höjer 1905, 234.

Mariendal has though been an object of research ever since the Early Modern age. In the sixteenth century, the German geographer Adam Olearius described the monastery in his narrative of his travels in Russia and Persia. Olearius had access to sources, such as the diary of Mariendal, that later have been lost. Around a century after Olearius wrote his account of Mariendal, the Swedish-German historian Christian von Nettelbla turned his interest towards the monastery when he wrote the history of the Birgittine Order outside Sweden. He based his sources mainly on Olearius' chronicle and the Vadstena Diary.²³⁷ While Olearius and von Nettelbla were early scholars to describe the Birgittines, one of the central sources concerning the foundation of Mariendal is Balthasar Russow's Livonian Chronicle from 1578, which in more detail describes the foundation. Russow stated that the monastery was founded during the reign of the Livonian Master Konrad von Vietinghof (r. 1401–13) in the year 1407 on the day of Saint Vitus. Russow further names three merchants as the founders of Mariendal:

During the government of this Master, in the year 1407 at the day of Saint Vitus the glorious monastery Mariendal, of Saint Birgitta's Order, a short mile from Reval, was begun to be built. The initiators were three wealthy merchants, namely Hinrich Swalberch, Hinirch Huxer, and Gerlach Kruse. The merchants donated all their possessions to it, and Hinrich Swalberch was the master builder of the monastery and was doing building work there for 29 years.²³⁸

These three men have traditionally been considered the founders of the monastery, even though they were not named in the Vadstena Diary. The diary only mentioned "two men" who came from Tallinn, but upon their arrival in Vadstena they mentioned that they represented a group of ten additional founders.²³⁹ The identity and provenance of the three men Hinrich Swalberch, Hinirch Huxer, and Gerlach Kruse have been discussed in previous research. The former conclusions by scholars, that they were merchants from Tallinn, has in recent years been questioned. The reason for this doubt is the fact that the council of Tallinn so strongly opposed the monastery's foundation (see below). Gerlach Kruse was probably of Swedish origin (had relatives in the town of Söderköping) and his brother was a priest in the Linköping Diocese and entered the convent in Vadstena as a priest brother in 1415. Concerning Hinrich Swalberch and Hinirch Huxer, their origin is not known otherwise than that Swalberch was accepted as a member of the Great Guild in Tallinn in 1406 and that the name Huxer also occurs in other Hansa towns, which indicates that he may have been a foreign

²³⁷ Olearius 1656, 103–4; Nettelbla 1746, 23–30. For further information on the Early Modern history writing concerning Piritä, see also Rajamaa 2018, 8–24.

²³⁸ "By disses Meisters regeringe/ Anno 1407. am dage Viti/ ys dat herlike Kloster Mariendal / S. Birgitten Ordens / eine kleine myle weges van Reuel / angefangen tho buwende / De anfangers sint gewesen dre vormögene Koeplüde/ Nômliken Hinrich Schwalberch/ Hinirch Huxer / vnde Gerlach Kruse /welckere Koeplüde alle ere güder dartho gegeben hebben / vnde Hinirch Schwalberch ys de buwmeister des Klosters gewesen vnd hefft dar auer gebuwet 29. Jar." Russow 1578, 44 v.

²³⁹ DV 149, 5 May 1407.

merchant, or at least potentially connected to the Huxers of other Hansa towns.²⁴⁰

Thus, the question of who actually stood behind the foundation of Mariendal concerns the fact that the delegation arriving in Vadstena had quite extensive knowledge of the details in the process of founding a Birgittine monastery. They had already an appointed location for the monastery outside Tallinn and some persons were prepared to join the two convents of the new monastery. They also knew that the new monastery needed a copy of the spiritual guide for the Birgittine sisters, the *Cantus Sororum*, and relics of Saint Birgitta to be placed in the main altar of the church. Thus, whence came the insights of the founders into the details of founding a Birgittine monastery? In reference to the recent studies by Kersti Markus, who has investigated this question, it seems plausible that the origin of the foundation is not to be sought among the merchants of Tallinn, but rather that the foundation might have originated from the Teutonic Order.²⁴¹

The Grand Master of the Teutonic Order, Konrad von Jungingen (1393–1407),²⁴² was in 1398 involved in the foundation of the first Birgittine monastery outside Sweden, Marienbrunn, located in Gdańsk. Tore Nyberg has derived Jungingen's interest in the foundation of a Birgittine monastery to the Vadstena brother Magnus Petri who arrived in Gdańsk in October 1390. He travelled through the town on his way to Rome, where he was to promote Birgitta's canonization, and the next year, after his successful trip, Magnus Petri again visited Gdańsk on his journey back to Vadstena. Jungingen was aware of Magnus Petri's journey through Gdańsk as he on 7 August 1390, prior to it, had granted Queen Margaret and her representatives right to travel through regions belonging to the Teutonic Order. This grant has been interpreted as a part of the preparations for Magnus Petri's journey to Rome and that Jungingen wished to contribute to Birgitta's canonization. Furthermore, other connections between Gdańsk and the cult of Saint Birgitta may as well have inspired Konrad von Jungingen to promote the Birgittine Order. In spring 1374, Birgitta's relics were transported through Gdańsk on their way through Europe from Rome to Vadstena. The arrival of the relics inspired the local mystic Dorothea of Montau to take up the model of Birgitta in her visions. Konrad von Jungingen was a devoted supporter of Dorothea, and he initiated her canonization process in Rome in 1404. Dorothea's interest

²⁴⁰ Markus 2012, 14; Kreem and Markus 2007, 61; Rajamaa 2007, 88–92.

²⁴¹ Markus 2013, 97–101; Markus 2012, 13–8; Kreem and Markus 2017, 62–65.

²⁴² Konrad von Jungingen's period as Grand Master was characterized by large scale building projects and a development of the financial administration in Prussia. Regarding Livonia, Jungingen is mostly known for his efforts in trying to incorporate the archbishopric of Riga into the hands of the Teutonic Order, which he managed to get sanctioned by Pope Boniface IX in 1394. This led to inner conflicts in Livonia as the opponents of the Teutonic Order allied under the lead of the Tartu bishop Dietrich Damerow. In the inner conflicts regarding the archbishopric of Riga, the vassals of Harjumaa and Virumaa received far-reaching privileges regarding legal inheritances, known as the "Jungingen Gnade" (the grace of Jungingen) where daughters also could inherit their fathers. For the biography of Konrad von Jungingen, See Jähniq 1998, 97–106.

in Saint Birgitta may accordingly have been his source of inspiration for his support to the foundation of a Birgittine monastery in Gdańsk.²⁴³

The foundation of Mariendal can possibly also be traced back to Konrad von Jungingen, as Kersti Markus has argued. Since it is unlikely, or impossible, that three merchants on their own would have founded a monastery, the project must have been sanctioned by a person, or persons, in the authority. The Vadstena Diary indeed states that the Livonian master granted the new monastery its location. In 1405, Johann III Ochmann was elected bishop of Tallinn. He originated from the court of Konrad von Jungingen where he had held the position of chaplain, which meant that he worked closely to the Grand Master and, for example, followed him on his journeys. Thus, the new Bishop of Tallinn must have been familiar with both the cult of Saint Dorothea and Saint Birgitta. As the Birgittine monasteries were placed under the visitation of the bishops, it seems likely that the project of founding Mariendal may have originated from the Grand Master through Bishop Johann.²⁴⁴ According to the letter sent in February 1416 from the Procurator of the Teutonic Order, Peter Wormditt (c. 1360– c. 1419), to the Grand Master, Michael Kuchmeister (1360 or 70–1423), Mariendal was initiated in 1405. That was the same year that Johannes Ochmann was elected Bishop. Wormditt further mentions that Hinrich Swalbart by then, in 1416, had led the construction of the monastery for eleven years.²⁴⁵ As Swalbart occurs in the sources from Tallinn only from 1405 onwards it seems plausible that he was a master builder that arrived in the town with the new Bishop.²⁴⁶

In reference to Kersti Markus research, it seems safe to explain that the foundation of a Birgittine monastery in Tallinn has originated from the circles of the Grand Master of the Teutonic Order in collaboration with some merchants and artisans. In his chronicle, Adam Olearius assigned Hinrich Swalberch as one of the main actors behind the foundation. Furthermore, Olearius described that Swalberch had forsaken all worldly belongings in order to enter the monastery himself as a lay brother. The chronicler mentioned that Swalberch spent a lot of money for the monastery's construction and went through much difficulty and work on the project. However, Olearius also mentioned that the foundation occurred during the age of Grand Master Konrad von Jungingen, the Livonian Master Konrad Vietinghof, and Bishop Johannes Ochmann. As a reference Olearius mentioned that he had read a book from Mariendal that described the foundation of the monastery, which probably was the monastery's diary.²⁴⁷

²⁴³ Nyberg 1991b, 161–225; Nyberg 1999, 169–82; Eimer 1966, 176–87.

²⁴⁴ Markus 2012, 16

²⁴⁵ LECUB I:5 2055 (TLA.230.1.BD 1:I, 118).

²⁴⁶ Markus 2013, 100.

²⁴⁷ "Ich habe vorm Jahre, als ich zu Revall gewesen, ben oberwehten Herrn D.Vestring, meinem sehr wehrtem Freunde ein alte Buch, in welchem die Stiftung und Anrichtung, wie auch Untergang dieses Klosters umbständiglich beschrieben, gesehen. Daß nemblich der Anfang zum Bau gemachet worden in Jahr nach Christi Geburt 1400, als Meister Cord Hochmeister zu Preussen, und Meister Cord Vietinghoff, Meister zu Lieffland. Item, Johann Oke, Bischoff zu Reuall gewesen, durch einen reichen Kauffmann Namens Huns Swalbert, welcher aus sonderlicher Andacht sich der Weltlichen Sachen begeben, in den gesitlichen Orden getreten,

Considering that Swalbart also was active in defying the monastery's position towards the Town Council, it seems likely that he and the circle around Konrad von Jungingen were the actual founders of the monastery. Tore Nyberg has demonstrated that new monasteries of the Birgittine Order typically were founded on a private initiative with support from the territorial authorities. In Mariendal, the first initiative towards the foundation of a Birgittine monastery did probably involve both the territorial lord (the Teutonic Order) and the bishop as well as private persons (the individual merchants).²⁴⁸

Even though Mariendal was founded in the immediate vicinity of a Hansa town, the monastery cannot be considered as an urban foundation in the same sense as Marienkrone, which was founded some fifteen years later. Mariendal was placed near Tallinn, but the Town Council was not involved in the foundation. On the contrary, it presented serious concerns against it. The monastery's position between Tallinn and the territorial lords came to characterize its future activities.

The Town Council's resistance towards the foundation

The Town Council in Tallinn was initially against the foundation of a Birgittine monastery near their town and took measures to prevent the monastery to be founded on the location near their town that it had been allocated by the Livonian Order. This reluctance was based on the fear that a Birgittine monastery near the town, on an easily accessible location with an adjacent harbour, would present a threat to the security of the town.²⁴⁹ However, the opposition against the monastery can also be regarded as somewhat surprising. Juhan Kreem argues that, based on the premises, that the foundation of Mariendal was a promising undertaking from the viewpoint of the modern urban piety among the urban citizens that needed new channels of expression. In this respect, the Birgittine monastery could have served as an institution for daughters of the patrician families in Tallinn to take up a religious carrier. The question is though if that need was already fulfilled by the Cistercian Saint Michael's nunnery inside the town. How much Mariendal came to compete with older institutions is though difficult to assess. Indeed, the Birgittines became rapidly integrated in the wide range of religious institutions in Tallinn that were regularly endowed in the wills by the town's inhabitants. The monastery was accordingly part of the urban sacral topography in Tallinn. The opposition towards the monastery seems thus to have been rooted mainly in the Town Council and maybe not so much among the inhabitants of Tallinn.²⁵⁰

The Scandinavian saints, such as Olav, Canute, and Henry, were widely celebrated in Tallinn, especially the cult of Saint Olav was firmly established there.

und groß Geld, Mühe und Arbeit, in affrichtigung dieses Klosters auffgewand." Olearius 1656, 103.

²⁴⁸ See Nyberg 1965, 89; Markus, 2012, 13–18.

²⁴⁹ This has lied in much focus of previous research, see Markus 2013, 102–3; Markus 2012, 16–17; Kreem & Markus 2007, 65–66; Rajamaa 2018, 58–74; Rajamaa 2007, 88–92.

²⁵⁰ Kreem 2002, 138; Hahn 2015, 247–49.

The cult of Saint Birgitta in Tallinn is mainly connected to Mariendal, but her veneration is also manifested inside the town through her depiction in the reredos of the Hermann Rode altar in the church of Saint Nicholas. The veneration of Saint Birgitta was as well established on other locations in the Baltic region: in Riga, a chapel and a chantry dedicated to her was founded at the church of Saint Peter and in the Cathedral of Haapsalu, a chantry was founded in her honour. These are though from the end of the fifteenth century, and it seems that the cult of Birgitta was not as widespread as the cult of the more famous Scandinavian saints. Possibly, her cult gained some popularity only after the foundation of Mariendal.²⁵¹

Several documents from the 1410s disclose that the concern of the Town Council was primarily targeted towards the location of the monastery and not so much towards the foundation of the actual monastery. The fear was based in the assumption that regent in Sweden, Denmark and Norway, King Erik of Pomerania, and the circle of nobles around him showed aspirations towards reclaiming the formerly Danish Estonian territories. The Teutonic Order was weakened after suffering great losses at the battle of Tannenberg against the united kingdoms of Poland-Lithuania in August 1410. The Teutonic Order then lost much of its political dominance in Livonia and furthermore it also disposed of the island of Gotland in 1408/09 when it was sold to the regents of the Kalmar Union: King Erik (1381/2–1459) and his adoptive mother Queen Margaret (1353–1412). Additionally, the Swedish nobility had some interest in the Estonian territories and thus this opened up the possibility of a Danish-Swedish campaign against the Teutonic Order. After 1410, rumours were spreading over Livonia of a possible attack from the Nordic kingdoms. Whether these fears were founded in any real substance is not certain, but the Livonian authorities nonetheless anticipated Nordic attempts of reannexing Estonia at this point.²⁵²

From a Scandinavian perspective, Mariendal was not the first monastery or convent to be founded in or near Tallinn from a Danish or Swedish motherhouse. The establishment of the Birgittines in Tallinn can also be compared to the establishment of the Dominicans in Livonia during the thirteenth century (Tallinn 1229) which was led by convents in the Scandinavian province of Dacia.²⁵³ The political context in the early fifteenth century was though much different than that of the thirteenth century when Estonia was a Danish province. In the early fifteenth century, on the contrary, due to the fear of the reawakened Scandinavian interests in re-annexing Estonia, the foundation led from Vadstena in the central parts of the Swedish realm was thus possibly regarded as problematic from the viewpoint of the Tallinn Town Council.²⁵⁴

The fear of a possible Nordic assault is visible in the petitions of the Tallinn council to the officials of the Teutonic Order where the council asked that the Birgittine monastery would be moved some four or five miles inland. The Town

²⁵¹ Mänd 2018 101–44, 129–32.

²⁵² Olesen 2019, 103–22; Olesen 1999, 9–32.

²⁵³ Kala 2018, 245.

²⁵⁴ Olesen 2019, 67–88; Rebas 2019, 123–38.

Council consequently caused problems for the monastery regarding its location. On 1 August 1413, it wrote a letter to the Grand Master Heinrich von Plauen (c. 1370–1429), where it raised its concerns towards the location. The councillors feared that the monastery would function as a foothold upon an attack by a foreign army. In the letter, the councillors further stated that their town would suffer “irreparable damages” if that would come to pass. They further argued that if the monastery would not be so closely located to the town, then the foreign army would not have a place to use as fortification. However, the fear of a Scandinavian attack as the actual motive behind the resistance can also be questioned.²⁵⁵

In another letter dated 1 August 1413, the fear of an attack was repeated, and the councillors petitioned to the Grand Master of the Teutonic Order that the monastery would be moved some three or four miles inland. A matter of concern was evidently also the fact that the establishment of the new monastery was led from Vadstena since brothers and sisters were sent from the motherhouse to Mariendal. The councillors raised suspicion against the Swedish Birgittines, but also towards the foreign burghers of the town, and claimed that they might be spies of foreign powers. The letter, which is preserved in form of a draft in the Tallinn City Archives, speaks of “foreigners” (*vromeden luden*) in general terms. However, through an erased sentence, it becomes evident that the foreigners the councillors more specifically had in mind were those sent by Swedish bailiffs and other officials from the Swedish Realm: “so, here will come some foreign men ~~sent here from Sweden by bailiffs and other people~~ [sent by foreign people], to sack the town and the country”.²⁵⁶ Thereafter, the councillors raised further suspicion against the foreigners living in the town and those who were arriving to the harbour:

And would it be so that the monastery was not located here, then they would not come. And the monks and maidens, who are to manage the monastery, they shall be sent from the monastery in Vadstena. Thus, it is located troublesomely near the town: we fear treachery, but also from our burghers who gather at all feast days, both women and men, and we have many non-Germans living inside the town, and here do also many foreigners arrive in our harbour. Because of this, we do not know if we have a town or not.²⁵⁷

Especially the last sentence (“we do not know if we have a town or not.”) rhetorically raises the concern of the monastery’s location. It shows that the council

²⁵⁵ LECUB I:4 1945 (TLA.230.1.BA 1:1b, 72).

²⁵⁶ “so komet hir manich vromet man to ~~hir over ut Sweden van vogeden und andern luden~~ [van vromeden luden], dat land und de stad to vorspeende” My translation, originaltext quoted in Salminen 2016, 13, note14; LECUB I:4 1945.

²⁵⁷ “(...)weret dat dat closter hir nicht ene lege, de hir nummer ene queme, und de moenke und de juncvrouwen, de dit closter regeren solen, de scholen ut dem closter to Watsten wesen. It. so licht also swarlikes vor der stat: wi bevruchten uns vor vorretnisse, wante unse borgere dar gemeinliken alle hochtiide sin, beide vrowen und man, und wi vele Undutschen binnen der stad wonende hebben, und hir ok vele vromedes volkes in unsene havene komet. Hir umme so en wete wi nicht, of wi ene stad hebben oder nicht.” LECUB I:4 1946 (TLA.230.1.B.k 4:I, 4-5.). I also wish to thank docent Salminen for his advice regarding the sources from Tallinn and sharing his thoughts on the conflict between the Town Council and Mariendal.

expressed serious concerns and suspicion towards the monastery's position and the Swedish Birgittines who supervised the monastic life. However, it also reveals suspicion towards other foreigners, the non-German burghers of the town.²⁵⁸

In 1413, the councillors of Tallinn further wrote both to the Grand Master and to the Livonian Master, repeating their concern that they did not know, whether they would have a town in the future or not if Mariendal was to remain on its location.²⁵⁹ Meanwhile, Tallinn's representative in Gdańsk, Merten Brandenborch, tried to procure an answer from Grand Master Heinrich von Plauen regarding the monastery's relocation. He did though not achieve any result as Heinrich von Plauen first answered Merten Brandenborch that he had been too occupied to deal with the errand and promised to write an answer after that he had discussed it with his counsellors. He promised to send his answer to the headquarters of the order's Commander in Gdańsk, but Merten Brandenborch never received a response because the grand master fell seriously ill. Brandenborch wrote in his response to the Tallinn Town Council that he had no possibility to receive an audience with the grand master on his sickbed. A month later, in October, Hans von Plauen died and then the issue was left as it was.²⁶⁰

The future negotiations concerning the location of Mariendal were conducted between the Livonian Master Siegfried Lander von Spanheim († 1424), the Procurator of the Teutonic Order Peter Wormditt, and the Tallinn Town Council. Both the Birgittines and the Tallinn Town Council sent letters to the authorities in their attempt to settle the dispute. The Birgittines petitioned to stay on the original location and the Town Council tried to have them moved. In the end of September in 1416 the Livonian master, Siegfried Lander von Spanheim, wrote to the Procurator of the Teutonic Order in Rome, Peter Wormditt, where he addressed the pressing issue of the location of the Birgittine monastery.²⁶¹ The threat from the Nordic kingdoms was mentioned in the letter, but Siegfried also stressed that the monastery would also do much good pious work and it would be a pity if it would be closed down as Livonia had only "about four or five" other monasteries. Therefore, Siegfried did not want to drive the Birgittines away. He accordingly asked that Wormditt would travel to Tallinn himself, hear all the parties, and settle the issue. If the dispute was not settled in favour of the Birgittines, then the procurator was to choose a different location up to four miles inland from the town.²⁶²

Eventually, the question of Mariendal's location was finally settled in its favour and the Birgittines remained on their original spot. Peter Wormditt did not travel to Tallinn, but he wrote to Grand Master Michael Kuchmeister on 13 Feb-

²⁵⁸ LECUB I:4 1946 (TLA.230.1.B.k 4:I, 4-5.).

²⁵⁹ LECUB I:4 1945 & 1946.

²⁶⁰ LECUB I:4 1947 (TLA.230.1-I, 527).

²⁶¹ The letter also concerned some other issues regarding the order's castles and the decree the order recently had drawn with the Archbishop of Riga, Johannes von Wallenrode. LECUB I:5 2015 (TLA.230.1.BB 24:I, 53).

²⁶² LECUB I:5 2094.

ruary 1417 asking him that he would put a final end to the dispute over the monastery's location.²⁶³ In the letter, he mentions that Heinrich Swalbart had travelled to Rome and together with the procurator of the Birgittine Order, Lucas Jacobi,²⁶⁴ he had petitioned for obtaining papal approval of Mariendal remaining on its location. Wormditt further wrote that the Bishop of Tallinn already six years earlier, in 1410, had asked him to obtain papal confirmation of the foundation of Mariendal, which Wormditt had done successfully. Wormditt now commanded the Grand Master Kuchmeister to make a final decision regarding the location and confirm that the Teutonic Order should compensate the Birgittines if the monastery was to be moved.²⁶⁵

In 1417, Siegfried Lander von Spanheim wrote a letter to the Tallinn Town Council stating that he had granted Mariendal the right to build a stone sacristy. Delegates representing the Birgittines had visited him along with some representatives of the vassals in Harjumaa and Virumaa who declared that they had given the Birgittines right to break stones in their quarries. Accordingly, the monastery remained on its original location, and the building works were moving forward. Mariendal could eventually be officially consecrated by the Bishop of Tallinn at midsummer 1431.²⁶⁶

The troubles with the Town Council seem though not entirely having disappeared even after the Grand Master decided that the monastery could remain on its location. In September 1418, the general confessor in Vadstena, Johannes Hildebrandi, wrote to a fellow Vadstena brother in Mariendal that he should stay there instead of returning home and continue to instruct the novices. Apparently Hildebrandi saw it important that Vadstena's representatives remained in Mariendal and followed the situation there on site as he mentioned in the letter that the threat of aggressions from the Town Council had not yet diminished. Surprisingly enough, Hildebrandi also mentioned threats from the Teutonic Order. He emphasized that the new monastery risked being annexed into another order, if the sisters and the brothers from Vadstena would leave. From this letter, it seems that Mariendal also may have had some problems with the Teutonic Order at this point. Maybe the Livonian Order planned to change the foundation into another monastic order because of the lengthy problems that the Birgittines had with the Town Council?²⁶⁷ In any case, it seems like the antipathies of the Town

²⁶³ In Bunge's edition is the year estimated to 1416 with some uncertainty, but it ought to be 1417 as Siegfried Lander von Spanheim's letter asking Wormditt to put a final end to the question regarding Mariendal's location is dated 27 August 1416 and Spanheim's letter to the council of Tallinn (which accordingly must be written after Wormditt's letter) is probably from 1417 and thus this letter must be from February 1417, not 1416. LECUB I:5 2055 (TLA.230.1.BD 1:I, 118), cf. LECUB I:5 2094 & 2109 (TLA.230.1.BB 24:I, 66).

²⁶⁴ According to the letter of the Town Council in 1413, Heinrich Swalbart and Borchard Sadel from Mariendal had then arrived from Rome with the papal confirmation letter. After this Swalbart had approached both the Commander in Cristburg and Wormditt asking for their support in the matter. Swalbart's activities regarding the monastery has previously been discussed by Kersti Markus, see for example Markus 2013, 100.

²⁶⁵ LECUB I:5 2055.

²⁶⁶ LECUB I:5 2109; See also Markus 2013, 93–108.

²⁶⁷ Ståhl (ed.) 1998, 87.

Council towards the monastery waned in the 1420s when immediate threat of a Nordic assault faded and Mariendal was allowed to continue on its original location.²⁶⁸ The question regarding its location shows how the Birgittines navigated between the territorial and ecclesiastical authorities in convincing them to let the monastery stay on the original spot. As often was the cause of action when the Birgittines became involved in a conflict, they gathered support both from the local authorities (the bishop of Tallinn and the Livonian Master) and on a further distance (the Grand Master of the Teutonic Order in Marienburg and its procurator Peter Wormditt in Rome) to build a strong network endorsing their case.

Mariendal prior to the consecration in 1431

The planning of Mariendal seems having been far advanced when the delegation came to Vadstena in 1407 and requested its help in the foundation. The question is though how finished the monastery was at the point when the delegates from Tallinn approached Vadstena.²⁶⁹ Usually a Birgittine monastery was officially consecrated a decade or two after the foundation, when the church stood finished. Before this, provisory buildings: a church (or chapel), and convents for the brothers and sisters were constructed, assumably in wood that is a faster building material than stone. Thus, the brothers and sisters in Mariendal moved to their convents already upon the foundation. This implies that some convent buildings and a temporary church were already built on the site and enable an enclosed lifestyle according to the *Regula Salvatoris*. The nuns and monks could though not be fully professed before their church and monastery were officially consecrated by the diocesan bishop. In Mariendal, the consecration was celebrated in 1431, but by then the monastery already had been active for at least two decades and even participated in the new Birgittine foundation near Lübeck.²⁷⁰

According to the Vadstena Diary, the plans were quite far advanced in 1407 as a group of sixteen women and six priests in Estonia was already willing to take up the religious life in the two convents of the monastery.²⁷¹ This means that the foundation process probably had begun already some years earlier. In previous research, the silence of the Vadstena Diary prior to 1407 has been interpreted as that the motherhouse was unaware of the plans prior to the arrival of the delegation from Tallinn.²⁷² This does, however, not necessarily have to be the case, as the Vadstena Diary also otherwise is rather taciturn of the details concerning other new foundations. The diary does not mention the foundation of Marienbrunn in Gdańsk in 1398 even though this was the first foundation after Vadstena. Neither are the foundations of Marienwohlde, Marienkrone, Munkaliv,

²⁶⁸ At this point King Erik of Pomerania became preoccupied with the war against the duchies Schleswig and Holstein that from then on required all his attention. See Olesen 2019, 103–2.

²⁶⁹ This question has previously been addressed by Ruth Rajamaa in. Rajamaa 2018, 69–89.

²⁷⁰ Olearius 1656, 103.

²⁷¹ DV 149.

²⁷² Markus 2013, 96.

Mariager, nor Marienfriede mentioned, while the foundations of Maribo, Syon, and Nådendal are noted. Accordingly, the diary is not consequent in describing foundations of new Birgittine monasteries and its silence concerning the planning of Mariendal prior to 1407 cannot be interpreted as a sign that Vadstena was not involved in the planning.²⁷³

In September 1407, four months after the men from Tallinn visited Vadstena, two Vadstena brothers, the dean Johannes Johannis and the lay brother Laurentius Øjarsson, were sent to Tallinn where the work of constructing the new monastery, according to the Vadstena Diary, was already begun. The task of the Vadstena brothers was to educate the new brothers and sisters in the religious life of the Birgittines. Apparently these two stayed in Tallinn and another group of brothers and sisters from Vadstena was sent there in 1412, that is, the year after the monastery had received its papal confirmation in 1411.²⁷⁴

One of the lay brothers from Vadstena, Stephanus *lapicida* (stone mason),²⁷⁵ was part of the group that was sent from Vadstena in 1412. Thus, added to Hinrich Swalbart at least one other brother had professional competence working with the construction of the stone buildings at Mariendal. The actual construction work could probably begin only when the long feud with the Town Council was settled and the Birgittines in 1417 received the right to break stones in the quarries of the vassals. In 1431, at least the eastern part of the church stood finished so that it could be consecrated and in 1436 the rest of church was consecrated by the Bishop of Tallinn. After this event, the monastery received a new permit to quarry stones for finishing the lodgings of the two convents. The refurbishments of the church were though continuous and more or less constant throughout its existence.²⁷⁶

Despite that Mariendal was barely founded, people were sent out from this monastery and not from Vadstena to supervise the foundation of Marienwohlde in the town Mölln near Lübeck in 1412. The reason why the founders of Marienwohlde turned to Tallinn and not to Vadstena most probably lies in the close connections between the two Hansa towns Lübeck and Tallinn. Yet, this must have meant that the planning of Mariendal at this point was enough advanced so that the young monastery could send brothers and sisters to Marienwohlde to supervise its foundation. In 1412, some brothers left Mariendal for Mölln with the task to found the new monastery and to find an appropriate location for it. In its turn, Marienwohlde would merely some years later supervise the foundation of Marienkrone even if also this monastery was just recently founded.²⁷⁷

Due to the rapid establishment of new Birgittine foundations, the monasteries that partook in them could not always have been all too experienced in the Birgittine way of life. This question has strangely not received much attention in the research on the foundations. The brothers Borchard (Saudel) and Johannes

²⁷³ Gejrot (ed.)1987.

²⁷⁴ Regarding the identities of the members of Mariendal, See Rajamaa 2018, 75–82.

²⁷⁵ Stefan Ljongasson professed as lay brother in Vadstena 14 March 1406, DV 140, 216.

²⁷⁶ Raam & Tamm 2006, 19–20; Rajamaa 2018, 69.

²⁷⁷ Dormeier 2013, 261–365; Dormeier 2019, 216–17; Deecke 1857, 356–58.

Rosenhagen from Mariendal went to Marienwohlde in 1418, but only after professing as priest brothers of the Birgittine order in Vadstena. They professed in Vadstena, because they needed to be full members of the Birgittine order when they went to Marienwohlde to supervise the monastery and to instruct new members in the ways of the *Regula Salvatoris*. They could not profess in Mariendal, as the monastery was not yet finished. In this way, Vadstena could also keep some influence over the foundation near Lübeck and it probably closely followed the progress.²⁷⁸

The exchange between the monasteries located near the Hansa towns is not surprising, since the region also otherwise had close ties through the trade. The brothers and sisters from Tallinn who came to supervise the construction of Marienwohlde also spoke Middle-low German. They could thus easily instruct the novices and negotiate with the local actors when settling the financial foundation of the new monastery. Borchard Saudel from Mariendal was, for instance, on site in Mölln already in 1413 when he bought some estates in the villages Petzke and Below that came to form the founding estates of Marienwohlde. Johannes Rosenhagen became the first general confessor and some years later he supervised the foundation of Marienkrone in Stralsund.²⁷⁹

The third brother, Gerlach Kruse, who professed in Vadstena 1418, went back to Tallinn to become the first general confessor of Mariendal. The sources witness of a continuing exchange between Vadstena and Mariendal during the period until the official consecration of the daughter monastery. Birgittine sisters were continuously sent from Vadstena to Mariendal to instruct the novices in the Birgittine lifestyle. The last time was in 1430, only a year prior to the consecration, when Vadstena sent a sister and two brothers as teachers to Mariendal upon the request of General Confessor Gerlach Kruse.²⁸⁰

Thus, Vadstena kept a close eye on the activities of its daughter foundation. The sources do however also witness that these relations were not entirely unproblematic as Mariendal sometimes acted without the consent of Vadstena. As, for instance, when Vadstena in November 1420 reprimanded Mariendal when the daughter monastery had announced their *Ad Vincula* indulgence even if it had been firmly instructed not to do so.²⁸¹ The monumental church building planned by Hinrich Swalbart at Mariendal has also been discussed as somewhat deviating from the Birgittine prescription. These changes in the construction may though

²⁷⁸ DV 290.

²⁷⁹ Dormeier 2019, 216–17; Nyberg 1965, 89–112.

²⁸⁰ 1429, C 6, f. 83v., UUB. Ruth Rajamaa has studied the connections between Vadstena and Mariendal, see Rajamaa 2007, 88–92.

²⁸¹ A 20, f. 171r., National Archives, Stockholm. This was at a point when the situation was precarious regarding the Birgittine double monasteries and the indulgences that the Birgittines had received prior to the Council of Constance. See also, Cnattingius 1963; Furthermore, in 1421, Mariendal sent sister Kristina Johansdotter back to Vadstena, even if it had not agreed upon this in advance. The problem upon her arrival in Vadstena was that the sisters' convent was full and that the number of nuns, including Kristina, increased to 61 members. A 20, f. 170v – 171r., National Archives Stocholm. See also Claes Gejrot's article that discusses the terms of travel that were implemented in the Birgittine monasteries in comparison to the *Regula Salvatoris*. Gejrot 2011, 71–81.

derive from the requirements of the local circumstances where the monastery was built.²⁸² The overall picture is thus that the two monasteries had a close collaboration, but at times the daughter house also acted independently even before the consecration. The founders of Mariendal thus seem to have had a clear vision of what they wanted to achieve with their monastery.

The situation during the first two decades in Mariendal, before its official consecration, was thus characterized by temporary solutions that nonetheless enabled monastic life according to the *Regula Salvatoris*, although the main part of the members were unprofessed novices. However, this situation did not prevent Mariendal from becoming an actor in the local community. Already in 1407, the burgher Wulfard Rosendal and his wife retired to the monastery, which means that Mariendal must have been finished enough at this point so that it could accommodate the elderly. In 1418, it granted the knight Otto Lode, his wife, and children into the monastery's spiritual confraternity so that they could be included in all pious deeds of the Birgittine Order.²⁸³ Mariendal did accordingly act as a fully functioning monastery even though it had not yet been officially inaugurated. The heads of the monastery, General Confessor Gerlach Kruse and Abbess Anna Tokesdotter (from Vadstena) were, however, full members of the order, which enabled them to lead Mariendal even if the monastery still was not finished.

Mariendal housing guests

Even though the monastic idea was to offer a place for reclusion from the world for its members, they could not be completely withdrawn from it, as the monasteries also were part of the society and had dealings with the secular world. The monasteries traditionally also filled a duty of hospitality, and the Birgittines made no exception to his rule. Apart from housing guests, the Birgittine priest brothers were also expected to preach for the laity. The service in the Birgittine churches was accordingly open for the laity.²⁸⁴

The monastic hospitality had a long tradition transmitted through the Benedictine monasteries and the Cistercian Order. The guests that monasteries could expect were pilgrims visiting their shrines, church dignitaries, royals, nobles, messengers, and relatives to those who had entered the monastic community. Another important element of the hospitality was the division of alms to the poor. The monastic rules and customaries did also contain terms regarding how the monasteries would act when housing guests. How a visitor was welcomed in a monastery also depended on their previous relation to the community and their social status.²⁸⁵

The regulation of Vadstena monastery is not exhaustive regarding visitors to the monastery, as it only states that the brothers and sisters were not allowed to invite guests to dine with them without the consent of the keeper of supplies.

²⁸² Raam & Tamm 2006, 19–20; Kühnert 1936, 71–80.

²⁸³ EAA.854.2.413.

²⁸⁴ Fritz, 2019, 140–42.

²⁸⁵ Kerr 2007; Kerr 2008, 25–39.

However, Birgittine brothers set out on travels outside their monastery were allowed to accept invitations to dinners and feasts with laypersons as long as they still respected the Birgittine Regulations.²⁸⁶ Moreover, the *Regula Salvatoris* forbid secular and religious persons who were not part of the monastic community to enter the premises of the convents. The members of a Birgittine monastery were not allowed to talk with outsiders apart from at certain hours and then only through a grilled window in the wall of the *locutorium*. These conversations were to be supervised by another member of the convent.²⁸⁷ However, the Vadstena Diary reveals that the monastery regularly housed prominent guests and it evolved into a religious centre in medieval Scandinavia through its ties to the ruling elite. In 1389, for instance, Queen Margaret and a large number of the upper nobility of the Swedish realm were visiting the monastery. The queen was again visiting Vadstena in 1403. She was then invited to an informal conversation with the brothers in their *locutorium* and when she returned at Christmas that same year, she was granted a letter of spiritual confraternity of the monastery and the Birgittine Order, and she was also allowed to meet both the sisters and the brothers in the *locutorium*. In 1413, King Erik visited Vadstena for the first time after being elected king in 1413. As a token of humility and devotion, he arrived by foot and is said to have walked all the way from the town Skänninge (c. 15 km). As Erik intended to build a Birgittine monastery in Denmark (Maribo on Lolland), he wished to see the brothers' convent, and after some persuasion, as this was against the *Regula Salvatoris*, he was even allowed into the convent of the brothers and visited it alone with Archbishop Peder of Lund. This was an exceptional favour granted the king since guests were not allowed within the enclosure.²⁸⁸

Being admitted into the enclosure was a special favour and reflected on the king's status as a prominent benefactor. Guests would normally only be allowed to the public spheres of the monastic precinct, that is, the guest house and the church, while the cloisters and convents were closed to everyone but the members of the order. The use of space was thus a means of expressing the status and the bonds that the community tied to its visitors. The context of the visit and the status of the guest were thus factors that weighed into the decision regarding how far within the monastic precinct the guest was admitted. In the examples from Vadstena, only the royals were granted the most generous admittance into the monastery.²⁸⁹

Mariendal housed guests on a regular basis and the monastery was evidently considered as a suitable location for meetings. This seems to have been the case when envoys from Scandinavia visited Tallinn. The sources regarding the visits in Mariendal do, however, not reveal much of the circumstances of the visits and how the guests were received upon their arrival. When the bailiffs from the other

²⁸⁶ Lindström (ed.) 1845, 21.

²⁸⁷ *Regula Salvatoris* ch. 7.

²⁸⁸ DV 49:3, 120, 123, 221.

²⁸⁹ Jamroziak, 2010, 37–58.

side of the Gulf of Finland arrived in Tallinn, they seem to have stayed at Mariendal. In 1433, the bailiff at Raasepori castle in Finland, Otto Pogwisch, thanked the Town Council of Tallinn for its gifts that he had received during his recent visit to Tallinn. In his letter he mentioned that he had stayed at the Birgittines:

[...] that I friendly thank you for your gifts in beer and wine and other gifts and presents through which you showed me your friendship while I recently was staying at the Birgittines. God knows that I am in eternal debt to your honour.

290

The quantity of the beer and wine and the other gifts that were sent to Otto when he stayed at the Birgittines are listed in the town's account books (*Kämmerei-rechnungen*) around the feast of Saint John the Baptist (24 June):

Furthermore 2 barrels of beer for 3 marks were sent to mister Pogwisch
Further 10 quarters of wine 2 marks and 4 schilling
And yet ½ mark for bread, was also sent to mister Pogwisch and 1 barrel of nut beer for 2 marks.²⁹¹

Otto Pogwisch and his company had accordingly received bread, beer, and wine to a value of around seven Riga marks from the Town Council. Otto's letter does not explicitly concern Mariendal, but it does witness that the monastery was regarded as a suitable place of accommodation when he, and other officials, visited Tallinn. Another example is when Otto's successor, Karl Tordsson (Bonde) visited Tallinn in May 1439 and he was as well sent some provisions in bread and beer by the Town Council.²⁹² It has been speculated that Karl Tordsson was set on a pilgrimage to Mariendal, but just as likely he may, like Otto Pogwisch, have found that the Birgittine monastery was a suitable place for accommodation when visiting Tallinn.²⁹³

Otto Pogwisch, whose family originated from Schleswig, was frequently corresponding with Tallinn and it seems that his relations to the town remained good even when the Hansa towns declared war against King Erik. Good relations across the Gulf of Finland were necessary to maintain the safety of the trade routes.²⁹⁴ His visit to Tallinn occurred some years after the town was involved in a conflict with the bailiff of Viipuri, Kristiern Nilsson (Vasa). This conflict, or rather series of conflicts, lasted for a decade and begun in 1417 when the Hansa towns put Novgorod in a trading blockade. The situation calmed down for a while after 1419 but escalated again in 1426 when Tallinn executed one of Kristiern's

290 "[...] dat ik jw vruntliken danke vor juwe ghave, dar gy my vruntschop mede bewisen, also ik nw was dar to sunte Birgitten also wiin unde beer andere juwe ghave unde ghifte. Got late my dat jeghen juwe erwerdicheyt vorschulden." LECUB I:8 695 (TLA.230.1.BC 28, 63).

291 "Item noch 2t. bers vor 3 mr. gesant her Poggwische, Item vor 10 stopp wins 2 mr. 4s., Item noch ½ mr., vor brot, ok her Poggewische gesant unde 1 t. noteber 2 mr." Vogelsang (ed.) 1976 33.

292 "Item vo 5t. bers; 4 t. worden gesant Karl Bonden (...) Item 6 f. vor 1 schaep, dat quam ok tor kost, do Karl Bonde was to gaste beden, de he was to sunte Berigitten. (...) Item 1 mr. vor broet Karl Bonden gesant. (...) Vogelsang (ed.) 1976, 173.

293 See notes to entries in LECUB I:9 695 and Vogelsang (ed.) 1983, 173.

294 Kreem 2002, 166.

envoys. In 1429–30, the parties corresponded in attempts to organize a meeting to solve the conflict and at this stage the Birgittines became involved. Mariendal was one of the suggested venues for the negotiations. The meeting was however postponed several times, but ultimately it seems that an agreement was achieved and that the parties met instead in Santhamn near Viipuri. The correspondence is however an example of how Mariendal's location at a fair distance from the town of Tallinn was regarded as a suitable venue for political meetings.²⁹⁵

Some letters concerning local affairs in Livonia do also witness that Mariendal was regularly chosen as a place for meetings and negotiations. These letters were either written on site in Mariendal or the correspondence mentioned that meetings had taken place there. In 1495, a person named Hans Manvort wrote a letter that was signed in Mariendal (“Written at the Birgittine monastery Thursday before saint Anthony.”²⁹⁶). The letter was directed to the Burgomaster Hinrik Schelvent who was asked to write a letter of recommendation authorizing Hans' messenger, Jachym Puserin, to collect all the claims that Hans had in Szczecin and on other locations. In his letter, Hans wrote that he sent Jachym to deliver the letter as he did not wish to enter the town himself, which is why he stayed at the Birgittines:

I hereby let humbly and friendly ask your worthiness, so that I do not have to come to Tallinn in this errand, as my state is now such that I do not yet wish to be much outside the monastery.²⁹⁷

He does not give any direct reason why he did not wish to leave the monastery and deliver his message in person to the Burgomaster. But, as he referred to his own personal state, then maybe he was of ill health and therefore sent his messenger instead. Maybe he was even staying at Mariendal as an elderly person who received sustenance from the Birgittines.²⁹⁸

Mariendal also served as a place where persons in trouble with the justice from time to time took shelter. According to the Canon Law, the right to asylum was acknowledged sacred spaces, such as churches, monasteries, and cemeteries. Those who sought shelter in a sacred space were protected from constraint, seizure, and pursuit. However, as the asylum at times became a burden to the church, some exceptions were added after the second Lateran council in 1139 allowing legal pursuit of persons committing homicide. Or, if the secular justice promised not to condemn a person to death or give a mutilating sentence, then a refugee could as well be handed over to the secular justice. As a rule, though, the

²⁹⁵ Kreem 2002, 166–71. LECUB I:8 54 (TLA.230.1.BC 36A, 56), LECUB I:8 61 (TLA.230.1.BB 15:II, 14); LECUB I:8 81 (TLA.230.1.BA 1:Id, 167v/168); LECUB I:8 241 (TLA.230.1.BA 1:Id, 167v/168); LECUB I:8 262 (TLA.230.1.BA 1:Id, 207/208).

²⁹⁶ “Geschreuen to Sunte Byrgitten closter des donredages vor sunte Antonniesz” LECUB II:I 123.

²⁹⁷ “Hir late ik juwer geleve demodigen unde vruntliken umme bidden, so dat ik doch umme desser sake willen nicht dorff to Revele daromme kamen, wente alzo et nu myt my gelegen isz, so en dent et my nicht wol vele ute deme closter tho wesende.” LECUB II:1 123.

²⁹⁸ LECUB II:1 123.

monasteries were regarded as spaces immune from prosecution.²⁹⁹ Evidently, Mariendal was sometimes sheltering persons who had committed a crime. At two instances a person is told to be staying at the Birgittines and could consequently not be judged for his crimes. In 1423, the castellan of Viipuri, Kristiern Nilsson, wrote to the council of Tallinn and declared that a man named Hans Purin had wielded damage to Kristiern's property in Gdańsk and in Flanders. Hans had avoided justice by going to the Birgittines and there he had, according to Kristiern's account, sat upon the stove in the parlour and made threats to him in front of some good persons who had gathered there. Hans had then told that he would confiscate Kristiern's goods in Gdańsk and in Flanders, or wherever he could lay hands on them. Kristiern now asked the council to deal with Hans Purin and to summon him to court in Tallinn so that he could not escape justice for the damage he had done.³⁰⁰

Another case of a person seeking shelter at the Birgittines is from the following year. In October 1424, the Twon Council of Turku wrote to the Town Council of Tallinn. They had received some information from the Turku burgher Wilhelm Dracheyn about a man named Lasse Jerve who was a burgher in Tallinn. Lasse had been imprisoned due to theft but one of his apprentices, Magnus Cordsson, was now staying at the Birgittines and he had testified that Lasse had broken into a coffin belonging to Wilhelm's brother and stolen some fine furs and one mark in coins whereafter he had divided the spoils with Magnus and two others.³⁰¹ These two cases show how Mariendal, located outside the jurisdiction of the town, functioned as a place where those in trouble with the justice could withdraw. However, the sources do not mention how the monastery saw upon these cases or how the heads of Mariendal acted when they learned about the deeds of those who came there. Assumably, they would not be too satisfied with the monastery receiving a bad reputation of housing thieves.

Thus, Mariendal housed many kinds of guests and was the venue for settling businesses between various interest groups.³⁰² The examples in this section

²⁹⁹ Lemaître 2005. <<https://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780227679319.001.0001/acref-9780227679319>> (accessed on 30 September 2021).

³⁰⁰ "Ersamen, leven vrundes. Wellet weten, also ik juwer erwerdicheit vake gescreven hebbe umme Hans Purin, de my groten drepliken schaden gedan heft, und uut deme rechtte thovoren untweken is, dar enbaven tho Sunthe Birgitten in deme kloster in der dornssen up deme ofwen geseten und heft my gedrouwet und secht in guder lude jegenwardicheit, dat he min guut welle besetten tho Danczik edder in Vlanderen edder wo he dat bekomen kan, also Got forbede, dat et schege, so scheget my tho unrechte, sylken wrefwel und ofvermot up mynen schaden is my unbilde to lidhende." DF 1720; LECUB I:7 96.

³⁰¹ LECUB I:7 199.

³⁰² In 1499, the council of Tallinn held a meeting in Mariendal³⁰² with the bishop of Ösel (Saaremaa) and the letter that the bughmaster wrote was dated at Mariendal. The meeting is described in the subsequent correspondence concerning the details for the construction of a navigation mark that the merchants of Tallinn wished to build on the island of Hiiumaa (Ger. Dageden). In the third letter, it becomes evident that the bishop himself had not attended the meeting in Mariendal, only his legates had negotiated with the representatives from Tallinn. This accordingly presents another example of where the monastery apparently was regarded

show that the location of the Birgittine monastery, which initially was regarded as problematic, eventually turned into an advantage for both the town and the monastery itself. Mariendal was located in the immediate vicinity of the town but was not under its jurisdiction. The monastery could accordingly function as a neutral place for political visitors and other persons who had errands to the town.

Benefactors of Mariendal

Despite the initial resistance towards the foundation of Mariendal, the monastery quickly gained popularity among the burgher population of Tallinn, which is manifested in the testamentary bequests that the monastery received. Otherwise, the nobility was prominent among the benefactors of the monastery as again Juhan Kreem and Kersti Markus have concluded in their article on Mariendal's founders.³⁰³ The support from the nobility in Northern Estonia is mainly visible through the donations and sales of land to the monastery.

Mariendal's special benefactors and friends

In 1939, the archivist Paul Johansen rediscovered a calendar fragment that originated from Mariendal in the Swedish National Archives. This fragment was used as wrapping for a volume titled "Privilegia Livonensium", which contained copies of the fourteenth century enfeoffments and privileges granted to the Estonian nobility by the Danish Kings Erik and Valdemar. The calendar fragment covers the months of May and June and lists five deceased persons who were benefactors or members of the monastic community. The persons mentioned in the fragment were Gertrud Lode 1 May 1492, Birgitte Eppenschede 2 May 1474, Elisabeth Stoltevoet 6 May 1477, Herman Schulte (diaconus) 15 May 1486, Dorothea van Alen (soror) 1 June 1444.³⁰⁴

The fragment gives a small glimpse into the identity of the persons living in the monastery. Two of the deceased were Birgittines: Dorothea van Alen who is titled as sister, and Herman Schulte who was a priest brother in the monastery. According to Johansen, these two must have been prominent persons in the monastic community maybe holding a position as abbess and general confessor because ordinary sisters and brothers would not have been noted in the calendar, according to Johansen. However, if the calendar was used as a necrology of the deceased members of the Birgittine community, then all deceased would assumably be noted there. The Calendar was probably created towards the end of the fifteenth century which would explain why so few names are noted in it. As Gustavs Strenga recently has demonstrated, sister Dorothea van Alen was possibly identical to the nun with the same name in the Cistercian Mary Magdalene nunnery in Riga. This monastery was in 1428 included in Mariendal's praying

as neutral ground for such negotiations but was not itself involved in the errands that were discussed. LECUB II:1 778 (TLA.230.1.A.a.10, 229 (nr. 604), 785, 1028; 1287.

³⁰³ Kreem and Markus 2007, 68–70.

³⁰⁴ Johansen (ed.) 1939, 11–16.

community, which meant that the sisters of the monastery would be commemorated in the prayers of the Birgittines in Tallinn. The Cistercians in Riga are otherwise known to have created a vast spiritual network by including other religious and secular communities into their confraternity, but also through becoming included in the confraternities of other monasteries. The praying communities accordingly filled an important function in creating long-lasting bonds between institutions all over the Baltic region.

Unfortunately, only a fragment of the calendar has survived, but comparably to the calendar from Syon Abbey which has been preserved in its entirety in the so called *Martiloge of Syon Abbey*, somewhat one hundred benefactors and other prominent friends of the English Birgittines have been named, both religious and secular, alongside the deceased Birgittine sisters and brothers. This a remarkable example of how the Birgittine praying communities tied together actors from various sections of society, creating a link between the living and the dead.³⁰⁵ Assumably, the calendar fragment from Mariendal has served a similar purpose as the Syon Calendar. The names mentioned in it do indicate that the community at the monastery united benefactors from both the patrician families of Tallinn and the nobility in Estonia.

When observing the family names in the calendar fragment, Eppenschede and Stoltevoet were names of burgher families, while van Alen and Lode belonged to the nobility. Members of the Lode family were early on endorsing Mariendal, and this family was among to the wealthiest vassals in Estonia with its vast landed possessions.³⁰⁶ On 17 March 1418, the General Confessor Gerlach Kruse issued a letter where he declared that Mariendal had accepted Otto Lode and his wife Köne into the monastery's confraternity, which meant that the couple would be included in all the spiritual benefits granted members of the Birgittine Order. The favour of receiving a confraternity membership was only granted the distinguished benefactors of a Birgittine monastery, making them part of all the pious work and deeds conducted in the monastery. The acceptance into the spiritual confraternity of Mariendal was a gesture of appreciation from the monastery. General Confessor Gerlach Kruse expressed thankfulness on behalf of both convents to Otto and Köne for their support of Mariendal and the affection they had shown towards the monastery.³⁰⁷ None of the documented donations were made by Lode family, but one can assume that this event was preceded with some form of donation as the General Confessor titled them as "special benefactors and friends" who diligently and devotionally had supported the monastery. Otto Lode was acting as assessor to the commander of the Livonian Order in Tallinn, which

³⁰⁵ Gejrot (ed.) 2015, 37–48; Bainbridge 2017, 128–43.

³⁰⁶ Johansen (ed.) 1939, 11–16; Kreem 2018, 282–83.

³⁰⁷ "Exigente vestrae devotionis affectu, quo nos et nostru, monasterium diligitis, vos, tamquam amicos speciales et benefactores praecipuos, in nostram favorabiliter colligimus fraternitatem per praesentes concedentes vobis specialem et fraternam participationem omnium pi-orum operum, factorum et faciendorum, quae per nos dignabitur clementia Salvatoris in monasterio nostro praedicto, in morte pariter in vita; statuente insuper, quod cum vester obitus nostro conventui fuerit nuntiatus, vestri apud nos memoria a singulis personis cum devotione tunc Divinitus inspirata peragetur" EAA.854.2.413; LECUB I:5 2210.

means that the monastery here had gained an influential supporter.³⁰⁸ The couple was not the only members of the Lode family endorsing the Birgittines. Two years later, in July 1420, the monastery included Lena Lode, widow of Helmold Lode, along with her sons Hermann and Odert in the confraternity. The letter is almost identically phrased as the previous one. Meaning that the monastery had worked out a standard formula for its confraternity letters.³⁰⁹ The Lode family was accordingly among the first supporters of Mariendal and as becomes evident of the calendar fragment, the family kept a close tie to the monastery as a Gertrud Lode was noted as deceased in 1492. She was not titled sister, which means that she must have been a member of the monastery's lay benefactor community.³¹⁰

Another family that has been connected to the early benefactors of Mariendal is the vassal family Wekebrod originating from a man named Everhard van Bodercke a.k.a. Wekebrod. In 1394, he and his heirs were granted vast enfeoffments and privileges to a large number of villages in Harjumaa by the Livonian Master.³¹¹ In 1434, his nephews Everd and Claus confirmed that their uncle had donated the village Kopli (Ger. Koppel) to Mariendal in exchange of prayers for his family.³¹² Thus, the Wekebrods, the Lodes, and other noble families supported Mariendal financially from early on.

A case related to the Wekebrods is Mariendal's acquisition of the village Lagedi (Ger. Lakede). In 1422, Hans Wekebrod, Everd's son, received seven and a half haken³¹³ land in the village Lagedi in Vaskjala (Ger. Usenkulle) parish. The transaction is described in a pledge of 700 Riga marks by Hannes Sorsever that he took for a period of 30 years. If Sorsever and his relatives did not reclaim the pledge, the property would remain in Wekebrod's possession. As it turns out, Hans Wekebrod must have donated it to Mariendal sometime after the pledge was made. After Lagedi came in Mariendal's possession, the village was in the 1450s involved in a dispute between the monastery and the other landowners in the area: the Town Council and the nobleman Herman Soye. However, in the documents regarding the dispute, how and when Lagedi came into the monastery's possession is not mentioned, only that it belonged to the monastery "of old"³¹⁴

³⁰⁸ The origin of the Lode family is unknown, but they are documented as vassals already in the thirteenth century. The family had vast enfeoffments in Wiek, Harjumaa and Virumaa. See Kreem 2018, 282; LECUB I:5 2210.

³⁰⁹ LECUB I: 5 2485.

³¹⁰ Johansen (ed.) 1939, 15.

³¹¹ LECUB I:6 2927.

³¹² The donation letter has not survived and the confirmation by Claus and Everd has been noted in a regest by Bunge, but the document was part of the archive of Baron von Tollsche's collection and its location is today unknown. LECUB I:8 865.

³¹³ Land in Livonia was measured in haken (in Estonian *adramaa*), where one haken originally comprised as much land as one farmer could plough. The size of the haken did though vary over different regions and over time, which makes it impossible to estimate the actual size of a haken. Loit 1975, 48–50.

³¹⁴ "den dat Closter doch van oldinges vry vnd egen Alleyne gebruket heuet", 7 September 1461, Tallinn City Archives, TLA.230.1–I, 691.

and that Hermann Soye and his heirs had bought the monastery's possessions in Lagedi.³¹⁵

One further aspect to take into consideration when discussing the benefactors and donations to Mariendal is the concern of the Tallin Town Council that riches would flow out of the town and into the monastery through donations and bequests in wills. The council feared that riches of the town would flow out of it and into the monastery, that Tallinn's wealth would be drained through the donated assets and inheritances of the burghers. This concern originated in the judicial conflict about the inheritance after the burgher Wulfard Rosendal, who together with his wife had retired to Mariendal already in 1407. Wulfard was a Tallinn burgher who formerly had lived in Turku and was burgomaster there before returning to Tallinn in 1400. He left considerable debts behind when he died in Mariendal in 1411. This led to a legal conflict among his heirs, his creditor the castellan of Kastelholm (on the Åland Islands), and the Tallinn council. The conflict continued over the following four-year period. The first step of the Town Council towards preventing the burghers to give their town property to the religious houses was that the council determined that every burgher who was retiring to or entering a religious order should sell all their property. Thus, it meant that they could donate sums of money that they received from selling property, but not give the actual property to convents or monasteries. The ordinance was thus a strategy to keep the town properties in the control of the burghers. This paragraph is not found in the c. 1405 version of the town ordinances (Ger. *Bursprake*), but it has been added in the version dating to the second decade of the fifteenth century. According to Tapio Salminen, who has studied the inheritance dispute after the burgher Wulfard Rosendal, this ordinance has been added only after the conflict concerning his debts and inheritance were settled.³¹⁶

However, the changes in the ordinances not only directed towards the Birgittines as it also affected all other religious institutions in and around Tallinn. The competition of the town dwellers assets between the parishes and the religious orders continued after the change in the ordinances. In 1425, during the so-called "church quarrel" (*der Kirchenstreit*), that begun already in the 1390s and culminated in the 1420s, the Tallinn Town Council issued a regulation that was directed against the Dominicans. The conflict originally concerned the schools and who would have the right to educate laypersons: the secular church or the Dominicans. However, the regulation of 1425 restricted donations for the commissioning of masses and other religious services from religious orders in favour of the parish churches. The inhabitants of Tallinn could then no longer choose freely from which church they wanted to perform their commemoration services

³¹⁵ SDHK 26818; Johansen (ed.) 1933, 468–69.

³¹⁶ "Item is dat zake, dat ziik ymant in eenen gheestliken orden geven wil, de sal syne opstande und liggende grunde tovorne vorkopen, er he dar in thût, und weret, dat das nicht ene deck, so solen se der stael vorbord syn." The Tallinn Bursprake is edited as appendix in Johansen & von zur Mühlen 1973, 440; LECUB I:4 1946; Salminen 2016, 13; Salminen 2001, <http://www.kansallisbiografia.fi/kansallisbiografia/henkilo/8269> (accessed on 2 September 2021);

and burials.³¹⁷ This affected the religious institutions inside the town and perhaps not so much Mariendal that was located outside the town gates.³¹⁸ Nonetheless, the regulation of disposing of property before entering a religious order must probably also be viewed against the background of this quarrel between the secular church and the religious orders in and around Tallinn. The Town Council was thus not only concerned about the Birgittines, but also about the other religious orders. The council of Tallinn seems to overall having been concerned about the endowments to religious institutions and tried to prevent them from growing too wealthy.

The role of Mariendal's spiritual confraternity

After 1417, when the dispute concerning Mariendal's location finally was settled, donations started coming into the monastery. The grand buildings that were erected on the site, even though now in ruin, still witness the wealth that was accumulated in the monastery. Persons donated to contribute to its large-scale building project and bequests in the wills were frequently directed towards the monastery's *fabrica* ("zum Bau").³¹⁹ The building project was not only sponsored through the legates of the wills, but it also received donations for this purpose. In 1438, abbess Kõne and General Confessor Gerlach included the nobleman Detlev van der Palen,³²⁰ his wife Margaret and their children into the monastery's confraternity:

[...] for the special favour that the abovementioned Detleff van der Palen who, for his sake and for the sake of all others, has given to God's grace and for the salvation of his soul to the construction of our poor house of God.³²¹

Several such letters were issued by Mariendal where the heads of the monastery declared that they had included secular benefactors in the confraternity. As seen in the case of the Lode family, the confraternity letter did not generally specify why the persons were considered as such important benefactors of the monastery that they would be included in its confraternity with all its special spiritual benefits. The case of van der Palen is though a good example of how such a favour from the monastery probably was preceded with a financial contribution of some sort as the monastery thanked Detleff van der Palen and his family for their gifts by granting them membership of the Birgittine spiritual confraternity.

³¹⁷ LECUB I: 7 237.

³¹⁸ Strenga 2007, 14; Kala 2018, 347–48; Hergemöller 1991, 13–42.

³¹⁹ Hahn 2015, 703.

³²⁰ van der Pahlen was a noble family originating from Pomerania. It immigrated to Livonia in the fourteenth century and had its main residence in Lemsalu. See von Transehe-Roseneck 1929, 159–76.

³²¹ "[...] umb eyne merklike ghünst, de de erbenomede Detleff van der Paal vor sik unde alle anderen vorgenommet Gode to love unde erer sele salicheyt to dem gebowte unsem armen godeshusze togereret hevet." LECUB I: 9 260. This document was in the archives of the Livonian nobility in Riga that unfortunately have been destroyed. Bunge had though access to the original parchment letter when compiling his source edition.

The confraternity was an important bond between a religious institution and the lay benefactors. Such spiritual confraternities, also known as praying communities, were ubiquitous all-over medieval Europe and played an increasingly prominent role in the devotional culture in the late Middle Ages when membership for lay people in spiritual confraternities of a religious order became a common phenomenon. Monasteries such as Mariendal offered their benefactors the service of becoming part of their praying community, which also functioned as bridge between the monastic community and the secular world. The laypersons became inscribed in the monastery's list of benefactors would eternally be part of the religious work, the *Opus Dei*, conducted in the monastery. In the case of the Birgittine lay confraternity, its members were granted the same spiritual favours as full members of the order, which was an especially beneficial gesture granted the most distinguished benefactors.³²²

The last documented case of Mariendal accepting persons into its confraternity is when Abbess Birgitta and General Confessor Rutger in November 1504 included the Knight Erik Turesson (Bielke, † 1511) and his wife Lady Gunilla Johansdotter (Bese, 1475–1553) into the confraternity of the monastery. The couple was also in the same year included in the confraternity of Nådendal. Erik Turesson was at this point bailiff at Viipuri Castle and a member of the Swedish council of the realm. After his death, his wife Gunilla took over her late husband's duties in Viipuri during the period 1511–13 until his successor took over the position as bailiff. Why was this couple included in the spiritual confraternities of both Mariendal and Nådendal?³²³ There are no remaining documents of the couples making donations of landed property to the Birgittines, but their inclusion in the Birgittine confraternities was assumably a sign of mutual interest and support. Due to the geographical location, the towns Viipuri and Tallinn had close ties, a bond that often was characterized by the current state of the trade with Novgorod. The relations across the Gulf of Finland became strained after Novgorod in 1478 was conquered by the Duchy of Moscovy. The inclusion of Erik and Gunilla into Mariendal's confraternity may thus be part of maintaining the ties across the Gulf of Finland.³²⁴

Since the inclusion of Erik and Gunilla into the confraternity of Mariendal and Nådendal occurred simultaneously, the two events must somehow be related. At the same point as they were included in Nådendal's confraternity, Erik's brother, Sten Turesson (Bielke, †1520), and his wife Anna Bengtsdotter (Sparre, †1561) were also accepted into it.³²⁵ Thus, one plausible explanation to them receiving this favour can be the tradition of the Bielke family to endorse the Birgittines in Vadstena. By the inclusion of the Bielke brothers and their spouses, the bond between the Bielke family and the Birgittines was extended to two other monasteries of the Birgittine Order, located in regions that at the beginning of the sixteenth

³²² Bijsterveld, 2007, 290–93.

³²³ SDHK 34923 & 34964. Lahtinen 2020, <<https://www.skbl.se/sv/artikel/GunillaJohansdotterBese>> (accessed on 21 July 2021).

³²⁴ Kreem 2002, 174–76.

³²⁵ SDHK 5060.

century were increasingly important for the economic and political interests of the Swedish council of the realm and the Swedish nobility. The Bielke family was since generations part of the upmost elite in Sweden holding important offices in the council of the realm.³²⁶

The connections between Vadstena and the Bielke family are well-documented through the Vadstena Diary. In 1385 Katarina Bielke was buried inside the church in Vadstena, and after her at least seven other members of the Bielke family were buried there. Otherwise, the diary speaks warmly of the members of this family as especially active benefactors of the monastery referring to their many generous donations.³²⁷ Erik's and Sten's father, Ture Turesson, was connected to Vadstena as he in March 1459 was included into Vadstena's confraternity and thus the sons can be described following their father's example when they created bonds to the Birgittines in Nådendal and Mariendal.³²⁸ The choice of memoria was a vital strategy among the nobility to create ties to significant religious institutions as it made long-lasting bonds, granting the benefactors important spiritual favours. The monasteries, in their turn, acquired recognition and an influential network.³²⁹ The fact that the brothers Erik and Sten with their wives turned to Mariendal and Nådendal is most likely related to their political connections to Viipuri and northern Estonia.

In the conflicts within the Kalmar Union at this point, Erik Turesson sided with the Swedish fraction of nobles led by the protector of the realm, Svante Nilsson, who wanted to separate the Swedish realm from the Union with Denmark. The council of Tallinn was concerned that the Russian trade would then bypass the town and that the town of Viipuri would create better eastward relations. Therefore, the council of Tallinn allied with the Danish King John of Denmark (1455–1513), which lead to tense relations to Viipuri. In the beginning of the sixteenth century, a continuing correspondence was conducted between Erik Turesson and the Town Council of Tallinn. These letters concern the trade between the towns as Tallinn had confiscated goods and captured some of Erik Turesson's men. The reasons for the town's actions were that the council feared that the goods of saltpetre, sulphur and gunpowder would be further sold to Moscovy with whom Tallinn was in conflict. In 1507, Erik wrote to Tallinn because the town had allowed some Danish mercenary ships into its waters and the mercenaries had harassed some of Erik's ships.³³⁰

These circumstances make it even more curious that the Birgittines outside Tallinn at this point included Erik and Gunilla into their confraternity. One further possible explanation to Mariendal's and Nådendal's action may be a sign of loyalty towards the Swedish council of the realm in the ongoing war. Nådendal did also have a good relation to the regent Svante Nilsson. Hence, the inclusion in the confraternities could be founded in the political circumstances at the time,

³²⁶ Carlsson 1924, < <https://sok.riksarkivet.se/sbl/artikel/18157> > (accessed on 21 July 2021).

³²⁷ DV 42, 189, 207, 243, 416, 420, 494.

³²⁸ SDHK 27384.

³²⁹ Jamroziak 2004, pp. 63–70.

³³⁰ DF 4848, 4844, 4846, 4918, 4925, 4944, 4957, 4958, 4967, 4989, 4970, 4971, 4981, 4991, 5027, 5074, 5082, 5102, 5119, 5199, 5251, 5305, 5234, 5252, 5291, 5316, 5352, 5429, 5427.

but they could as well be based on a personal interest and family tradition favouring the Birgittine Order. The letters issued by the abbess and general confessor in Nådendal also states that the couples were included in the confraternity of every Birgittine monastery.³³¹

These bonds to secular persons, especially in the societal elite, were mutually important for both the monasteries and the lay benefactors. By eternally granting its benefactors exclusive spiritual favours and including persons among the high nobility into its confraternity, the Birgittines could create additional security for their monasteries. They could thus create reciprocal bonds that lasted for generations.³³² Against this background, the inclusion of persons such as Erik Turesson and Gunilla were expressions of the reciprocal ties between the monastery and its benefactors. In the politically uncertain times of the early sixteenth century, the Birgittines could in this way gain powerful allies.

Another indicator of Mariendal's bonds with the local nobility are the tombstones that still are to be found within the ruins of the church. Being buried inside the church of the monastery was a favour granted to the monastery's benefactors. Those whose grave slabs remain on the site can be identified as nobles, with the exception of one priest. The information on the stones such as text fragments and heraldic symbols that still are decipherable and thus are some of the buried persons are still identifiable. The many grave slabs display Mariendal's function as a burial church for the local nobility. In total thirteen remaining medieval slabs are found inside the church ruins. As some of them are much damaged, their owners are not identifiable, even if the given name and shield are still visible. Unfortunately, it is uncertain if the slabs have been moved or if they remain on their original location inside the church.³³³

Since being buried inside a church was prestigious, let alone the church of a prominent order, the persons who were buried at the Birgittines must be considered as special friends of the monastery. Inside Tallinn, the Dominican convent held a central position in the memorial culture of the nobility. Some two hundred members of the nobility were residing in the upper town on Toompea. The nobles in Tallinn often wished to be buried inside the convent church of Saint Catherine's.³³⁴ Accordingly, even if the Dominican convent functioned as the religious nave for the nobles, but the Birgittines at Mariendal must nonetheless also have played a significant role for the memorial culture of the rural nobility in northern Estonia. At least considering that many of the benefactors and also the inhabitants in the monastery originated from the societal elite and the vassal families.

The owners of the graves inside the church are though not documented among the donors of landed property to Mariendal. Only at one instance in the remaining sources were the donors explicitly asking for a burial place in the

³³¹ SDHK 34923 & 34964.

³³² Strenga 2020, 212–31.

³³³ Raam & Tamm 2006, 62. Unfortunately, I have only been able to study photos of the slabs and not on site in the church ruins.

³³⁴ Strenga 2007, 111–12.

monastery. In 1493, Jurgen von Merle and his wife Kerstin made an agreement with the monastery about their burial. Jurgen and Kerstin then gave 300 Riga marks to Mariendal for their grave. Their donation was, however, a combined donation and loan, as they further made an agreement that they at each Christmas would pay the monastery sixteen Riga marks for a pledge that Kerstin previously had made with the monastery. If they would not be able to pay off the loan, then the monastery could continue to use the estate.³³⁵ Jurgen van Merle was from a merchant family in Tallinn and his brother, Johann van Merle, had a master's degree in medicine. Johann had a decade earlier written two letters to the council of Tallinn regarding the division of heritage between the brothers after their father. In his letters, he also mentioned that his mother was living at the Birgittines. Along with Wulfard Rosendal's example, the van Merle family testifies that also burghers in Tallinn entered the monastic community, or at least the lay community for elderly, and to some extent commissioned burials in the monastery.³³⁶

When laypersons commissioned prayers and chantries from religious institutions this meant that priests or members of the monastic community were employed or assigned to perform these memorial duties. In the parish churches wealthy persons could hire priests and found chantries that would be the foundation of the eternal commemoration. This was an expensive form of memoria. A more affordable version was to commission prayers and masses for a limited amount of time or memorial services to be held on certain days instead of founding a vicary for the eternal masses that only a few persons could afford.³³⁷

This type of commemoration was possible at the parish churches, but the Birgittine monasteries did not have the same capacity to perform such "extra" masses for laypersons. The duties of the priest brothers were primarily to serve the need of their convents. The Birgittines could perform prayers for their benefactors, but they could not perform an uncontrolled number of private masses. The *Regula Salvatoris* does not mention the possibility of laypersons to found private chantries or vicaries in the church of a Birgittine monastery. However, a way around this problem is found in a letter issued by the abbess and the general confessor in Mariendal in 1484. They then founded a vicary to be held by the priest Johannes Grunwald who upon every midsummer was to receive 18 Riga marks for his service in the chapel of Saint Birgitta in the monastery's church. He would weekly pray and hold three masses for the founders of the vicary and the monastery's benefactors (who are not further identified in the letter). For his sustenance, he would receive housing, clothing, and provisions through the monastery. This is an exceptional case, which possibly was a way to round the problem with performing the private commemoration in the monastery's church commissioned by the laypersons.³³⁸

³³⁵ SDHK 32915.

³³⁶ LECUB I:14 348, 963.

³³⁷ Strenga 2007, 111–32.

³³⁸ SDHK 31462.

Lady Elsebe von Putbus donations to Mariendal

Mariendal had received a part of the village Lagedi from the Wekebrod family, but the other part of the village was donated to Mariendal by Lady Elsebe von Putbus (1387–1449) who in February 1444 bought a part of the village from the Livonian Order and subsequently donated it to Mariendal. The purchase and donation were confirmed by the Livonian Master Heidenreich Vincke von Overbergh (†1450) who handed over the privileges to Lagedi to Mariendal. This estate encompassed no less than 15 haken land.³³⁹ Elsebe von Putbus was an extraordinary endorser of the Birgittines in the Baltic Sea region at this point. She not only gave large donations to Mariendal, but in the late 1420s she also donated her landed estates on Rügen to Marienkronen (see Marienkronen chapter). Already in 1424, she donated her estates in Harjumaa consisting of the entire villages Jägala (Ger. Jackewold) and Vandjala (Ger. Wandel) as well as three haken in the villages of Kostivere (Ger. Kostifer) to Mariendal. She had inherited the villages from her late husband the Danish nobleman Albrecht Andersen (Eberstein, † 1405). The donation is documented through the letter of confirmation that was issued by the Commander of the Livonian Order in Tallinn, Sitz van Ruthenberg.³⁴⁰

Due to the vast privilege granted by Grand Master Konrad von Jungingen, a.k.a. the “Jungensche Gnade”, to the vassals in northern Estonia³⁴¹, Elsebe, and not her son Anders, was the heir to her husband’s estates in Estonia. Albrecht and Elsebe belonged to the Danish nobility, but Elsebe’s family originated from the island of Rügen. When becoming a widow, Elsebe first retired to Marienkronen before moving to Estonia permanently to enter the community at Mariendal. Elsebe was a member of the prominent Putbus family, which was part of the Danish political elite. Her father, Henning von Putbus (before 1350–c. 88), was the *drots* (highest member of the king’s privy council) of King Valdemar IV Atterdag (1320–75) and he even acted as ruler over Denmark in 1368–70. Through her family connections, Elsebe became involved in the grand politics of the Baltic Sea region when she in 1420 mediated between King Erik of Pomerania and the Livonian Order. As discussed above, the order feared at this point that King Erik would put claims on Estonia through the extensive privileges of the vassals in Virumaa, who at this point were allied to Erik. This eventually led to limitations in the vast privileges of the vassals so that they would only encompass persons permanently living in Harjumaa and Virumaa.³⁴²

Consequently, not only the Town Council of Tallinn was concerned by the threat of a Scandinavian re-annexation of Estonia, but this was an issue that also engaged the Livonian Order. In Elsebe von Putbus, Mariendal and the Birgittines had an influential supporter and she donating all her inherited possessions in

³³⁹ ELB 182.

³⁴⁰ SDHK 20219.

³⁴¹ Kreem 2018, 287.

³⁴² Rebas 1976, 53–62.

Northern Estonia to Mariendal was a gesture to the Livonian Order that she put down all her interest in the region by giving up all her estates.³⁴³

After the 1420s, Elsebe donated one more time to the Birgittines. In her will, she made generous endowments to both Mariendal and Marienkrone.³⁴⁴ Especially Mariendal was endowed, and the monastery received 2 000 Riga marks. Some days prior to drawing up the will, she had sold her remaining assets in Virumaa to the Livonian master worth 4 000 Riga marks, which sum she subsequently donated to the Birgittines. In the 1430s her relatives, the Gyldenstjerne family, and the diocese of Ribe put further claims on the estates of Hagen in Virumaa while they, from the viewpoint of the Livonian Order, already had divided the inheritance of these estates in the 1420s and could thus not put any further claims on them. Elsebe's donation of all her assets in northern Estonia to the Birgittines in Mariendal must also be understood against the background of this conflict between the Gyldenstjerne family and Livonian Order.³⁴⁵ Accordingly, Mariendal became involved in the matter of Scandinavian inheritance claims in Estonia through the relations of Elsebe von Putbus, but by donating all her assets in Estonia to the Birgittines in Mariendal she could remove the claims on these estates. Not only was she undoubtedly a dedicated supporter of the Birgittine Order, Mariendal was probably as well the best beneficiary of her donations due to its strong connections to Vadstena and Scandinavia.³⁴⁶

Mariendal in the wills

Many Tallinn citizens endowed Mariendal in their wills alongside other religious institutions and the testamentary bequest were the primary way to endow Mariendal among the burghers. Kadri Rutt-Hahn has systematically studied all the 337 medieval wills from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries in the Tallinn City Archives. She has also compiled the bequests to the various religious institutions in extensive tables that enable a comparison between Mariendal and other religious institutions as recipients of testamentary gifts. When comparing the bequests that the Birgittines received along the fourteen other religious institutions in the town, Mariendal was not among the top three recipients (churches Saint Olav and Saint Nicholas, and the Saint Catherine's Dominican convent) but the monastery was still among the institutions receiving many bequests. During the fifteenth century, the Birgittines even received more testamentary gifts than the female Cistercian nunnery of Saint Michael's within the town. In total, according to Hahn's table, Mariendal received 90 legates to a value of 1 974 marks, which is a substantial sum. Added to monetary bequests, the monastery also received valuable objects such as cloth, a silver belt, some gilded jugs, candelabras, etc.³⁴⁷

³⁴³ Rebas 1976, 57.

³⁴⁴ Regarding her will, see further discussion in chapter on Marienkrone.

³⁴⁵ Rebas 1976, 57–62; Olesen 1980, 340–41, 396.

³⁴⁶ LECUB I:10 517.

³⁴⁷ Hahn 2015, 692–707.

The bequests in the wills to Mariendal varied all from the tiniest gifts of one mark to large sums of three hundred marks, but the most common value of the gifts comprised sums between five and ten marks. All larger testamentary endowments to the Birgittines are all dated to 1510 or later.³⁴⁸ However, as many wills from the fifteenth century have been lost, one explanation to the increase in large testamentary bequests from the early sixteenth century is related to the fact that the number of wills overall increase in number during this period.³⁴⁹

Despite the initial antipathies of the Tallinn Town Council towards the Birgittines and its efforts to hinder the monastery in growing too wealthy, some members of the Town Council nonetheless endowed the Birgittines in their wills. It seems that the concerns of the council waned in the following decades after that the feud regarding the monastery's location. Their bequests of to Mariendal were, however, generally quite modest and maybe the Birgittines were included as beneficiaries of their wills as part of the convention to commemorate all the major religious institutions within and near the town. For example, councillor Johan Budding's will deviate from the pattern. On 20 August 1455, he bequeathed 40 marks to Mariendal, while the church of Saint Olav, where he also wished being buried, received 30 marks, the churches of Saint Nicholas and Saint John ten marks, the chapel of Saint Gertrud, the Dominicans, and the Cathedral received five marks.³⁵⁰ The burgomaster Joan Viant did as well especially endow Mariendal in his will of 1524 where he assigned the monastery no less than 300 marks.³⁵¹

Accordingly, the Birgittines in Tallinn were in due time included among the main institutions that often were endowed in the wills by the citizens. It seems though that this happened only after that the monastery was inaugurated in 1431 because only one will is dated before this date. After the inauguration, the monastery was regularly included in the Tallinn wills and was thus part of the repertory of monasteries, churches, and chapels that those drawing up their wills could choose to endow.³⁵²

The wills also give a glimpse into the vast networks of the merchant population in Tallinn. Customarily, they not only endowed institutions and persons in

³⁴⁸ LECUB I:9 911; 6.8.1510 Borcherd Herde, originated from Westfahlen, 50 marks, RR III 98; 4.12.1511, Ludeke Loszeke, merchant originating from Duisburg, gave 100 marks for the building; 21.9.1513, Hinrik Horneyt, merchant and shipowner, gave 50 marks, LECUB II:2 545; 28.8.1518, Henningk Simer, gave 50 marks for vigils and masses; 11.3.1519, Katharina Meller, married to the painter Jørgen Dreger, for a painting depicting the revelation of Saint Gregory; 9.4.1519, Hans Bouwer, German merchant, member of the Black Heads, gave 70 mark for the building and for prayers, RR III 118; 13.9.1519 Evert Gruters, merchant, gave 200 marks; 4.9.1520, Hans Rothgers, treasurer, procurator of the church of Saint Nicholas, gave three roll of linen and 100 marks for his niece for the entrance to the monastery, RR III 121; 7.5.1521, Joan Viant, councillor, gave 300 marks; Hahn 2015, 566–67.

³⁴⁹ Hahn 2015, 13–25.

³⁵⁰ LECUB I:11 442.

³⁵¹ RR III 127.

³⁵² 21.1.1435 Ludeke Witte, RR III 10; 10.5.1447 Wilm van Scheele, LECUB I:10 334; 19.4.1449 Martin Busch, LECUB I:10 583; 18.6.1473–1.5.1475 Gerwen Borneman, LECUB I: 13 148; c. 1490 Hinrik Schelwent, RR III 50; c. 1500 Marquard van der Molen, LECUB II:1 895; c. 1500 Gert Swartwolt, LECUB II:1 896; 9.4.1519 Hans Bouwer, RR III 118.

or near Tallinn, but also on locations where they originated from, if they still had relatives there, or places that they had trading connections to.³⁵³ As recently established by Gustavs Strenga, the practice of merchant wills commemorating institutions abroad was a means of keeping the connections to the family, the place of birth, the trading connections, but were also a means of expressing identity.³⁵⁴

The Tallinn merchants endowed religious institutions over a vast geographical space. Not all testators did this, but it was relatively common that they at least endowed one or two sacred institutions in their native towns.³⁵⁵ Endowing sacred institutions across the region was a practice common to persons with cross-regional connections, among merchants as well as nobles. Two wills from Tallinn and one will from Turku draw attention towards the Birgittines in this respect. In 1444, the abovementioned noblewoman Elsebe von Putbus gave lavish endowments to both Mariendal and Marienkrone, and also some Cistercian monasteries on Rügen and on Gotland. Her will is further discussed in the chapter on Marienkrone and it will accordingly not be further analysed here.³⁵⁶ In 1453 the knight Henrik Klasson endowed Nådendal (which he and his wife Lucia Olofsdotter had founded together with the Swedish council of the realm and the bishop of Turku) especially but he also gave a bequest to Mariendal which received 20 marks. This sum was to be withdrawn from the debt that the widow of a man named Clas Pedersson in Tallinn owed him for two horses. Thus, the bequest was given to finish his business in Tallinn and his choice of Mariendal instead of any other institution in Tallinn was probably connected to his involvement in Nådendal and his interest in the Birgittine Order.³⁵⁷

Two years later, in 1455, the councillor Jakob Vrese in Tallinn, who also had been burgomaster in Turku, endowed both Mariendal (20 Riga marks) and Nådendal (10 Riga marks). This is the earliest example of a member of the Town Council in Tallinn who included Mariendal in his will. The religious institutions that he endowed in Tallinn were the following: Churches of Saint John, Nicholas, and Olav, the Cathedral on Toompea, Saint Michael's Cistercian nunnery, the chapel of Saint Gertrud, the Birgittines in Mariendal, and the Dominican Saint Catherine's convent. In Turku, he endowed: the altars of Saint Henry, the Magi, the Holy Trinity, and Saint George in the Cathedral, the hospital of the Holy Spirit, the Dominicans Saint Olav's convent, the altar of Saint George, and the Birgittines in Nådendal.³⁵⁸

Jacob Vrese's will is thus quite typical for a merchant who was active as a tradesman on several locations across the Baltic Sea. Apart from the legates to family, servants and other persons, he listed a large number of religious institutions. All major churches, hospitals, chapels, and monasteries in Tallinn were included. Thus, the fact that endowed the Birgittines in both Tallinn and Turku is

³⁵³ Regarding the churches and religiosity of travelling German merchants in the Hansa region, See Graßmann 2009, 113–30; Jahnke 2019, 7–41.

³⁵⁴ Strenga 2018, 65–94.

³⁵⁵ 18.6.1473–1.5.1475 LECUB I:13 148.

³⁵⁶ LECUB I:10 17.

³⁵⁷ DF 2918.

³⁵⁸ LECUB I:11 397.

not per se to be interpreted as evidence of his personal inclination towards the Birgittines or the cult of Saint Birgitta as he also endowed the Dominicans on both locations even if they received smaller bequests than Mariendal and Nådendal.

Moreover, persons from locations where the Birgittines were not established did also endow Mariendal, which can be interpreted as a manifestation of a certain interest in Saint Birgitta's cult and Birgittine Order. In 1425, the councillor Conrad Visch in Riga gave 10 marks to Mariendal and in return of his gift he expected that the Birgittines in Mariendal would mention him in their prayers. In his will, Mariendal was the only religious institution that he endowed in or near Tallinn, and thus it seems that he was particularly interested in the cult of Saint Birgitta.³⁵⁹

These examples show that the Birgittines alongside the Dominicans and the Cistercians, became an integrated part of the religious landscape of northern Europe. The wills reflect that Mariendal did not become the church of choice where the citizens of Tallinn wished to be buried, that purpose was already fulfilled by the parish churches Saint Nicholas, Saint Olav, and the Dominicans inside Tallinn. Thus, the burghers chose their final resting place in the urban churches within the town gates, where perhaps also their ancestors lied buried. Mariendal hence fulfilled a complementary role to the urban piety and the spiritual services of the urban parish churches of Tallinn. Mariendal's position between the town and country is further manifested in the fact that the Birgittine church served as burial church for the nobles residing on the countryside, while the citizens of Tallinn endowed it with testamentary bequests with requests for the Birgittine prayers in return.

Mariendal as landowner

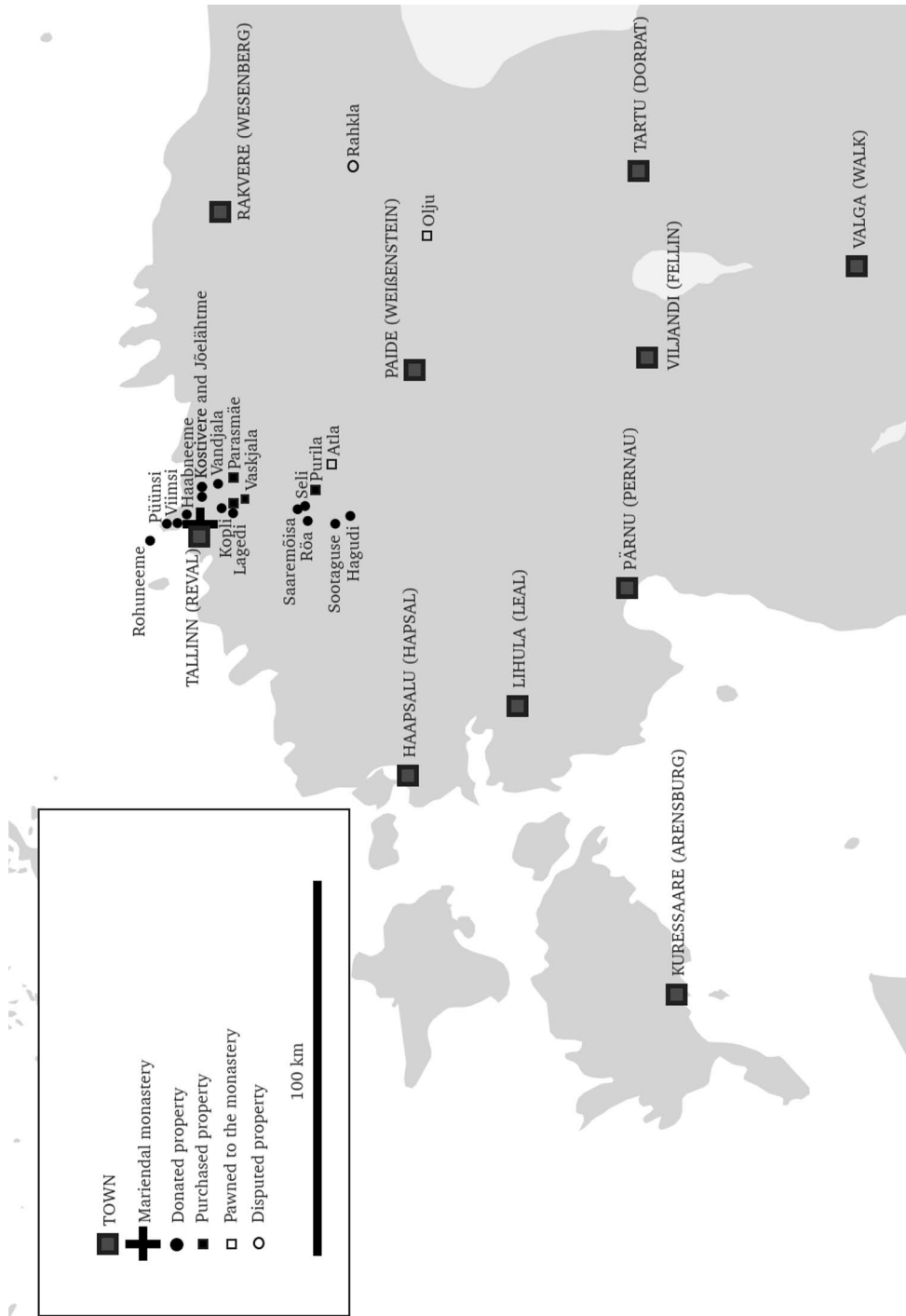
Mariendal received donations of landed estates from the 1420s onwards. Its landed estates were mainly located in Harjumaa and most of them were received through donations. The donated villages were Vandjala, Kostivere, Kopli, Lagedi, Hagudi, Sootaguse, Viimsi, Püüni, Rohuneeme, Seli, Rõa, Saaremõisa, and Haabneme.³⁶⁰ That Mariendal acquired landed estates in its immediate vicinity was quite typical to the gifts to monasteries. The Birgittine landscape in northern Estonia was accordingly concentrated to the region of Harjumaa. Keeping the landed estates coherent was a practical issue for the monastery and the fact that Mariendal deliberately strived to acquire landed property in the Harjumaa region also becomes evident from its purchases of estates that were predominantly located there.

The land in Livonia was measured in *haken*, a unit in use in Livonia, Prussia, and in the Northern German duchies. The exact size of one hake is not possible

³⁵⁹ LECUB I:7 372.

³⁶⁰ LECUB I:7 84; LECUB I:8 865; LECUB I:10 16, 287 (TLA.230.1.BB 40:I, 60); LECUB I:12 820; ELB I 303.

Map 1. Mariendal's Landed Property



Map: © Panu Savolainen & Anna-Stina Hägglund

to determine as the measurement was only conformed during the great revision of the seventeenth century. In the Middle Ages, the haken was not a conform unit in Livonia. Thus, its sizes varied between regions and over time. Originally, the unit corresponded to as much land that one farmer could cultivate with a plough (thereof its Estonian word *adramaa*).³⁶¹

The haken was accordingly the foundation of the measurement of landed rents when estimating the property value upon a sale or donation and determined how much the farmers were to pay annually to the landholder. The haken size varied all from 30 to 120 barrels of land (*Tonnen land*).³⁶²

Relations to vassals and villagers

According to previous studies on the distribution of land between the various landowners in northern Estonia, the land in Harjumaa was divided between the vassals, Livonian Order, the monasteries, the bishop, and the town of Tallinn. The absolute majority of the landed estates in Harjumaa were in the possession of the vassals, but also the monasteries owned a considerable amount of land ranking as the third largest group of landowners.³⁶³ The main part of the sources from Mariendal concern the monastery's landed estates and these documents give glimpses into the monastery's interaction with other landowners. In this chapter, examples of the communication between Mariendal and other landowners are discussed.

One important key to study the lands of Mariendal are the surviving charters of landed privileges that were issued by the masters of the Livonian Order. In 1447, the Livonian Master Heidenreich Vincke von Overberg (†1450) issued a letter of enfeoffment on demand of the knight Johann von der Lechte who had given a testamentary bequest to Mariendal encompassing no less than sixteen haken of land in his village Hagudi (Ger. Hakude) in Rapla (Ger. Rappel) parish. Because the Livonian Order was the territorial lord, the master's confirmation of change of ownership and transfer of the privileges to the new owner was necessary. In the same letter, the master granted the monastery all privileges to the village Sontake in the same parish, which the monastery had bought from a man named Didrik Kalve encompassing four haken. The master then liberated the monastery from all taxes and declared that the monastery was free to cultivate the land eternally.³⁶⁴

Another letter of privilege was issued by the Livonian Master Wolter von Plettenberg (c. 1450–1535) in February 1513. It liberated the monastery of all taxes and obligations from a large number of villages and estates in both Harjumaa and

³⁶¹ Johansen 1933, 681; Loit 1975, 48–50; Tarvel 1983.

³⁶² Until the land revision in 1687, no less than 90 various types of haken-sizes have been documented in Livonia. During the end of the era of the Teutonic Order, several revisions of the haken-size were made, the most renowned was the Plettenberg haken that the Livonian master Wolter von Plettenberg let measure. Tarvel 1983, 10–11; Liljedahl 1933, 24; Nordisk Familjebok 1909, 1064; Soom 1954, 183–84.

³⁶³ Zetterberg 2018, 96.

³⁶⁴ 2 January 1447, EAA.2069.2.64.

Virumaa. Assumably were not all these privileges granted by Wolter von Plettenberg new to the monastery, but he most probably also confirmed older privileges.³⁶⁵ The charter witnesses that Mariendal on a regular basis, throughout the fifteenth and early sixteenth century, bought and received villages and manors, mostly in Harjumaa, but also to some extent in Virumaa.³⁶⁶ The Birgittine landscape in Northern Estonia was thus concentrated to the county of Harjumaa as seen in map 1 over the donated, bought and pawned estates to Mariendal.

Mariendal was landlord of quite a large number of villages, which meant that the monastery was in regular contact with those who worked on the land. The farmer-population in Livonia was mostly composed of natives speaking Estonian in contrast to the landowning vassal families who mostly were of immigrated people of Danish and German origin. The farmland in Estonia during the Middle Ages was usually put directly under the landowners who possessed the right to collect taxes and incomes. When the estates and villages changed owner, the underlying peasant households were part of the deal. According to the enfeoffment privileges, the landowner granted the peasant population the usufruct to the farms. The agrarian economy in late medieval Livonia became, due to the growing export of grain, increasingly based on a production concentrated around the manors. This manor economy (Ger. *Gutherrschaft*) meant that the peasants became tied to the land as so-called hereditary farmers (Ger. *Erbbauer*) who were not straightforward serfs but not free to decide over their farms themselves or move from them without permission. This system has usually been regarded as the beginning of the manorial economy and serfdom that peaked during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in Livonia.³⁶⁷

Mariendal also acted as the manorial overlord on the estates in its possession and the underlying farms and farmers were under the monastery's power. One example of Mariendal dealing with its farmers is from 1451 when the abbess transferred two farmers to the abbot of the Cistercian monastery Padise.³⁶⁸ Another example is from May 1527 when the abbess and general confessor transferred the hereditary farmer Tönnis along with his family from the monastery's village *Waynzakel* to the vassal Jacob von dem Levenwolde. The letter does not mention why Tönnies was transferred to another landlord, but the monastery states that Jacob van dem Levenwolde had accepted the deal, in accordance with the monastery's terms. The farmer was hereafter fully under Jacob's power, as stated in the transfer letter:

³⁶⁵ SDHK 20219.

³⁶⁶ The property included in the letter concerned the parishes: the village Rahkla (Rachell) in the Katkul parish in Virumaa; the villages Pae (Padis), Kangla (Kannge), Saidapere (Seddevere), Aela (Agelis), Sadala (Seddegell), Lõiuse (Loo), Kunila (Kundele), Jalase (Jallis); the manor Purila (Pirgell) and the villages Ameris, Loit and the mill and village Seli (Sellige) in Juuru (Jorden) parish, Rõa in Rapla parish, Vandjala (Vandegel) in Jägala parish. 25 February 1513, EAA.2069.2.299. See Rajamaa 2018, 230.

³⁶⁷ Loit 1975, 54–55 & 59–62; Pöltsum-Jürjo 2018, 341–7.

³⁶⁸ "1451. Cessio Abbatisse in Mariendahl (nunc S. Brigitten-Closter) duorum rusticorum Abbati de Padis 1451." Regest of the document in Schirren, 1861, p. 141, Nr. 462. Cited in LECUB I:11 192.

Jacob von dem Levenwolde may own the intended farmer and use him as his own hereditary farmer according to his will. If the farmer would run away from Jacob, then he may reclaim him and his children, where he can find them, as they are his hereditary farmers.³⁶⁹

Therefore, if Tönnis or his children would run away, Jacob van der Levenwolde had full right to reclaim them if they were caught, since they were the subordinated farmers to him. This system of hereditary farmers who were tied to Mariendal's pertaining farms, was different from the situation at the other two monasteries studied here, as both Marienkronen and Nådendal had tenant farmers who paid annual rent from their produce to the monasteries, but who were not regarded as property belonging to the monasteries in the same sense as the underlying hereditary farmers to Mariendal. The local system of property management thus also implied that Mariendal's economy also was part of the manorial system, which determined the management of its underlying farms.

The villages in Livonia functioned as administrative units, as centres for collecting taxes and incomes from the farms. Thus, the local population in the villages belonging to Mariendal must have been in regular contact with the representatives of the monastery, the procurators, when they came to collect the monastery's incomes and overseeing the farms and farmland. To the villagers the monastery was thus omnipresent in their daily lives as their landowner. Furthermore, to the rural population living near the monastery the monastery was possibly also part of their religious life through their participation in the services in Mariendal's church and hearing the preaching of the Birgittine brothers.

Mariendal's landed estates

When Mariendal purchased landed property, it seems that it in some cases was an attempt to buy more land in areas where it already owned landed possessions. Thus, the monastery could try to keep its landed property as coherent as possible. The abovementioned village Sontake is one example of a purchase made by Mariendal in a parish where the monastery previously had received another village, Hagudi, through a donation. Hence, the purchase of Sontake can be interpreted as an attempt of the monastery in trying to keep its property coherent on locations where it already owned landed possession.³⁷⁰

Another example of a purchase by Mariendal is from August 1425 when the nobleman Johann Parenbeke sold his village Parasmäe (Ger. Parenbeke) in Harjumaa to the monastery for 2 000 Riga marks. The village had been in the possession of the vassal family Parenbeke since the Danish era.³⁷¹ The sale was negotiated and sealed at the castle on Toompea in Tallinn before the Livonian Mas-

³⁶⁹ "Des gedachten Bauern mag Jacob von dem Levenwolde besitzen und gebrauchen für seinen eigenen Erbbauern nach seinem willen. Sollte der Bauer dem Jacob entgehen, so mag er ihn und seine Kinder wieder verfordern, wo er sie erwischen kann, für seine eigenen Erbbauern." ELB 933.

³⁷⁰ LECUB I:10, 287.

³⁷¹ SDHK 20555.

ter Sitz van Ruthenberg and his coadjutors: the marshal Diderik Kra, the commander to Fellin Goswyn van Polhem, the commander of Tallinn Goswyn van Velmede, as well as the bailiff to Järvamaa (Ger. Jerwen) Lord Heylweg van Gylsen together with the knights and the squires in Harjumaa and Virumaa.³⁷² The sale is a typical example of how changes in ownership of landed property were officially transferred in front of the representatives of the political authority and the landowning elite in Estonia. This implied that Mariendal, when it sold, purchased, or received landed property, had to send its representatives to Toompea castle to attend the official transfer of ownership. At this occasion, the charter was made and all sealing witnesses gathered. At the sale of Parasmäe village, the sealing witnesses were Johannes himself, of course, his nephew Clawes Parenbeke, and the vassals Clawes Soye and Clawes Mekes. The case presents an excellent example of how the monastery negotiated and interacted with the other landowners in Toompea castle.³⁷³

The purchases and pawns that Mariendal accepted witness that the monastery through the donated assets quickly accumulated wealth that it could reinvest. The economy of the monastery also allowed it to accept pawns by the laity. In exchange of landed property as security, Mariendal could give sums of money to people who needed a loan. In 1433, a man named Hans Sorsever pledged 350 marks for which he would pay an annual rent of one last of rye and one last malt. If the grain could not be delivered, he placed the village Olige in the parish of Katküll as a security of the loan.³⁷⁴ Another example of Mariendal giving credits to the nobility was in 1460 when Wolter Holthusen pawned a part of the village Kostivere.³⁷⁵ However, Mariendal did not only lend money to the nobility; in 1501 the merchant Johann Koetcke from Zwolle was declared being in debt 95 Rhine Guilders to Mariendal, which he, according to the council in Zwolle, was bound to repay the monastery by the following Easter. If Johann could not pay his debt, two other merchants would secure that Mariendal was compensated.³⁷⁶ As the merchants in Tallinn traded with other towns in the Hansa region and the Netherlands, merchants with trading connections to Tallinn loaned from institutions in the town. The case demonstrates that Mariendal was regarded as a liable creditor to the Tallinn merchants and that they also turned to the Birgittines to take loans. The lending activities are furthermore an indication of the reciprocal relations between the Birgittines and the citizens. Due to its location outside the gates of the town, but in its immediate vicinity Mariendal had an advantageous position and could interact with both the vassals and the town population.

The case of Johann Koetcke shows that Mariendal also lended money to foreign merchants with connections to Tallinn. In 1425, correspondence between Tallinn and Lübeck concerned a debt of 120 nobels that the burgher Wilhelm

³⁷² SDHK 20563.

³⁷³ SDHK 20555.

³⁷⁴ LECUB I:8, 660.

³⁷⁵ Johansen 1933, 451.

³⁷⁶ LECUB II:2 74(TLA.230.1.B.k.4-I, f. 18 r-v).

Richard owed Mariendal and the Tallinn burgher Tidike van Bodike. The first letter of the correspondence is damaged, but it becomes evident that Wilhelm Richard had died and now Mariendal acted together with Tidike van Bodike in trying to reclaim the debt from Wilhelm Richard's heirs. Consequently, Tidike van Bodike had confiscated a shipment of honey that belonged to the estate of the deceased. Richard's testators claimed that the debt already had been paid to van Bodike while the payment to the Birgittines was not made yet. Thus, the council of Lübeck wished that van Bodike would let go of the confiscated shipment. Hence, the case further witness that the Birgittines in Mariendal already in the 1420s, although the monastery was recently founded, acted as creditor to merchants. In this example, the monastery was co-operating with a Tallinn burgher to reclaim a debt. Furthermore, it was the brothers from Vadstena who supervised the monastery that had made the loan. They were thus acting in the local environment in the management of the monastery, possibly with help from the local brothers and sisters.³⁷⁷

A fourth example of Mariendal acting as creditor is from 1461 when the vassal Otto Tödwen (Todwyn) declared being in debt to the monastery for a yearly rent of three Riga marks that he had mortgaged in his estate Atla (Ger. Attele) in Juuru parish for 50 Riga marks to Mariendal. In order to pay off the loan, Otto and his heirs promised to pay the instalments at midsummer each year. In the meantime, or if they for some reason could not pay the instalments, Mariendal would be able to run the estate without interference, including all the privileges and belongings of the estate.³⁷⁸

In its turn, Mariendal also bought estates by paying them in instalments. For example, when the monastery in 1501 purchased an estate in Kostivere with all its privileges from the nobleman Evert van Delwig and his wife (not named) for 440 Riga marks. The sale was made, as customary, at the court of the commander of Tallinn who also confirmed it in a separate letter. In the letter issued by Evert it seems that all details regarding the loan already had been worked out in beforehand with the abbess and the general confessor. The charter mentions that Evert had received the estate as an enfeoffment through his father-in-law, Evert Tödwen, who probably was related to the aforementioned Otto Tödwen. Both families von Delwig and Tödwen were vassal families holding a vast range of estates in Livonia as fiefs. According to the charter, the monastery paid 130 marks upon the sale of Kostivere and by the next midsummer it had to pay the remaining 100 marks, which implies that Evert had already received 210 marks already before the letter was drawn up.³⁷⁹ An explanation to Mariendal's purchase is possibly that the monastery the monastery for some reason wished to enlarge its landed property in Kostivere, as another part of it had been donate by Lady Elsebe von Putbus around eighty years earlier.³⁸⁰

³⁷⁷ LECUB I:7 286 (v TLA.230.1.BA 1:Ib, 96.); LECUB I:7 287 (TLA.230.1.BB 40:I, 60); LECUB I:7 539 (TLA.230.1.BB 40:I, 66).

³⁷⁸ TLA.230.1-I, 718.

³⁷⁹ SDHK 38978 & 38991.

³⁸⁰ SDHK 20219.

In 1474, Hans Lode von Kotz transferred the manor Seli (Ger. *Sellige*) to Mariendal. This document is a letter of transfer issued by the Commander of Tallinn and it does not further state the circumstances of the sale other than that the estates belonging to the village were transferred to the monastery. It mentioned that two Birgittine brothers, Rotger van Bache and Hans Wyneck, were present as representatives of Mariendal on the occasion when the letter was drawn up. In the letter, the price of the property was not mentioned, but a list of the property was included in the transfer: the estate (Ger. *Hof*) Seli with three farm labourers (Ger. *Gesinde*), a mill with two labourers, and the estate Sarvast with five labourers. The estate is mentioned having had a work force of ten labourers and was transferred in its entirety to the monastery with all privileges and landed property attached. The Birgittine sisters and brothers were declared free to use the property as they wished³⁸¹

The turn of events proved though otherwise as Hans Lode himself five years later, in 1479, stood in front of the court held by the Commander in Tallinn, claiming that Mariendal had mismanaged Seli and the fief that was attached to it. In the sentence issued by the Commander in Tallinn and his co-adjutors, they declared that Hans Lode had stepped in front of the jury claiming that the Birgittines had neglected the fief. In reference to the previous charter of 1474, the court declared that the complaint was not valid as the charter of transfer clearly stated that the Birgittines could run the estate as they found best. Furthermore, the legal jury had made inquiries from the Bishop of Tallinn (because the bishop performed visitations at the monastery), Simon van den Borch, and asked him if the Birgittines had neglected to attend to the fief. The Bishop confirmed though that he saw no irregularities in how the estate of Seli was run by the Birgittines. Therefore, the commander and his jury declared that the complaint by Hans Lode was invalid and that Mariendal could continue to run the estate. The case is a good example of how the interaction between Mariendal and the vassal not always went smoothly, and that the negotiations for some reason or another could be prolonged.³⁸²

Later, in 1537, Mariendal pledged the mill in Seli to the Tallinn Burgher Tönnis Vyant for 1 200 Riga marks.³⁸³ Ruth Rajamaa argues that this was the turning point in the monastery's economic actions. After this date, the monastery did not expand its landed possessions anymore when the reformatory ideas gained foothold, and Mariendal had increasing economic difficulties.³⁸⁴ The examples discussed here, give glimpses into the interaction between Mariendal and people in both the local community, both vassals and Tallinn burghers, but also with foreigners. A central place in these negotiations was Toompea castle of the Livonian commander in Tallinn. Here representatives of Mariendal met with the other parties in front of the representatives of the territorial lord, the Livonian Order, to make property transactions. Sometimes the letters states that the negotiations

³⁸¹ EAA.2069.2.145.

³⁸² EAA.2069.2.159.

³⁸³ ELB 1106.

³⁸⁴ Rajamaa 2018, 278–80.

were made with lay brothers who were sent to the Commander's castle to represent the monastery, but it also occurred that the negotiations are said to have taken place directly with the abbess and general confessor. As they did not leave their monastery, the letters issued by them were assumably written in Mariendal and sent with the lay brothers to Toompea where the negotiations took place. Alternatively, the details of agreement were made at the monastery and only the final part of the transactions were performed at the court of Toompea. The focus of the next section presents the case of the negotiation of the borthers of three villages between Mariendal and the Town Council of Tallinn.

Mariendal's relations to its neighbours

In the middle of the fifteenth century, an inquiry was drawn up in three versions: two by the Town Council of Tallinn and one by the abbess and the general confessor of Mariendal. The inquiry concerned the division of the pastures in the villages Vão, Lagedi and Vaskjala and was settled between Mariendal and the other landowners. The villages were located four to thirteen miles south of the monastery along the river that nowadays is called the Pirita river, which in the medieval sources is referred to as the "Hyrveschen beke". The dispute begun, however, already in the beginning of the 1420s concerning some fields in the village Vão. In the letter issued by the abbess and the general confessor in August 1423, they mention that both Mariendal's and the town's famers in the village had made them aware of a letter sealed by the town, which the farmers had heard being read to them. If the account was to be understood correctly, as the abbess and the general confessor expressed it in their letter, the Town claimed in its letter that it owned a field and a meadow in the village and described the border between the town's land and the land of the monastery. The farmers had explained to the heads of Mariendal that they twice had approached the council in this errand and now they wished for an answer clarifying it so that they in peace and in friendship could continue to cultivate the farmland.³⁸⁵

The three villages were located in the neighbouring parishes of the monastery. The possessions that Mariendal owned in the village Lagedi were acquired through the donations by Evert Wekebrod and Elsebe von Putbus, as well as through purchase from the Teutonic Order.³⁸⁶ How the other two villages Vão and Vaskjala, had come into Mariendal's possession remains unclear. In the 1450s, another legal affair was settled between the monastery and the other owners in the villages. This time, the dispute concerned some fields that the monastery had possessed in Lagedi after it had sold the rest of the village to the nobleman Herman Soye and his sons.³⁸⁷ Soye now questioned the monastery's continued use of parts of the land; therefore, a court decision was necessary to settle the dispute. In the letter issued by Commander Gerd Mellingrod in Tallinn, in March 1457, Herman Soye and his sons Claws, Jurgen, and Gerd, were declared

³⁸⁵ LECUB I:7 24 (TLA.230.1.B.k.4-I); Rajamaa 2018, 232.

³⁸⁶ LECUB I:10, 16.

³⁸⁷ He was the same Hermann Soye who had sold a field in the immediate vicinity of the village Vão on 27 December 1416. TLA.230.1-I, 543.

to have bought the monastery's possessions in Lagedi. However, Mariendal had kept four fields that were cultivated by the farmers in Lagedi. This and the other charter issued in the affair give unusually detailed descriptions on the disputed meadows. Three of these fields were located on the border to the village Vão on the right-hand side of the road when coming from the direction of the monastery and going towards Lagedi, and the fourth field was located on the left-hand side of the road. The reason why the two parties now stood in front of the legal court, was to settle the borders of the adjacent land to the Pirita River. The disputed pastures went all the way from the bridge ("der Hyrveschen brugge") that was located next to the town's land at the hill Laksberg and continued further along the river all the way to the sea ("der solte see"). In this land, Herman Soye and his sons owned two parts belonging to their estates in Lagedi and Vaskjala. Mariendal and its underlying farmers, in their turn, owned three parts to which they had full legal rights to run as they wished including all the underlying islands, lakes, meadows, fields and drover's roads. The Commander found that the Monastery's evidence of its right to use the land was valid, and hence he concluded by stating that the Soyes had to put down all their claims to the land by the Pirita river and the fishing right in the river also remained in Mariendal's possession.³⁸⁸

In 1458, the Town Council of Tallinn issued two letters containing a further inquiry in the land division in Lagedi between the owners. The letter is very detailed regarding the division of the villages between Mariendal, the town of Tallinn, Herman Soye and the farmers in Vão. Because of the dispute in the previous years, the parties now made an agreement on how the common land was to be used alternately: the first year the farmers from Vão would use the land, the second year those from Vaskjala, the third year the farmers of Herman Soye, and Mariendal's farmers the fourth year. The dispute was thus settled, and all the parties agreed to it. Moreover, the monastery was declared free to possess and use an island east of the monastery, upon which it now had built a fishing lodge, the island in question had belonged to the monastery "of old" and was to remain eternally in the monastery's possession.³⁸⁹

Finally, in order to keep the peace between the landowners in the future, stones had been placed out to mark out the border between the property of the monastery and the property of the town (to which the villagers in Vão apparently were pertaining): one large red stone where the mark of the town was carved, and another large stone with the monastery's sign: a cross within a circle.³⁹⁰ One final letter in the matter was issued by Abbess Konegund and General Confessor Arnold on 7 September 1461, where they repeat the terms of the negotiations and confirm the division of the land. They did as well refer to the dispute with Herman Soye and mentioned that it had been "settled in good manners" so that the monastery could continue to use the island east of the monastery upon which

³⁸⁸ SDHK 26818.

³⁸⁹ SDHK 27116.

³⁹⁰ SDHK 27116, 27303.

it had built a fishing lodge and a bathing facility (Ger. *Badstube*) and continue to use the fields at the river.³⁹¹

To the farmer population living on the land and cultivating it on behalf of the landowners, it did probably not make any considerable difference whether their landlord was the monastery or a layperson, a vassal family, or a monastery regarding the practicalities in the running of the estates. However, the borders of the monastic estates and those of its neighbours also marked a physical presence of the monastery in the landscape. The signs were marking the division of the land, and just as the medieval town was full of signs that served informative, mnemonic, and symbolic functions to the town dwellers, a parallel can be drawn to the signs of the landowners that marked the borders of their landed property. These markers were erected to remind everyone of the borders between the estates, give information on who the owners were, and they were symbolic in the sense that they used pictures to present the landowner. In Mariendal, its border stones were marked with a cross within a circle that was fetched directly from the Birgittine iconography. In this manner, Mariendal's visual presence was also manifested in the landscape on the landed estates that it owned.³⁹²

The division of land gives a rare glimpse into the practicalities of Mariendal's property management and how the monastery interacted with the other landowners. The use of the common land, the creation of new meadows, and the construction of a mill was a collaboration between the monastery and the town's farmers in Våo. Moreover, the land was partitioned and marked out to clarify which pastures pertained to which owner.³⁹³

A phrase repeated in the letters is that the involved parties wished that they could continue to cultivate and administer the land in peace and friendship. A final letter in the matter of the common drover's road along the Lagedi hill until the sea was issued by the abbess in 1472, but only survives as a seventeenth century transcript. In this letter, Abbess Konegund begins by addressing the councillors in Tallinn as "our honourable and good friends" and then continued to refer to the settlement with Herman Soye and the dispute that was settled fourteen years earlier concerning the fields in Våo. Now, she continues, the council had declared that it wished to use the drover's rode that went along the Lagedi hill all the way to the sea by itself even though it previously was agreed that this would be use as common land between the monastery and the town's farmers. As a compensation, the council, in "goodwill and friendship", had given a house adjacent to the Dominican convent inside the town, which the Birgittines in the future were free to run and use as they wished according to the town's jurisdiction. Abbess Konegund accepted and returned this favour by declaring that the monastery gave the council full right to possess the entire drover's road.³⁹⁴

³⁹¹ TLA.230.1-I, 691.

³⁹² Camille 2000, 1-36.

³⁹³ The settlement was also later on referred to in a contract that the monastery made with Evert Wekebrod in 1471. SDHK 29273.

³⁹⁴ LECUB I:13 69.

The relations between the monastery and its neighbours were occasionally characterized by disputes regarding the borders between the pastures. All the involved parties wished to settle the disputes peacefully and negotiate solutions that suited everyone. One such solution was to draw up terms for the use of the common land, which mainly consisted of meadows and drover's roads. In cases where such dealings clearly were settled in the favour of Mariendal, the monastery could, as a token of appreciation, offer the other party to be included in the Birgittine prayers. For instance, in September 1497, when Mariendal made an agreement with the nobleman Karsten von Rosen regarding the forest and wilderness (*wyltnysse*) located in *Hapenisse*. In exchange, the monastery could freely possess and use this land according to the terms and borders that were drawn up in the settlement with von Rosen, and Mariendal promised to include him, his brother Jurgen and their parents into its prayers.³⁹⁵

The overall picture transmitted through the remaining letters of agreement between Mariendal, and the other landowners shows that the rural landscape was dynamic and that the question of the borders was a continuous negotiation of space where fields, meadows and other types of pastures were sold, bought, donated, disputed, reclaimed, exchanged, confirmed, and granted.

Conclusions: Mariendal a dynamic actor locally and regionally

Mariendal's location was the prerequisite for the monastery's interaction with the town of Tallinn, its benefactors, and its neighbours. The location near Tallinn but outside the jurisdiction of the town was both an advantage and a disadvantage to Mariendal as it initially posed problems to the new monastery when the Town Council resisted the foundation. However, the location came to characterize the role of the monastery in local society. The fragmentary picture of Mariendal's activities rendered in the remaining sources is a monastery that operated in the society also in other ways than taking care of the spiritual needs and housing unmarried daughters and elderly. Mariendal had continuous communication with its neighbours and the pertaining farmer households. The relations to the vassals in northern Estonia can be described as dynamic as the Birgittines were offering them the traditional spiritual services and in return, the monastery received donations from its benefactors. As a token of appreciation, Mariendal included them in its spiritual confraternity. However, due to the wealth that the monastery accumulated, it could act as creditor in cases where laypersons pledged a landed estate as a security for the sum that they loaned from Mariendal.

Mariendal was an important foothold of the Birgittine Order in Livonia and was established relatively soon after Vadstena. Arguably, its foundation contributed to the spreading of the cult of Birgitta in the region and further to other Hansa towns. The timing of the foundation was though the main reason why the council of Tallinn resisted the foundation due to the fears that the monastery

³⁹⁵ SDHK 33525; LECUB II:1 594.

would enable Scandinavian attempts of re-annexation of northern Estonia. In time, however, as this threat waned, the concerns of the council of Tallinn towards the Birgittine monastery were also reduced. The location of the monastery near the town also implied that it potentially could function as an appropriate space for negotiations that the council held with other political actors. The location also meant that persons visiting the town could be accommodated in Mariendal. Finally, Mariendal's position between the town and country gave it an important function, both religiously and socially.

An element in Mariendal's relations to the local authorities was its connections to the Teutonic Order. Initially the order was a strong supporter of the monastery's foundation and probably one of its initiators. When the council of Tallinn resisted the foundation, the heads of the Teutonic Order persisted that the monastery would stay on the original location, which it had chosen. After the foundation, the relations between Mariendal and the Teutonic order mainly concerned the landed estates of the monastery. The Livonian Masters granted the Birgittines privileges to their estates and their local representatives in Tallinn decided in legal matters and negotiations that concerned the monastery's landed property. Mariendal's representatives were regularly sent to the court of the Commander of Tallinn attending matters concerning the monastery's landed property. The actors behind the foundation of Mariendal came to have much influence on the initial stage of the monastery, but the resistance of the Town Council seems not to have affected the monastery's popularity among the citizens in the end. The main supporters of Mariendal are to be found among the local nobility who donated estates in northern Estonia in the counties of Harjumaa and Virumaa to the monastery. The Birgittine landscape in Estonia was accordingly concentrated there.

Mariendal is an excellent example of how the local circumstances set the frame to how a newly founded Birgittine monastery adapted to the local circumstances without deviating from the prescriptions of the Birgittine lifestyle. Mariendal can be termed as a monastery between town and country, as both rural and urban elements were strong in its activities. The confraternity of the monastery also connected it to other religious institutions such as the Cistercians in Riga, and to benefactors around the Baltic Sea region. The location near a Hansa town was most likely the reason why Mariendal and not Vadstena supervised the foundation of Marienwohld near Lübeck, which led further to the foundation of a branch of Birgittine monasteries in the Hansa network.

4 Marienkrone: an urban monastery outside the town gates

After the birth of the lord in the year 1421 on the first Sunday before the day of Saint Mary Magdalene [20 July], then the monastery of Saint Birgitta, which is located near Stralsund, was bequeathed and begun with the sisters and brothers when they on that same day entered the monastery and let themselves be enclosed according to their rule.³⁹⁶

The excerpt above tells the story of the day when Marienkrone was begun and contains the curious detail that sisters and brothers already on that day let themselves become enclosed in their convents. August 1421 is generally considered as the date of Marienkrone's foundation, but according to the chronicle, the decision of founding and planning the Birgittine monastery must have started already earlier with the construction of some sort of convent buildings on the spot that enabled the communal living in the two convents. The foundation of a Birgittine monastery, or any monastery for that matter, did not begin with the sisters and brothers moving into their convents but was preceded by negotiations and planning. When the founders had decided on which order they would choose for their new monastery, they would take contact with representatives of this order and begin negotiations and preparations regarding the construction of the convent buildings and, most importantly, the church of the monastery. At this stage, the recruitment of new members who were willing to join the monastic community was begun. Thereafter, some persons from a monastery that functioned motherhouse would be sent to supervise and instruct the new members in the communal living. In the case of Marienkrone, the monastery Marienwohlde in Mölln near Lübeck came to serve as its motherhouse.³⁹⁷

Marienkrone near Stralsund is not to be confused with its namesake, the Carthusian monastery Marienkrone near Rügenwalde (Pol. Darłowo), which was founded twenty-seven years earlier in 1394 by Duchess Adelheid of Pomerania-Stolp (1410–c. 1445).³⁹⁸ In contrast to the Carthusian monastery, Marienkrone was almost entirely an urban project initiated by the members of the Town Council of Stralsund.³⁹⁹ The monastery was located only 200 meters outside the Kütergate, to the west of the town, on the other side of the Knieperteich pond. Marienkrone did accordingly evolve a more distinct urban character than many other Birgittine monasteries in the Baltic Sea region: Only Marienbrunn

³⁹⁶ "Na gades bort 1421 jar des ersten sondages vor sunte Marien Magdalenen daghe do wart sunte Byrgitten kloster, dat vor dem Stralessunde lycht, ersten bwedemet unde beghunt myt den susteren unde broderen, wente se toghen uppe den sulven dach in dat kloster unde leten besluten nach der reghelen." Baier (ed.) 1893, 22.

³⁹⁷ Baier 1893; For the history of Marienwohlde, see Dormeier 2019, 215–52.

³⁹⁸ Hoogeweg 1925, 369–89; Heyden 1957, 135.

³⁹⁹ Nyberg 1965, 99–112.

(founded 1398) in Gdańsk was also located in the immediate vicinity of a larger town.⁴⁰⁰

From the sources, it becomes clear that Marienkrone had a symbiotic relationship with the town and its inhabitants. Assumably, most of the sisters and brothers who entered the monastery were daughters and sons of the burgher families. The town was accordingly the primary basis for the monastery's recruitment of new members. Furthermore, Marienkrone became rapidly part of the religious culture in Stralsund and is from early on mentioned among the most significant religious institutions that were often bequeathed in the wills and donations of the citizens. The Town Council was also often representing Marienkrone at property transactions and it exercised some insight into the monastery's economy as it, in accordance with the foundation letter, had the right to appoint Marienkrone's lay foreseers (see below).⁴⁰¹

In the fifteenth century, Stralsund was a wealthy and autonomous town in the Duchy of Pomerania, and it had active trading connections to other Hansa towns all over the Baltic Sea region. Ecclesiastically, the town belonged to the archdiocese of Tribsee which was part of the Schwerin Diocese. The adjacent island of Rügen, however, belonged to the diocese of Roskilde and the church province of Lund. From time to time, Stralsund became involved in conflicts between the dukes of Pomerania and the Hanseatic League, resulting in embargos against the town and the Hansa. Added to this, the foundation of the so-called Kalmar Union in 1397 between the kingdoms of Denmark, Sweden and Norway made an important ally to the northern German duchies against the towns of the Hansa league. Especially with the coronation of King Erik (regent 1397–1439), who himself was son to Duke Wratislaw VII of Pomerania-Stolp. The strategic location of Stralsund in the middle of the southern Baltic Sea region made the town an important meeting place between the political actors.⁴⁰²

No monasteries for women were founded within or near Stralsund, apart from some beguine communities, where the daughters of the burgher families in Stralsund could be housed to take up a religious life. In other words, the foundation of Marienkrone filled a vacuum regarding the possibility for the daughters of the urban elite to enter a religious way of life that was more approved of by the church than the beguine houses.⁴⁰³ Monasticism had reached Pomerania in the twelfth century with the settlement of the Cistercians and Benedictines, and the female monasteries that were founded within these orders were often connected to the nobility and the ducal families of the region.⁴⁰⁴ Several daughters of the dukes had entered these monasteries to become prioresses or abbesses.⁴⁰⁵

⁴⁰⁰ The story of Marienbrunn is though much different from Marienkrone in the sense that this foundation was strongly influenced by the Grand Master of the Teutonic Order, and furthermore was founded around a convent of penitent women (former prostitutes). Nyberg 1991b, 161–225.

⁴⁰¹ Lusiardi 2000; Schildhauer 1992; Rauer 1974.

⁴⁰² Nyberg 1965, 99.

⁴⁰³ More & Mulder-Bakker 2020, 1057–73.

⁴⁰⁴ Jamroziak 2011, 47–112.

⁴⁰⁵ Heyden 1957, 116–17.

Thus, as Tore Nyberg has stated, instead of meeting the spiritual needs of the nobility, a Birgittine monastery near Stralsund served the urban elite, which grew increasingly powerful in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.⁴⁰⁶ The late Middle Ages also saw a growth of the lay piety and the Birgittine spirituality focusing on the Virgin Mary and the suffering Christ did-well correspond to the preferences of the urban lay founders.

The sacral topography of Stralsund was dominated by the three parish churches of Saint Nicholas, Saint Mary, and Saint James. Added to these, the Dominicans and Franciscans were also represented in the town: the Dominican convent of Saint Catherine was located near the Küter-gate, in the western part of the town,⁴⁰⁷ while the Franciscan Saint John's convent⁴⁰⁸ was located in the northern part near the Knieper-gate and the harbour. In addition to the mendicants, the town also had some additional religious institutions: beguine houses and two hospitals.⁴⁰⁹

Marienkrone's foundation by the Town Council

Stralsund's medieval copy books contains several copies of letters from the foundation of Marienkrone. Even though a foundation charter has not been preserved, the foundation is described both in the *Liber memorialis* and in the chronicles of the town.⁴¹⁰ The chronicler Johann Berckman, in his history of Stralsund from the middle of the sixteenth century, gave the following description of Marienkrone's foundation:

Year 1421 the Birgittine monastery, choir and roofs were come together and first begun as the first maidens came there. Then those who were burgomasters at that time gave the place where they lived, where they still are established, as large and wide. Then the names of the aldermen were Simon von Orden, Nicolaus Lippe, Hinrich Blome and Curdt Morder. In the year 38 it was finished, as is written in front of the church, and in 1445 the first maidens were crowned and the monks ordained. There was a large tent in the yard of the church, where the bishop dressed the maidens and consecrated the priests and then there was a large dinner, where our prince and entire Town Council feasted. Since that time no one could go to them, instead they could go in secret through the tunnels. God forgive all sins! ⁴¹¹

⁴⁰⁶ Nyberg 1965, 109.

⁴⁰⁷ Its buildings are still extant and are now housing the historical museum as well as the maritime museums of Stralsund.

⁴⁰⁸ Some of its buildings are also well preserved and are now housing the City Archives.

⁴⁰⁹ Ewe 1995, 42–93.

⁴¹⁰ Many documents most likely perished in the Town Hall fire in 1680.

⁴¹¹ "Anno 1421 wurtt Birgitten kloster, chor vnnd bone thokamende erstenn begrepen, dat de jungfruwenn ersten quemen. Do geuen de borgermeisters, de dar werenn, de sted, dar se up buwedenn, als sie noch begrepenn iss, so groth vnnd with. So hete de oldeste borgermeister Simon von Orden, her Nicolaus Lippe, her Hinrich Blome unnd her Kurdt Morder. Im 38. jar wurdt idt rede, wo vor der kerckenn geschreuen steitt, vnnd anno 1445 wordenn jungfrowenn gekronet vnnd de monke gewyett. Dar wartt ein gross pallatz auf dem karchhoue,

According to Berckman's account, the monastery's inauguration was a festive occasion with the Duke of Pomerania attending the event. However, Berckman's reformist suspicion towards the Birgittine two-convent ideal also shines through in the chronicle, which was a suspicion that the critics of the Birgittines had raised already from the early history of the order. The sceptics towards the Birgittine model opposed the concept of including a female and a male convent in the same monastery. The critics feared that, despite the careful instruction in the *Regula Salvatoris* of how to keep the convents strictly separated, that the inhabitants would still find ways to visit each other. Berckman expressed his suspicion through his remark on presumed secret tunnels to the convents and the outburst: "God forgive all sins!". According to the Birgittine rule, the priest brothers were only allowed to enter the female convent to give anointing of the sick and to retrieve a deceased sister for her burial. Otherwise, they never met in person. The confessions were heard through a niche in the wall between the convents, through a grated window so that the confessor and the sister giving her confession could hear, but not see each other. During the church services, the sisters had their own entrance into the church, and they followed the service from an elevated balcony through which they were accordingly separated from the brothers.⁴¹²

Johann Berckmann's critic thus followed an established tradition, which was reinforced after the reformation. The rumours of Birgittine sisters and brothers visiting each other also exists in stories concerning both Vadstena and Nådendal. In 1652, the student Petrus Johannes Gyllenius from Turku wrote about his visit to the ruins of Nådendal. In his diary, where he described the visit, he claimed that the skulls of two hundred infants had been found under a torn down monastery building. This reference insinuated the moral downfall of the monastery and that forbidden liaisons between the sisters and brothers had taken place. The story has since the seventeenth century remained in the folklore about Nådendal but has been dismissed by researchers already in the nineteenth century. However, blatant oversteps over the strict separation of the convents did sometimes occur. In one petition from the year 1472 at the papal penitentiary the priest brother Johannes Philippi in Nådendal petitioned for absolution for his sins because he had incurred excommunication. His sin was that he, after being elected general confessor by the two convents, had entered the female convent on several occasions and practised sexual intercourse with two of the sisters who moreover also were related in the third degree of affinity, making the sin even graver. This case indicates that lapses occurred in the obedience to the strict separation of the convents, but one cannot assume that they occurred at such a scale that the reformist critics would have it.⁴¹³

dar kledede de bisschop de meide, vnnd wiede de prester, vnnd dedenn eine grote koste; dar werenn vnse forstenn vnnd gantze rhatt, de dar ethen. Sodder der tidt muste nemant tho en ingan, sonder se muchtenn ehm heimlikenn dorch de rullen laten. Gott vergeue alle sunde!" Mohnike & Zober (eds) 1833, 93.

⁴¹² *Regula Salvatoris* ch. 17 & 25. Mohnike & Zober (eds), 1893, p. 93.

⁴¹³ Ahl-Waris 2010, 60 & 93; Gejrot et al. (eds) 2008, nr. 180.

What can be concluded from Berckman's chronicle, written in the mid-fifteenth century, is that the project of founding a female monastery in Stralsund was of such an importance that it still a century later received attention by the chroniclers. Berckman was not the only chronicler who showed an interest for the monastery. Both the Pomeranian chronicler Thomas Kantzow († 1542) and the Stralsund burgomaster Bartholomäus Sastrow († 1603) mentioned the foundation of the monastery in their chronicles.⁴¹⁴

The foundation of a Birgittine monastery in Stralsund was initiated in 1421 by the Town Council. The preparations for a nunnery in Stralsund had begun already around the year 1417, which becomes evident through three entries regarding the preparations in the town book. The councillors in Stralsund were noted to on 16 March 1417 to have bought a garden from the Burgomaster Hinrik Rubenow in Greifswald. This garden was located outside the Küter-gate in Stralsund, near the chapel of Saint Mary Magdalene. All the pre-existing buildings and other structures on the site were included in the purchase. While the following entry of the town book, states that the burgomaster Simon van Orden, in his turn, bought the same estate from the magistrates of Stralsund. Four years later, on Saturday 8 March 1421, according to the third entry in the town book, he donated it for the foundation of the Birgittine monastery and for the sake his and his parents' souls.⁴¹⁵

The donation of the garden by Simon van Orden was the beginning of a monastery but, as a matter of fact, the initial plans were set on founding a nunnery of another order. In 1417, when the garden was bought from Henrik Rubenow, the Town Council intended to found a nunnery of the Order of Saint Clare. These plans are revealed in a petition at the papal curia on 14 January 1419, when the archdean of Tribsee, Gerard Wulff, acted as spokesman of the Town Council in Stralsund. On behalf of the Town Council, he then asked for papal permission to found a nunnery dedicated to Saint Clare at the chapel of Mary Magdalene. The pontiff gave the nunnery permit to construct and erect all necessary convent

⁴¹⁴ Gaebel (ed) 1897–8; Mohnike (ed) 1823.

⁴¹⁵ "Anno domini Quadringentesimo decimo septimo. Feria tertia post dominicam in qua cantatur in ecclesia dei oculi proconsules et consules opidi Sundensis emerunt a hinrici Rubenowen proconsule opidi gripeswold ortum situm extra kuterdor prope capellam seu ecclesiam beate Marie Magdalene qui quondam pertinuit Arnolde de Zoest cum domo et aliis structuris in eodem orto existentibus et omnibus aliis suis attinenciis. ¶ Dominus Symon de Orden proconsul Sundensis emit a dictis dominis proconsules et consules Sundensis predictum ortum supra descriptum situm extra kuterdor prope Capellam seu ecclesiam beate Marie Magdalene qui quondam pertinuit domino Arnolde de Zoest cum domo et aliis structuris in eodem orto existentibus et omnibus aliis suis attinentiis. ¶ Anno domini millesimo quadringentesimo vicesimo primo sabbato post dominicadominicam in qua cantatur in ecclesia dei letare prefatus dominus Symon de Orden ob salutem animarum progenitorum suorum representantibus et successorum suorum in honorem omnipotentis dei et beate Brigitte dedit resignavit donavit et dimisit prefatum ortum supra descriptum situm extra Kuterdor prope capellam seu ecclesiam sancte Marie Magdalene qui quondam pertinuit domino Arnolde de Zoest cum domo et aliis structuris in eodem orto existentibus et omnibus aliis suis attinentibus pro instauracione seu fundacione et erectione monasteri de ordine sancte Brigitte predicte." StaS, HS 0004, Stadtbuch IV, f. 33 v.

buildings for maintaining communal life according to the Order of Saint Clare.⁴¹⁶ The new monastic commenced receiving donations immediately. Already in 1418, a woman named Reymborg made a donation and assigned a man named Conrad Bischof and his heirs to, on her behalf, pay fifty marks during the two subsequent years for the construction of the new monastery at the Chapel of Mary Magdalene.⁴¹⁷ Reymborg's bequest does however not reveal what kind of monastery that then was planned at the chapel of Mary Magdalene.

The foundation of a Franciscan nunnery is only addressed in Gerard Wulff's petition where the Town Council was mentioned having made all the necessary preparations for it. Interestingly enough, in his petition Gerard further described that the Town Council wished to construct the new monastery for both sisters and brothers with all the privileges and indulgences that Pope Boniface VIII had granted the order. Tore Nyberg interpreted this phrase as intending a female minor convent with a pertaining convent of male confessors.⁴¹⁸ However, at some point soon after Gerard had procured the papal permission to found a Clarisse nunnery, the plans must have changed for the Birgittines instead. One possible reason for the change of plans was that the structure of a Birgittine monastery was favourable and suited the plans of the project as they were described in the petition. A Birgittine monastery would automatically have one convent for women and an adjoining convent for priest brothers. The foundation of Marienkrone as a Birgittine monastery was accordingly most likely a result of the structure of the monasteries of the Order of the Holy Saviour, which appealed to the preferences of the founders in Stralsund and their plans for their monastery.

Accordingly, the Town Council's original plan was to found a nunnery of the Order of Saint Clare and the planning of this monastery begun in 1417, but somewhat later the plan changed into the foundation of a Birgittine monastery. The planning of Marienkrone should accordingly have begun at the earliest in spring

⁴¹⁶ Item pater beatissime cum in civitate et dioc. Zwerinen. et in partibus vicinis per plures dietas solum unicum sit monasterium ordinis sancte Clare et moniales dicti ordinis pre aliis sub arciori et attentiori perpetua clausura conserventur devoti vestri proconsules et consules opidi Sunden. Zwerinen. dioc. zelo devotionis attensi cupientes terrena in celestia et transitoria in eterna felici commercio commutare et bonis a deo sibi collatis pro suarum animarum salute et propagacione dicti ordinis sancte Clare ad quem specialem gerunt devotionis affectum, Capellam beate Marie Magdalene extra muros Sunden sub parrochiali ecclesia Voghe-dehagen sitam de consensu rectoris ipsius ecclesie et archidiaconi Tribucen ordinarii immediati in monasterium sive domum sancte Clare cum ecclesia claustro campanili campana domibus ortis ortaliciis et aliis necessariis officinis erigere ipsumque fundare et construere proponant." AAV, Reg. Suppl. 120, fols 70v-71r.

⁴¹⁷ "Et vltra hoc dictus Dnus. (Dominus) Conradus vel fui sui heredes debent et tenentur post mortem ipsius Dne. (Domine) Reymborgis dare et erogare pro salute anime ipsius quinquaginta marcas denariorum ad structuram noui Monasterii Monialium in Capella sancte Marie Magdalene extra muros sundenses erigendi in duobus annis post mortem." Dinnies 1783, 149. Tore Nyberg and Norbert Rauer have identified Conrad as the Bishop of Schwerin, but the problem is that no Conrad was Bishop of Schwerin at this time. Conrad Bischof was though a member of the Town Council in Stralsund and is often mentioned in the *Liber Memorialis* at this time period. Thus, he is probably the person who Reymborg referred to in her donation. LM II nr. 23. 162, 172, 173, 197, 199, 204, 211, 221, 223, 286, 287, 292, 355, 441, 460, 461, 467, 559, 643, 643, 669, 692; Nyberg 1965, 100; Hoogeweg 1925, 734.

⁴¹⁸ StAS, HS 0004, Stadtbuch IV, fol. 33v; Dinnies, 1783, 149.

1418. The Town Council must then have taken contact with the monastery Marienwohlde, which functioned as motherhouse of Marienkrone, and initiated the negotiations regarding the foundation. The situation in Stralsund is not unique regarding the changed plans in favour of the Birgittines. This happened also at other locations, such as in Nådendal that originally intended to be a Dominican nunnery.⁴¹⁹ At Mariager in Denmark, the Birgittines took over a waning Benedictine monastery and allocated the estates that formerly belonged to the Benedictines to the Birgittines. At Munkaliv in Bergen, Norway, the Birgittines took over another Benedictine monastery, which also led a diminishing existence. In the Rhineland, the Birgittines took over the former Augustinian nunnery Kottenforst (renamed Marienforst) and in Landshut in Bavaria the Benedictine nunnery Altomünster was converted into a Birgittine monastery. Thus, old monasteries were sometimes converted into Birgittine foundations or the foundation plans were altered in favour of the Birgittine Order.⁴²⁰

Regarding the further preparations of Marienkrone, the *Liber Memorialis* of Stralsund contain four entries, all dated around Pentecost 1421. The first entry was issued by the magistrates of Stralsund and is dated on 12 March. The preparations were apparently then so advanced that the chapel of Mary Magdalene with the adjoining buildings and graveyard were handed over to the Birgittines. The councillors declared that they had transferred the Chapel of Mary Magdalene to the representatives of Marienwohlde so that they could start the initial work on the monastery. According to the letter, the Birgittines were prohibited from accepting new members, extending its buildings, or cultivating the land without consulting the Town Council or its forseers who were appointed by the Town Council. This means that the Town Council kept control over the management of the estates and insight into the economical affairs of the monastery.⁴²¹

The second entry, which also was dated on 12 March, was issued by the vicar Johannes van der Heyden in Voigdehagen, which was the parish that the chapel of Mary Magdalene belonged to. He confirmed the council's transfer of the chapel to the Birgittines conditioned that the monastery would compensate him with three marks at Easter each year for the revenues from the chapel.⁴²²

The third letter, dated on 6 April, was issued by the Dukes Wratislaw IX of Pomerania-Wolgast (c. 1400–57) and Barnim VII of Pomerania-Wolgast (1403/05–51). They declared that they, as patrons of the churches in their duchy, approved of the construction of a Birgittine monastery outside the town walls of Stralsund in order to promote the holy service in the area.⁴²³ The ducal approval was necessary as the foundation actually was against a decree issued by Prince Jaromar II (c. 1218–60) on Rügen in 1291, in which he declared that no new monasteries would be founded in or outside Stralsund. The role of the dukes in the foundation was probably not merely a question of formality, but also

⁴¹⁹ See the chapter on the foundation of Nådendal.

⁴²⁰ Gunnes 1991, 221–30; Jørgensen 1991, 231–79; Nyberg 1965, 128–135.

⁴²¹ LM II nr. 559.

⁴²² “videlicet quod idem monasterium dabit et exsolvet mihi 3 marchas redditos sundensis Monete annuatim super festa Pasce exponendos” LM II nr. 560.

⁴²³ LM II nr. 561.

a step in creating better bonds with the town of Stralsund after the preceding conflict between King Erik of the Nordic kingdoms, with whom the Pomeranian dukes were allied against the Hansa towns.⁴²⁴ In giving their approval of the monastery, the dukes of Pomerania were also participating in the foundation and they were included in the circle of benefactors of the monastery. Accordingly, they also requested to be included in the prayers of the Birgittines.⁴²⁵

The fourth letter, which is also dated on 12 March, was issued by Abbess Mechtild von Bremen, Prioress Cecilia, and General Confessor Johannes Rosenhagen from Marienwohlde. They had travelled to Stralsund in order to begin and supervise the construction of the monastery. In the letter, they confirmed the conditions set by the council regarding that Marienkrone would not buy or sell property without the consent of the council nor the monastery's foreseers. They further stated in the letter that the Birgittine sisters and brothers in the monastery at the Mary Magdalene Chapel especially would pray for the inhabitants in the duchy and the town.⁴²⁶

A further motive to the Town Council of Stralsund to found a monastery of the Birgittine Order was probably the possibility of the Council to supervise the economy of the monastery as the Birgittines were put under the observance of the diocese and the secular church and the *Regula Salvatoris* prescribed that the abbess could appoint trusted laymen to help with the economy. In other Hansa towns such as Lübeck, but also in Stralsund, the parish churches had one or two *provisores* (foreseers) who often were members of the Town Council or were connected to the corporations of the town. The foreseers were in charge of the book-keeping and saw to that the churches were provided with enough wine, Eucharist wafers, candles, etc. for the liturgical service. The testamentary foundations of votive masses and vigils were also controlled by the foreseers, not by the vicars. Thus, the lay community obtained insight into the economy and the administration of the donated assets.⁴²⁷ It seems to be in line with this practice when the Town Council of Stralsund preserved the right to have insight into Marienkrone's economy by keeping the right to appoint the monastery's foreseers. The Town Council claimed the right to appoint foreseers of the monastery, at least during the foundation phase. If they kept their control over the monastery's economy also after the inauguration in 1445 remains uncertain.⁴²⁸

⁴²⁴ Especially Stralsund was affected by the conflict, which was settled on 3 January 1421 in the so-called Quatembergreichte (during the ember days) between the burghers, nobility, and the dukes. Nyberg 1965, 104–5.

⁴²⁵ PUB V: 3244. See further Möller 2014, 323.

⁴²⁶ "Nec eiam debemus aliquas terras, spacia, loca, possessions aut alia bona nobis comparare necque debemus quamcumque curiam, agriculture dictam bwhoff habere vel colere et coli facere civitati predictae prope vel longe nec edificia nostra ampliare seu plurificare nisi hec omnia fiant de prefatorum proconsulum et consulum et procuratorum scitu, beneplacito et voluntate." LM II 562. A seventeenth century copy of this letter is kept in the State Archive of Szczecin in a folder containing other errands concerning Marienkrone and the post-reformation Saint Annen & Birgittenkloster. AKW Tit. Sign 1772, Fol. 22r–25r.

⁴²⁷ Reitemeier 2009, 59–88.

⁴²⁸ LM II:559.

The first procurators were the burghers Simon von Orden, Jacob von Hiddingen, and Nicolas Krakow. The three men acted in 1423 as intermediaries between Marienkrone and some persons regarding a field near the monastery.⁴²⁹ Consequently, if the Town Council only would supervise the economy during the phase of construction or indefinitely is not specified, but since Stralsund burghers were acting on behalf of the monastery also at later occasions, for example when the burgher Mathias von der Lippe bought the village Seelwitz on behalf of the monastery in 1450, it seems like the council kept some insight into Marienkrone's economy.⁴³⁰ Additionally, the foreseers seems having been persons who otherwise had close connections to the monastery as its benefactors. At least two of the first procurators, Simon and Jacob endowed the monastery with costly bequests in their wills.

Another explanation of the foundation of the Birgittine monastery was the novelty of the Birgittine Order and its modern ideals. The merchant elites of the time were well aware of the latest fashions in the spiritual life of the fifteenth century. The growth in wealth of the Hansa towns also meant an increasing contrast between the wealthy burgher elites and the Christian ideals of leading a humble life in refrain from earthly riches. This led to a larger demand of spiritual guidance and of leading a life in the understanding of God. Devotional literature, such as Thomas à Kempis *De imitatione Christi* from 1418, and exercises for individual devotion were widely distributed in the merchant towns of northern Europe.⁴³¹ The fourteenth and fifteenth centuries also saw an upsurge in large-scale ecclesiastical building projects in the Hansa towns, which was a result of the combination of increasing wealth and extended individual piety as the *devotio moderna* gained influence. The new religiosity was manifested in the churches and monasteries through the foundations of altars, chantries, and memorial masses by families, corporations, and the councils. In due time this also led to a need for reconstruction and refurbishment of the churches. The religious space functioned as well as a channel of representing wealth and political influence as in the case of the monumental building projects of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries in Stralsund at the parish churches Saint Nicholas, led by the Town Council, and at Saint Mary, which was initiated by the rivalling corporation of the *Gewandschneiderkompanie* (The Cloth Merchant Company). These large-scale constructions were seen as a main task of the urban leaders to maintain and promote the religious life in the town, a task that formerly belonged to the territorial lords but was overtaken by the urban councils and corporations in the late Middle Ages.⁴³²

The foundation of Marienkrone can thus be regarded as in line with this new urban piety and in line with the ambitions of the Town Council and the urban families. The monastery was in this manner also part of the spiritual economy of the town. Accordingly, both religious and economic motives were behind the

⁴²⁹ StAS, Stadtbuch IV, f. 42r. See also a document that is referred to by Dinnies 1783, 153 & 160.

⁴³⁰ StAS, UMarienkrone nr. 64 & 65.

⁴³¹ Bärsch 2014, 21–48.

⁴³² Hillebrand 2018, 53–83; Bainbridge 1997, 56–57.

choice of the Birgittine Order. The monastery, located just outside the town gates, can be regarded as an extension and manifestation of the urban representativity as well as a pious undertaking. Merchant towns around the Baltic Sea and across Europe were important links in the spreading of the cult of new saints such as Birgitta.⁴³³ The transmission of Saint Birgitta's cult spread across the continent through the trading routes and even if the Birgittines had influential supporters among the church dignitaries and regents, the merchants around the Baltic Sea also played an important role in the transmission of the Birgittine ideas. Especially as the Birgittines first were rapidly founded in the Hansa towns and in regions within the Holy Roman Empire in the early fifteenth century. The Birgittine order also became established in the Low-Countries later, in the middle of the fifteenth century, via the Birgittines in the Hansa towns. The popularity of the Birgittines on these locations is thus to be found in the contemporary spiritual needs.⁴³⁴

The foundation of the monastery happened thus rather quickly. According to the above quoted excerpt from the *Chronicle B*, the first nuns and brothers settled in already in 1421. This chronicle also gives some further notes on the construction of the monastery. The Chapel of Mary Magdalene provided an initial space to perform the religious duties. The temporary church was though twenty-five years later replaced when the construction work of the new church was begun.⁴³⁵ According to the chronicle, more or less constant construction work was made at the monastery. The new church stood finished in 1470 and was then inaugurated by the bishop of Schwerin. Four years later, in 1474, the gable of the church was finished. Because no structures of the monastery are visible above ground, no records of the architecture of the church have been preserved. Assumably though, it resembled the other Birgittine churches in Vadstena, Mariendal, Maribo, Nådendal.⁴³⁶

The Birgittine sisters and brothers in Stralsund

At the general chapter of the Birgittine Order in Gnadenberg in 1487, the reported number of inhabitants at Marienkrone were fifty-four sisters, eight priests, four deans, and eight lay brothers. Thus, the number of sisters was not complete according to the sixty-two-member ideal prescribed in the *Regula Salvatoris*, but the number was nonetheless high and other female convents of the

⁴³³ Dormeier 2009, 32.

⁴³⁴ Nyberg 1965, 134.

⁴³⁵ "Anno dni 1446 jar do wart de nyge kerke to sunte Birgitten erst upghelecht unde begrepen" in Baier (ed) 1893, 22.

⁴³⁶ Baier 1898, 37, 41 & 43. The cellars of the monastery and wall fragments were found in 1929 when apartment buildings were constructed on the site, but already in 1900 articles were included in the local newspaper giving accounts of human bones and skull fragments that were found in the area where the monastery was located. 'Lokales und Provinzielles', *Stralsundische Zeitung* nr. 94, 24.4.1900; 'Lokales und Provinzielles', *Stralsundische Zeitung* nr. 123, 28.5.1903; 'Vom alten Stralsund', *Stralsundische Zeitung* nr. 44 21.2.1929; 'Vom alten Kloster Mariakron', *Stralsundische Zeitung* nr. 49 27.2.1929.

order were not complete either according to the notes from the General Chapter.⁴³⁷ The male convent, on the contrary, was complete with eight priest brothers and eight lay brothers.⁴³⁸

Another glimpse into life in the monastery and its inhabitants is given in an excerpt of a Stralsund chronicle with an account of the festive occasion when Bishop Peter Walckow of Schwerin in 1508 came to Stralsund and entered the town “with crosses and banners”. The bishop stayed in the town for ten days while he performed confirmations at the three parish churches in the town and consecrated a church tower and some altars as well. At Marienkrone, he crowned fourteen maidens (novices who then were enclosed as full members of the female convent) and ordained twelve priests and brothers at Marienkrone. Thus, in total twenty-six persons professed as full members of the Birgittine community at one single occasion, which seems like a very large number. According to the Birgittine statutes, the ordinance of new priest brothers and the consecration of sisters and laybrothers were tasks to be performed by the diocesan bishop. As Marienkrone pertained to the diocese of Schwerin, its bishop consecrated the new Birgittines. This meant that Birgittine sisters and brothers could profess only when the bishop visited Stralsund and the monastery, which also explains why so many new members were ordained on one occasion: if it had been a while since the previous visitation.⁴³⁹

Apart from the chronicle, the Birgittine sisters and brothers at Marienkrone are only sporadically mentioned in the sources. Sometimes the monastery’s residents are mentioned in the entries of the copy books of the town or in documents concerning the monastery’s property management. A group of Stralsund Birgittines that on the contrary are possible to trace are the abbesses and general confessors. Some of the heads of the monastery bear names of well-known burgher families with affiliation to both the Town Council and the Cloth Merchant Company such as the abbesses Adelheid and Agnes Holthusen, Heilwig Gildehusen (a daughter of the alderman of the Cloth Merchant Company Heinrich Gildehusen) and Gertrud Gildehusen (a niece to Heilwig) and Adelheid Elmehorst.⁴⁴⁰

For a short time, in year 1437, Lady Elsebe von Putbus is mentioned as abbess of the monastery. However, she seems to have acted as abbess only in this year as both before and after 1437 Adelheid Holthusen is mentioned as abbess in the remaining sources. Johann Dinnies explained the change of abbess as Adelheid, who was from a Stralsund burgher family, had to step down when Lady Elsebe

⁴³⁷ Nyberg 1974, 170.

⁴³⁸ Nyberg 1974, 170–71.

⁴³⁹ “Anno 1508 an des hilligen lichnams auende, do quam de bischop Peter Waleko, de wardt hier ingehalet mit krutzen vnd mit fahnen. De wiede hier einen glockenthorn vnd 6 altäre tho vnser leuen fruwen kercken, vnd firmede; tho St. Nicolaus firmede he ock; tho St. Jacob do firmede he ock, vnd wiede 2 altar; tho St. Birgitten do krönedo he 14 jungkfrowen vnd 12 presters vnd bröders. He lach hier 10 dage.” Mohnike and Zoher (eds) 1833, 216.

⁴⁴⁰ Nyberg 2013, 167; Lusiardi 2000, 217.

entered the monastery and then again resumed her post as head of the monastery when Elsebe continued to Mariendal in Tallinn.⁴⁴¹ This information does however not add up as Elsebe spent at least five years at Marienkrone before transferring to Mariendal. A more plausible scenario is that Adelheid for some reason was indisposed and could not fulfil her duties as abbess, for example due to illness. In any case, women of the Holthusen family were abbesses of Marienkrone for a period that stretched over thirty years, with some short interruptions (Adelheid was succeeded by her sister Agnes). Considering that the monastery only existed for a hundred years before the reformation this is a long time⁴⁴²

Besides Elsebe von Putbus, no other benefactors or Birgittine sisters belonging to the nobility are known. However, the monastery did probably house members who originated from the local noble families even though the nobility, in accordance with the Pomeranian tradition, usually sent their daughters to Cistercian, Premonstratensian, or Benedictine nunneries. Furthermore, it also seems that among the brothers at Marienkrone resided some men who also were of the local nobility. In a letter from the Danish monastery Maribo, a lay brother named Conrad von den Borne from Marienkrone was in 1434 sent to Maribo to bring the summoning of Birgittine representatives to the Council of Basel.⁴⁴³ The von den Borne family had its residence in Gützkow south of Greifswald. Conrad is the only known example of a Marienkrone brother who was of noble birth, but nonetheless his case suggests that also men from the local nobility joined the male convent at Marienkrone.⁴⁴⁴

The establishment of monastic life at Marienkrone was quick as the monastery already in 1436 became the location of the first general chapter of the German Birgittine monasteries. The Birgittine brothers at Marienkrone thus seem to have been actively participating in the debate on the inner development of the Birgittine Order.⁴⁴⁵ Added to Marienkrone's participation in the reform movements of the order, the monastery was also actively taking part in the foundation of new monasteries in the archdiocese of Cologne: Marienforst near Bad Godesberg south of Bonn in 1437 and Marienwater in 's-Hertogenbosch in 1450. Birgittine sisters were sent from Marienkrone to supervise the new foundations. Marienkrone thus became the motherhouse of the Birgittine monasteries in the Low-Countries and in the German Rhineland, which evolved into an important branch of the Birgittine Order (see Table 1 in chapter "Research Questions and Aims").⁴⁴⁶

In 1437 and 1450 Marienkrone was involved in the foundations of the Birgittine monasteries Marienwater in 's-Hertogenbosch in Rosmalen and Marienforst at Bad Godesberg near Bonn. Some representatives were then sent from Ma-

⁴⁴¹ Dinnies 1783, 161.

⁴⁴² Hoogeweg 1925, 756.

⁴⁴³ SDHK 22166.

⁴⁴⁴ Bagmihl 1843, 94–97.

⁴⁴⁵ Nyberg 1973, 7–16; Nyberg 2013, 166–67.

⁴⁴⁶ Højer 1905, 242–43; Bainbridge 1997, 55–76; Nyberg 1965, 128–32, 179–85.

rienkrone to supervise the foundations, as was customary. Through these foundations, Marienkrone became the motherhouse of the Birgittine monasteries in the Low Countries and in the Rhineland. An influential figure in the history of Marienkrone and subsequently at Marienforst was the General Confessor Jacob Roperstorp (1436–53). As a newly elected general confessor, he represented Marienkrone at the first general chapter in 1436. The chapter was summoned after Cardinal Giuliano Cesarini (1398–1444) issued a decree commanding that the Birgittines within the Holy Roman Empire, after the model of the Carthusians, were to hold a general chapter every third year with two representatives attending from each monastery. Jacob Roperstorp seems to have been interested in the inner development of the Birgittine Order by advocating reforms. Tore Nyberg even identified him as the author of a reform scripture regarding the Birgittine Observance.⁴⁴⁷

Against this context, Marienkrone was an important monastery for the future development of the order and a dynamic community advocating reform and participating in the new foundations. When Marienwater was founded, the founders approached Marienkrone and Jacob Roperstorp. The monastery was initiated by a merchant widow from Kampen, Milla van Amerongen, who possibly had come into contact with the Birgittines in the Hansa region when she had followed her late husband on his journeys to the trading towns in the hanseatic region. Roperstorp was transferred to Marienwater to supervise it together with seven other sisters and brothers from Marienkrone: the sisters Beate Hartvig Bezon, Hadewig Bezon, Birgitta Veldegastis and Aleydis Berns. The priests Henrick Nyeman and Cristiaen, and the lay brother Nicholas. The sisters Beate and Hadewig took over the lead of the monastery as the first abbess and prioress and the priest Henrick Nyeman became the first general confessor. Both Beate Hartvig and Henrick Nyeman eventually returned to Marienkrone and became abbess and general confessor there.⁴⁴⁸

The foundation of Marienforst was initiated by the archbishop of Cologne, Dietrich von Moers, who saw that the Birgittine statutes corresponded with his ambitions of monastic reform, which is why he decided that the former Augustinian nunnery was to be transformed into a Birgittine monastery. As the convent at Marienwater was not yet inaugurated at this point, it could not act as motherhouse which is why Marienkrone once more functioned as motherhouse. Jacob Roperstorp was again sent out to supervise the foundation along with four sisters that had professed at Marienwater.⁴⁴⁹ One can speculate if abbess Agnes Holthusen from Marienkrone as well was sent out to Marienforst for a period of time? At least it would explain why her office at Stralsund was interrupted during the period between 1453 and 1462. In the intermediary period of nine years Beate Hartvig, who then had returned from Marienwater, acted as abbess of Marienkrone. If Agnes was absent because she was leading the foundation at Marienwater is though uncertain. Nonetheless, it seems that the participation in

⁴⁴⁷ Nyberg 1973, 7–16.

⁴⁴⁸ Sander-Olsen 2013, 212–13.

⁴⁴⁹ Strang 2013, 185–86.

a new foundation could function as a career move forwards towards the leadership of their monastery for the Birgittine sisters and brothers.⁴⁵⁰

Marienkronen did as well fill an important function in the local society in Stralsund by housing elderly. In the year 1429 the innkeeper Hinrik Krul assigned his belongings to his sons as he intended to enter Marienkronen as a lay brother (Lat. *frater conversus*). His terms of the transfer were, however, that he would manage the property himself as long as he lived. If the sons were to die before him, then all the belongings would be “used for devout purposes” (*pious usus*). Hinrik would thus probably finance his sustenance in the monastery through the revenues of the property he owned.⁴⁵¹ This is also the only documented case from Marienkronen where a man that one can assume being at least middle aged or even older entered the monastery as a lay brother. He was though not the only elderly person who was sustained by the Birgittines. An excerpt from Thomas Kantzow’s Pomeranian chronicle describes how Marienkronen cared for elderly people at the monastery:⁴⁵²

“And in this monastery, there were not only maidens, but also widows among them, and many old burgher women who had no men gave themselves there into to lead their lives in service of God”⁴⁵³

The chronicle only mentions elderly women, but as in the case of Hinrik Krul, elderly men were also cared for by the monastery. Elderly care was a practice usually implemented at Birgittine monasteries and an important service they offered the lay community. The role as care giver was accordingly an important function that Marienkronen and other monasteries of the order fulfilled on the locations where they were founded.⁴⁵⁴

Another source of information about the sisters and brothers in Marienkronen are the entries in the copy books regarding rents given as provision for Birgittine sisters and brothers. The aforementioned Alheid Holthusen, for instance, received in 1423 from her father, Hinrik Holthusen, a life estate of ten marks from three storehouses (Lat. *bodarum*) in the Ossenreyerstraße.⁴⁵⁵ These revenues were to provide for her sustenance in the monastery. The *Liber Memorialis* does as well include some entries regarding persons who either intended to enter the monastery or persons who already stayed there and received rents from farms or urban estates to pay for their livelihood. Another such example was when Abbess Heilvig Gildehusen in 1469 wrote to the treasurers of Lübeck regarding the

⁴⁵⁰ Hoogeweg 1925, 756–57.

⁴⁵¹ LM III:397.

⁴⁵² The chronicle excerpt, copied in the seventeenth century, has the heading “From Thomas Kantzow’s chronicle fol. 89” is now stored in the Szczecin State Archives in a folder containing copies of documents concerning Marienkronen. I have not been able to find this section of the chronicle in the 1897 edition by Gaebel (ed.) 1897–98.

⁴⁵³ “(...)und waren in diesem Closter nicht allein Junckfrawen sonder auch witwen, dorcheinander, und gaben sich viele alte Bürgerinnen die keine Menner hetten dar ein das sie ire lebend daselbst in Gottes dienste Fürachten.“ ‘Aus Thomæ Kantzowen Chronik fol. z. 89 p. 2’, Archivum Państwowe w Szczecinie, AKW 1772, f. 29r.

⁴⁵⁴ LECUB I:4 1946; DF 2471.

⁴⁵⁵ Dinnies 1783, 161.

annual rent of seven marks allocated for Sister Tilseke Nippe's sustenance in the monastery. The rent was paid by the Lübeck burgher Hans Pawese. According to the letter written by the abbess, it had been agreed that Tilseke's rent was to be paid annually in two instalments: four marks at Easter and three at the feast of Saint Michael. Evidently some problems with the payments had occurred, which is why the abbess wrote to the town treasurer urging for the rent to be paid in accordance with the agreement.⁴⁵⁶

The two examples show that individual members of Marienkrone received their sustenance in the monastery from rents in urban property that was pertaining to them. The members of the monasteries could accordingly possess personal incomes in form of rents that were to pay for their stay in the monastery. Whether these rents formed personal prebends or if they were merely part of the entrance donation that was given with a person who wished to join the monastic community is not mentioned in the documents. Such personal rents to provide for conventuals were not unique to Stralsund or the Birgittines. Gabriela Bjarne-Larsson has observed regarding the use of rents in medieval Stockholm that the annual rents from houses, inns, and storages were part of the way conventuals managed their sustenance. The management of rents in town property is thus to be regarded as an expression of Marienkrone's vicinity to Stralsund and as a characteristic to it being an urban foundation.⁴⁵⁷

Another example in the *Liber Memorialis* that concerns life annuities of inhabitants in Marienkrone is from 1435. The town scribe then noted that Lay brother Petrus Below together with the aldermen of the Cloth Merchant Company had an annual income of 80 marks in kind. Furthermore, two more brothers and one sister at Marienkrone were as well stated having had such annual incomes: the priest Tiderikus Kremer five marks, Hermannus Hane ten marks, sister Magdalena von Rethen fifteen marks. This entry has been added to the *Liber Memorialis* because the aldermen had bought the annual incomes from the aforementioned persons with the consent of the General Confessor on behalf of the monastery. As payment they gave 17,5 marks annual rent in the village *Netzelstorpe* (=Nißdorf?). The sale is an example of how individual sisters and brothers at Marienkrone managed their property even after they had entered the monastic community. As the *Regula Salvatoris* prohibited individual members from owning private property, these were most probably incomes that were to pay the living costs of the three Birgittines. When their annual incomes were sold, this payment was instead covered by the incomes from the village which was transferred to the monastery as communal property.⁴⁵⁸

⁴⁵⁶ LUB XI 417.

⁴⁵⁷ Bjarne-Larsson 2019, 197–243.

⁴⁵⁸ LM III:690.

The Dukes of Pomerania supporting the Birgittines

In the southern Baltic Sea region, the bonds were traditionally close between the ducal families and the monasteries since the dukes played an important role in promoting the establishment of the Cistercian, Premonstratensian, and the mendicant orders in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. This relation between the dukes and the monasteries can be described as interdependent: the dukes took the monasteries into their protection and made endowments to them, and in return, the monasteries included the ducal families in their prayers and memoria.⁴⁵⁹ The support of certain monasteries was linked to the dynastic ambitions of the dukes who established their personal memorial sites and chose their final resting place in the monastery churches. Such ducal burial churches could be maintained for several generations of a ducal family, and the daughters could be given to the female monasteries as prioresses and abbesses. That is, for instance, why the dukes on Rügen especially endowed the monasteries Bergen and Neuenkamp. When a new branch of the ducal family gained power, then the special favours could switch to another monastery. For the dukes, the pious gifts could as well be used as a means of promoting their power by commissioning prayers and masses from religious institutions on various locations all over their territory.⁴⁶⁰

As already discussed above, the foundation of Marienkrone as a Birgittine monastery has been interpreted as a means of the Town Council to keep its influence over the monastery. Because the monastery was located outside the town gates, the consent and the permission of the territorial lords was however needed for the foundation of the monastery. That is why the dukes Wratishaw IX and his brother Barnim VII took the new monastery into their protection on 6 April 1421 and allowed Marienkrone to keep all the offerings, services, benefits, profits, and alms that derived from the chapel of Mary Magdalene.⁴⁶¹

In 1442, Wratishaw IX and Barnim VII granted Marienkrone “for the promotion of the service of God” the privilege of “weddeschatte”, which meant that the monastery could accept capital and landed estates in their territory. Additionally, they gave the monastery full right to all the landed estates it already had bought or received. Marienkrone also held the privilege to, in the future, buy landed estates and property in the Duchy of Pomerania.⁴⁶² Marienkrone’s ducal privileges were again confirmed in 1449 when Duke Barnim VIII “the younger” to Pomerania-Wolgast-Barth (c.1405–51), a cousin to Wratishaw IX and Barnim VII, granted the previous privileges and included the landed possessions that it had bought since then. In return for their privileges, the dukes wished for prayers and commemoration for themselves and their families, as is stated in a charter issued by Barnim VIII at Christmas 1448:

⁴⁵⁹ Jamroziak 2011, 77–113.

⁴⁶⁰ Auge 2009b, 305–21; Auge 2009a, 131–33. See also Hellmuth Heyden’s discussion on the connections between the Pomeranian dukes and the monasteries Heyden 1957, 113–18.

⁴⁶¹ LM II:561.

⁴⁶² StAS, UMarienkrone, nr 39.

[...] And so that we and our parents can take part of all the good deeds that are done in this house of God and monastery located in our land at our town of Stralsund, named the order of the eternal sacred Virgin Mary and Saint Birgitta called the order of the Holy Saviour. Therefore, we have awarded and given the same religious persons, who are gathered in this same house of God and monastery and those who yet will be sent there to the service of God, that they can use and hold and all the estates that they have bought in our land [...]⁴⁶³

The ducal letters follow the standardized formulas also concerning the commemoration that is described in the letters. This does, however, not mean that such formulations lacked meaning to those who issued the charters. As Arnoud-Jan A. Bijsterveld has argued, in reference to Chiffolleau and Oexle among others, the terms such as “in mei memoriam” were not completely hollow phrases although they were part of the standard formula. Such formulations were of larger meaning to the grantors or donors than the charters reveal.⁴⁶⁴ When the dukes of Pomerania, and other benefactors, wished to take part in the prayers of the Birgittine sisters and brothers this practically meant that the inhabitants of the monastery would include them in their prayers. Even if the dukes did not especially favour the Birgittine Order, their support nonetheless had a significance both to the monastery and to themselves as they then became included in the religious activities at Marienkrone.⁴⁶⁵

According to Hermann Hoogeweg’s overview over Marienkrone’s history also other dukes of Pomerania than the three aforementioned bequeathed Marienkrone with privileges.⁴⁶⁶ In 1464, according to Hoogeweg, the monastery accepted Duke Erich II of Pomerania Wolgast (1420–74) and Duchess Sophia into its spiritual confraternity (Duchess Sophia had though died already in 1462), which was a special favour that the Order granted prominent persons and special benefactors. The ducal couple did however not send their daughters, Elisabeth and Maria, to Marienkrone to take up a religious career at the Birgittines, but they were instead given to the Benedictine monastery Verschen where they both eventually became prioresses, in accordance with the Pomeranian tradition.⁴⁶⁷

It seems that the dukes of Pomerania also turned to the Birgittines when they needed to loan money. On 7 January 1448, duke Barnim VIII pawned an annual

⁴⁶³ “[...]Vnde ok dat wy vnde vnse vor olderen moghen delafftyth werden alle der ghuden werke de dar scheen in deme ghodesshuse vnde klostere belegghen in vnser Landen vor vnser Stad tho deme Stralessunde gheheten de orde der ewyghen hilghen Junckvruwen Marien vnde sunte Byrgitten Ghenomet de orde des hilghen salychmakers. Hyr vmme so hebbe wy gheghund vnde ghegheuen den suluen gheestlyken personen de in deme suluen ghodeshuse vnde klostere ghesammelt synt Vnde ok noch moghen gheschycket werden tho deme denste godes det se moghen hebben vnde bruken vnde besyten alle de ghudere de se in vnser landen hebben ghekofft[...]”, StAS, UMarienkrone, nr. 57.

⁴⁶⁴ Bijsterveld 2007, 158–87.

⁴⁶⁵ Auge 2009b, 305–21.

⁴⁶⁶ Hoogeweg accessed sources in the ducal archives during the interwar period in the 1920s and he refers to sources that either have been lost, or are now divided between several archives, which makes his references difficult to trace. Hoogeweg 1925, 732–57.

⁴⁶⁷ Regarding a discussion on prominent benefactors at a Birgittine monastery see Bainbridge 2017, 128–43.

rent worth 100 marks in some estates and villages on Rügen to the price of 2 000 marks.⁴⁶⁸ In 1456, duke Wratislaw IX and his son Erich II loaned a sum of 200 Rhine Guilders from the monastery.⁴⁶⁹ Some monasteries, like Marienkrona, were in a position of granting large mortgages as they administered large incomes from their property and the endowments that could be reinvested in real estate. The dukes of Pomerania are also known to have made pawns to other monasteries of the Cistercian and Premonstratensian orders in the fifteenth century. Accordingly, Marienkrona developed into a prosperous monastery which as well could act as creditor.⁴⁷⁰ The reason why the dukes were in need of capital were their costly politics and military ambitions. Apart from caring for their souls, the monasteries also functioned as reliable creditors because they were prosperous enough to grant the dukes the funds that they needed. Thus, not only did the dukes support the monasteries and expect spiritual favours in return, but they also used the monasteries as deposits when in need of liberating funds tied to landed property.

The pawn Marienkrona granted Duke Wratislaw IX and his son Erich II in 1456 was made at a time when the dukes were in the middle of a feud between the duchies of Pommern-Wolgast and Mecklenburg, which conflict also involved the town of Stralsund. According to Oliver Auge, who has studied the ducal politics in Pomerania, the conflict concerned claims on landed property on Rügen valued to 20 000 gulden. A sum that the cousin of Wratislaw IX, Duke Barnim VIII, around 1451 had given as a testamentary bequest to his niece Catherine, who was betrothed to Duke Ulrich II of Mecklenburg-Stargard (1428–71). As the dukes of Pommern-Wolgast did not accept the testamentary bequest upon Barnim's death in 1451, it resulted in an armed conflict in which Wratislaw IX accused the burgomaster of Stralsund, Otto Voge (1419–75), of being allied with Mecklenburg. Whereupon the duke, in his turn, was suspected by the town of Stralsund of being involved in an assassination complot against Voge. The Town Council then seized the duke's bailiff in Stralsund, Raven Barnekow, and had him executed together with some burghers. This led to a conflict among the councillors, and Otto Voge had to flee the town in 1453. The feud did not end there but continued throughout the following decade. Wratislaw IX died in 1457 and Otto Voge returned to the town, which duke Erich II did not accept and the feud between the duke and the town arose again. Erich II and his brother Wratislaw X of Pomerania-Wolgast-Barth (1435–78) attacked a transport from Stralsund in 1457 and confiscated goods to a value of 20 000 gulden and seized forty merchants. The counteraction of Stralsund was to revive the league with the Wendish Hansa towns Greifswald, Anklam, and Demmin. Whereupon the dukes allied themselves with their former rival Mecklenburg as they feared that the league of the Wendish Hansa towns would grow too powerful. The struggle between the dukes and the towns was settled in 1458 when they exchanged prisoners and Otto Voge could return to the town. Nonetheless, the heirs of Raven Barnekow

⁴⁶⁸ Lisch 1851, 182–83.

⁴⁶⁹ Hoogeweg 1925, 741.

⁴⁷⁰ Gleba 2009, 369.

still wanted to be redressed for his execution and in 1465 the Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian I determined that the town would compensate them with the sum of 500 pounds in gold. Stralsund did however not accept the emperor's sentence and was threatened with an imperial ban in 1469, but by then Dukes Erich II and Wratislaw X were involved in the succession feud in Szczecin against the duke of Brandenburg, which meant that they were not able to act against Stralsund.⁴⁷¹

Against this context it seems rather daring of Marienkrone to lend such a substantial sum of money as 200 rhine guilders to Wratislaw IX and Erich II in the middle of their feud with the Town Council of Stralsund as the latter, upon the monastery's foundation, had reserved the right to oversee its financial matters. Marienkrone's loan to the dukes shows that the Birgittines could, despite their bonds to the Town Council, act independently in such financial affairs. Marienkrone's location outside the town gates, within the ducal jurisdiction, is another possible explanation why the monastery loaned money to the dukes. They had granted Marienkrone all its privileges to buy and administer its landed estates in Pomerania and thus the Birgittines were perhaps not in a position to deny them this service. The timing of accepting Erich II and Sophia into its brotherhood in 1465 (if Hoogeweg's notes are correct) is as well rather interesting as it occurred at the point when the dukes were settling their feud with Stralsund. Possibly, the monastery included the ducal couple into their praying community as some sort of peace gesture. The monastery's space of action was accordingly depending on both the Town Council and the dukes, a position which certainly demanded cautious diplomatic actions in times when the two authorities were in conflict with each other.

Donations and testamentary bequests to Marienkrone

The earliest testamentary bequest to Marienkrone was the endowment of fifty marks which the widow Reymborg donated in 1418 to an unspecified monastery at the Chapel of Mary Magdalene. The second donation was made by the Town Council of Stralsund and especially by councillor Simon von Orden when he on 8 March 1421 donated the garden next to the chapel for the sake of himself and the souls of his ancestors "in honour of God almighty and Saint Birgitta".⁴⁷² After the monastery was founded by the council of Stralsund, it quickly became part of the range of religious institutions the citizens included in their wills.⁴⁷³

⁴⁷¹ Auge 2009a, 145–48. For the meaning of ducal alliances in the late Middle Ages, see Hardy 2018, 93–178. The chronicles also give some accounts on the turn of events, see Mohnike and Zober 1833, 199–206; Baier 1893, 24–32.

⁴⁷² "Dnus, Simon de Orden ob salutem animarum progenitorum suorum in honorem omnipotentis dei et beate Birgitte dedit resignavit donavit et dimisit prefatum ortum supra descriptum situm extra Kuterdor prope capellam seu ecclesiam sancte Marie Magdalene (...)", StAS, Handschriften, HS0004, f. 23r–v; Dinnies 1783, 149.

⁴⁷³ Lusiardi 2000, 78–113.

From the period before 1520, around one thousand medieval wills survive from Stralsund. The testamentary bequests are though differing from donations as the wills, instead of being directed towards one beneficiary, usually targeted many churches, convents, monasteries, and hospitals, as well as laypersons. Among the religious houses in Stralsund, the mendicant convents were most popular among the religious houses in the wills and they received the most generous legates. Marienkrone was nonetheless often mentioned among the beneficiaries and the bequests that it received ranged all from the smallest gifts of two or three marks up to the largest sum of 500 marks. Soon after the foundation of the monastery the Birgittines thus became an integrated part of the sacral topography of the town.⁴⁷⁴

Apart from landed property and rents, Marienkrone also received valuables and clothing as donations. Most of these gifts are noted in the *Liber Memorialis*. As, for example, when a burgher woman named Margareta Giskow gave Marienkrone a scarlet dress, a head band (*Sappel*) valued to a weight of four marks, a golden bolster, six golden cushions and a golden cover. These items would first go to her daughter and her granddaughters, but if they did not have any daughters, then the valuables would be given to the Birgittines. Accordingly, this was a promise of a gift by the testator that would only be given to the Birgittines if Margareta would not have any granddaughters to inherit the items. In this manner, the testator could secure what would happen with her belongings if she would not have any female heirs.⁴⁷⁵ What did the monastery then do with items such as clothing and bolsters? The luxurious items were not allowed in the convents and individual sisters and brothers were, according to the *Regula Salvatoris*, forbidden to hold personal belongings. However, as textiles were valuable commodities, and could accordingly be used as payment in property transactions, or be used for the creation of liturgical vestments. The commodities were accordingly possible for the monastery either to sell or reuse.⁴⁷⁶

In the Stralsund City Archives, only four charters concern gifts directed towards Marienkrone. All four donations concern landed property, including one house inside Stralsund. Two of the donations were made by clerics. Thus, one must assume that the majority of the donations to the Birgittines are not known. The prosperity of the monastery, nonetheless, suggest that the Birgittines regularly received donations from the laity. At least when new members joined the monastic community, they ought to have brought some kind of property with them to finance their sustenance in the monastery. In 1429, the priest Jürgen Munther donated a rent of twenty-five marks in the village Jarkvitz on Rügen. The donation was confirmed through a notary instrument written on site in the

⁴⁷⁴ Lusiardi 2000, 31–32, 61. The councillor Tobias Gildehusen was one testator who gave a costly testamentary bequest to the Birgittines shortly after the foundation of the monastery. In 1424 he allocated twenty marks for clothes and shoes to the inhabitants of Marienkrone. Another early testamentary endowment was that by the burgher Hans Grote who in 1428 gave fifty marks to Marienkrone. Dinnies 1783, 156.

⁴⁷⁵ LM II 559, LM III 6, 506, LM V 313, 69, 722, LM VI 79, 86.

⁴⁷⁶ DF 4017 & 4590.

monastery and in addition to the notary instrument, Jürgen also issued a donation charter.⁴⁷⁷ Four years later, in 1433, the priest Peter Stenhus donated an annual rent of twelve marks to the monastery in the village Jasedow in Ranzin parish, which also was documented through a notary instrument. Four marks of the sum would though go to the priest Paul Wyse and after his death the sum was allocated the Birgittines.⁴⁷⁸

Marienkronen also received a donation by a person living abroad. This donation was made in April 1460 by a man named Birger Johannesson who lived in Ronneby in the region of Skåne in Denmark. Apparently, he had been active in Stralsund as he owned a house on Fährstraße “between Ludeke von Othmersen and Jacob Peterson” which he donated to the monastery in honour of Virgin Mary, Saint Andrew, and Saint Birgitta for the sake of his soul and the souls of his parents, friends, and relatives. Birger is not possible to further identify, but possibly he was a Danish merchant, perhaps active in the herring trade as the towns in the Scania region were important to the fish trade. The house that Birger donated had been used by him and his forefathers according to the donation charter. Added to his donation charter, the donation was as well confirmed through a notary instrument. The issuing of a notary instrument when donating landed property to the monastery seems having been common practice as three out of four donations among the documents in the city archives have notary instruments.⁴⁷⁹

The donation by Birger is however of further interest as he also through it commissioned an eternal mass, vigils, and requested that he and his entire family, both dead and living, were to be commemorated by the sisters and brothers in their prayers:

“So, I desire to have and to hold, in the aforementioned monastery for me and my parents as well as all of my family, both living and dead, now and to come, an eternal mass every week at the altar of Saint Andrew, the holy apostle. And the mass shall commemorate and intercede for me and my father Hans Hannendesson, and my mother Gertrude, my children, my sisters and brothers, and my grandfather Hannus Peterson, and my grandmother Beynta. And so, I wish that you will inscribe me and my aforementioned forefathers into your Memorial book on Sunday after sext as is customary that you will pray and once a year to begin with vigils and requiems at a time that is most convenient, so that we all will be blessed by God and that he will send us to his eternal kingdom.”⁴⁸⁰

⁴⁷⁷ StAS UMarienkronen 25 & 28.

⁴⁷⁸ StAS UMarienkronen 32.

⁴⁷⁹ StAS HS 005.

⁴⁸⁰ “So beghere yk tho hebbende vnde thobeholdende In deme vorbenometen klosteren vor my vnde myne olderen vnde alle myn slechte leuendych vnde dot yeghenwardich vnde thokomende ene ewyghe Mysse enes In der wekene Tho deme Altare Sunte Andree des hylghen apostells vnde In der Mysse tho denckende vnde thobyddende vor my vnde mynen Vader Hans Hannendessone vnde moder Ghertrude myne kyndere sustere vnde brodere vnde mynen ghrotevader Hannus petersson vnde Ghrotmoder Beynta so beghere yk ok dat se my vnde myne vorvarden vorbenomet schryuen an ere denckebock des sundaghes na deme Sezmonen nach wonlykerwyse vor se thobyddende vnde enes In deme yare tho beghande myt

Birger's donation is an illustrative example of the type of private spiritual services that the monastery could offer. The donation is though further interesting as it also shows that the commissioning of masses at a specific altar in the monastery was possible. According to the *Regula Salvatoris*, the Birgittine church would besides altars honouring the Virgin Mary and Birgitta, have twelve altars for the apostles. The commissioning of private memorial services, such as those requested by Birger Johannesson, at specific altars were though probably quite unusual as such private devotion was not performed at any larger scale in the churches of the Birgittines, even though benefactors could sometimes wish for masses, vigils, and prayers. In contrary to such recourse consuming memorial services as regular eternal masses of individual benefactors, donors could instead explicitly request to have their name inscribed in the Birgittine Memory book and request to be included in the Birgittine praying community. This was the most common form of memoria performed in the Birgittine monasteries where the sisters and brothers would mention their benefactors in their daily prayers.⁴⁸¹

Consequently, the question is though what capacity the Birgittine priest brothers had to maintain such memorial masses for the Birgittine benefactors. The task of the priests in a Birgittine monastery was two-fold: for one, they would serve the spiritual needs of the sisters and laybrothers, and for the other, they would, just as the mendicants, keep the contacts with the world outside the monastery through preaching and hearing confessions.⁴⁸² Still, the male convent of a Birgittine monastery comprised only twelve priest brothers and since they primarily served the spiritual needs of the monastic community, preached and heard confessions, they would not necessarily have had the capacity to celebrate private masses and hold vigils for individual benefactors and their families.⁴⁸³

According to the notary instrument, Birger's donation was made on site at Marienkrone at vespers in the the brethren's parlour. The value of the house on Fährstraße is not mentioned, but according to the notary instrument the revenues were to go to the fabrica of the new church which was being constructed at the monastery. The Birgittine representatives who were present to receive the donation and accept the terms of it were the general confessor Christian Rouysch and the Birgittine brother Cherubim Costers.⁴⁸⁴ The notary instrument thus gives a glimpse into the interaction between the donor and the monastery upon the occasion when property was officially donated and transferred to the monastery. Present were also three burghers from Stralsund witnessing the donation by hanging their seals together with Birger's seal under the letter of donation. Thus,

vygilien vnde zelemysen tho ener tyd de dar bequemest tho ys dat vns allen got ghnedich wesen mote vnde gheue vns syn ewyghe ryke", StAS, UMarienkrone, nr. 80.

⁴⁸¹ See for example: Strenga 2020, 212–231; Clark 2007, 315–331; Bainbridge 2017, 128–143; Bijsterveld 2007, 287–314; Jamroziak 2007, 63–76.

⁴⁸² Nyberg 1991a, 115–17.

⁴⁸³ In Nådendal Lady Lucia Olofsdotter founded a weekly mass to be celebrated in the monastery in 1485, DF 4049.

⁴⁸⁴ StAS, UMarienkrone 81.

apart from Birger, at least six other persons were present on site when he officially made his donation, two representatives from the monastery, three witnesses, and the notary.⁴⁸⁵

The generous endowments of Lady Elsebe von Putbus

Many of the bequests that Marienkrone received came from the citizens of Stralsund but the single most outstanding donation was that of Lady Elsebe von Putbus. In 1444, she drew up her will at Mariendal, where she lived the last years of her life († 1444 or 1445). At this point, she was probably one of the wealthiest and politically most influential women in the Baltic Sea region due to her family connections both to Denmark and to Livonia (see chapter on Mariendal). The Putbus family originated from Rügen and held connections both to the Pomeranian dukes and to the Danish kings, as well as the bishops of Roskilde. Before Elsebe went to the Birgittines in Tallinn, she is mentioned as abbess at Marienkrone in 1437, but it seems though that she was only an intermediary abbess as Alheid Holthusen was holding the office both before and after 1437.⁴⁸⁶ Even though Marienkrone received a generous bequest in Elsebe's will, the Birgittines in Tallinn were the primary beneficiary in her will drawn up at Mariendal 23 February 1444:

[...] Further I give to Saint Birgitta's monastery Mariendal which is built and located near Reval two thousand Riga marks. Further I give to Margarete Gramsche, an enclosed sister in that same place, one hundred Riga marks. Further the female monastery on Gotland that is called Sonnenschyne [Solberga] also one hundred Riga marks. Further I give the monastery of Marienkrone located outside Stralsund five hundred Riga marks. Further I give to the monastery at Bergen on the island Rügen sixty Riga marks to light up your high altar. Further I give Reinmar Berndt two hundred Riga marks [...] ⁴⁸⁷

In her will, Elsebe both endowed monasteries to which she had a personal connection and monasteries that her family traditionally had supported. The monasteries mentioned in her will were located on places where she had lived as the Cistercian monasteries Solberga and Bergen were near her family residence on Rügen. By directing bequests to the Cistercians, she assumably followed a family tradition as the Putbus family was part of the high nobility which traditionally had close ties to the Cistercians in the region. Her special bond to the Birgittines is manifested through her generous bequests to Mariendal and Marienkrone which were the two beneficiaries receiving the costliest gifts in the will. In this

⁴⁸⁵ StAS UMarienkrone81.

⁴⁸⁶ StAS UMarienkrone 36 & 192; StAS StU 0934. Compare Hoogeweg 1925, 757.

⁴⁸⁷ So geue Ik to den gebowte Sunte birgitten Cloestere Mariendale by Reuall gelegen twedusent mark Rigisch. Item So geue Ik Marghareten der granschen dar suluest eyenm buten suster hundred mark Rigisch, Item dem Junchvrouwen Clostere vp gotlande tom Sonnenschyne genompt geue Ik ok hundred mark Rigisch, Item So geue Ik dem Cloester Marienkrone vor dem Stralessunde gelegen vyffhundert mark Rigisch. Item so geue ik dem clostere to Berghen vp deme lande to Rügen gelegen sostich mark Rigisch to beluchtunde eren hogen Altar Item So geue ik her Reyमारो bernd twehundert marck Rigisch. (...) 23.2.1444, Ericssbergsarkivet, SDHK 24479, RA Stockholm.

respect, her will demonstrates both her personal preferences as well as practices tied to family traditions.⁴⁸⁸

The bequest of 500 Riga marks is the largest endowment that Marienkrone received as a testamentary gift, although the sum is only just a fourth of what she allocated to Mariendal. She had though endowed Marienkrone once before. A decade earlier, in 1432, two documents were issued by knight Henning von Jasmund and Elsebe's son Henning Albrechtson. The original letter of donation has not survived but the size of the endowment is mentioned in the two charters of confirming her gift, where it was described to encompass substantial rents in some villages on Rügen: Gnies 72 marks and 30 hens, Bischofsdorf 28 marks and 28 hens, Vilmnitz 24 marks, Neuendorf (near Putbus) 20 marks. In one of the charters, the son, Henning, declared that he confirmed and approved of his mother's donation and declared it fully in the monastery's possession.⁴⁸⁹ Apparently, Elsebe still had some landed possessions on Rügen even though she and her sister, Countess Eufemia of Eberstein, 31 years earlier, in 1401, sold their inheritance after their father, Henning von Putbus, to their cousin, Knight Pridbor von Putbus, for 2 800 Stralsund marks.⁴⁹⁰

In his letter dated on 2 February 1432, Henning von Jasmund, who as the ducal bailiff on Rügen, confirmed that Elsebe had made the donation to Marienkrone and transferred three letters to the monastery: her own donation charter, a charter sealed by the bishop of Roskilde, and a charter issued by the Knight Henning von Putbus. The letters were handed over to the Birgittine priest brother Petrus Blesevitz⁴⁹¹ and the lay brother Clawes Rubbs who had been sent by Marienkrone to receive the donation. Thus, by handing over the letters to Marienkrone, the monastery was declared to be in full possession of the donated property in accordance with the issued charters.⁴⁹²

Additionally, Henning Albrechtson further describes that his mother's donations also would function her entrance fee for joining the monastic community as a Birgittine sister:

[...] that my venerable mother lady Elisabeth von Putbus with good will permanently has drawn up, assigned and transferred to the of monastery Marienkrone of the order of the Holy Virgin Mary and Saint Birgitta, called the Order of the Holy Saviour, located at Stralsund in the honour of God and where she has entered and given herself to that same monastery to the almighty God

⁴⁸⁸ Hoogeweg 1924, 102, 105–6, 117, 122; Bagmihl 1854, 172–76.

⁴⁸⁹ StAS UMarienkrone 29 & 30.

⁴⁹⁰ 13.1.1401, Diplomatarium Danicum, <<https://diplomatarium.dk/dokument/14010113002>> (accessed on 14 May 2020).

⁴⁹¹ Petrus Blesevitz was general confessor of Marienkrone in 1432 even though this is not stated in the letter.

⁴⁹² "na vtwysyngher der suluen breue vnde na lude des breues den vruw Elzebe vorbenomet deme vorbenometen klostere dar vort vpp bezeghelt hefft", StAS, UMarienkrone 30.

and to an eternal promise and for the salvation of hers and her kinsmen's souls.⁴⁹³

As this donation was made in 1432, it means that Elsebe had lived at least five years at Marienkrone when she acted as abbess of the monastery in year 1437. Her special interest for the Birgittines is possibly explained by her ties to the Danish royal family through her father Henning von Putbus who was a member of King Valdemar's privy council. Through her husband, Albrecht Andersen (Eberstein), she was connected to the Danish high nobility. Elsebe also knew Queen Margaret of Denmark as she, for instance, in 1406 loaned a sum of 200 Lübeck marks to the queen according to the terms they personally had agreed upon. Besides, it seems rather likely that they knew each other already from early on in life as Elsebe's father Henning was drot during the reign of Margaret's father King Valdemar.⁴⁹⁴ Considering that Queen Margaret was an active supporter of the Birgittines in Vadstena and that she founded the Danish Birgittine monastery Maribo, she was a possible source of influence to Elsebe von Putbus in her interest in promoting the Birgittines regionally.⁴⁹⁵

Elsebe bequeathed the Birgittines both in Stralsund and in Tallinn. As Marienkrone only had existed a decade when it received Elsebe's donation, her gift was an important contribution to the new monastery. Alongside the initial donations by the Stralsund Town Council this was the most generous donation that the monastery received. The donation practices of Elsebe emphasizes the link between personal interest towards the new order among persons in the political elite and their support of the new monasteries. Their support and interest in the Birgittines contributed to the success of the order across the Baltic Sea region.

Councillors and merchants endorsing Marienkrone

Marienkrone was quickly included in the range of religious institutions that were frequently endowed in the wills of the burghers in Stralsund, but the three parish churches in the town were, however, the most popular destinations of pious gifts in the wills of the citizens. Such bequests were included in the wills alongside gifts to individuals and alms charities. The testamentary bequests were directed towards religious institutions, often with specific instructions regarding how the endowments were to be used (for vigils, masses, prayers, the salary of a priest, providing candles to an altar etc.). The purpose of such provisions was to pay for various forms of intercession.⁴⁹⁶ The Birgittines at Marienkrone were frequently

⁴⁹³ "De myn leue moder vruwe Elzebe von puthbutzke hefft myt ghuden wyllen vppghedreghen vorlaten vnde antwordet deme clostere Marienkrone des orden der werden hylghen Junckfrowen Marien vnde sunte Byritten. ghenomet de orde des hylghen Salichmakers belegen vor deme Stralessunde tho der ere godes dar by tho blyuende vnde hefft syth suluen vort in dat sulue kloster gheoffert vnde ghegheuen deme allewedyghen gode tho eneme ewyghen loue vnde tho erer vnde erer vrunde zelen zalycheyt", StAS UMarienkrone, nr. 29.

⁴⁹⁴ 19.11.1406, Diplomatarium Danicum, <<https://diplomatarium.dk/dokument/14061119001>> (accessed on 14 May 2020) C 6 adk., Rigsarkivet, København.

⁴⁹⁵ Etting 1996, 251–55; Olesen 1991, 169–219; Olesen 2018, 67–88; Olesen 1980, 340–41.

⁴⁹⁶ Schildhauer 1992, 22–33.

listed in the wills of the inhabitants of Stralsund. Mostly the monastery received smaller gifts of one to five marks but sometimes it was also given larger sums of ten, twenty, or fifty marks and in a few cases even up to one hundred marks. In return, the testators wished for prayers and masses and sometimes even to be buried inside the monastery.⁴⁹⁷

When it comes to preferences, for example concerning the choice of location of burials or special commemoration, such bequests were much laden with family traditions and personal bonds to a specific religious institution, or institutions. A common practice was to direct the most lavish gifts and commission the costliest memorial masses, vigils, prayers, or chantries at the own parish church among the testamentary bequests. Maybe the family tomb was located there, or maybe the family owned a private chapel or altar foundation in the church. The testator also had close bonds to their parish church as they regularly attended the spiritual service at it.⁴⁹⁸

When persons wished to endow other institutions or give them a more prominent position among the beneficiaries, their choice can be regarded as an expression of individual preferences.⁴⁹⁹ When it comes to the Birgittines in Stralsund, just as at Mariendal, they were regularly included among the religious beneficiaries in burgher wills, but they were usually not the main beneficiary. However, the historian Ralf Lusiardi has been able to detect some exceptions where persons requested special long-term benefices at Marienkrone in their will already at an early stage after the foundation. The burgher Ralf Kryvitz, for instance, wished in 1429 to be included in the prayers and inscribed in the memorial books of the parish churches, the mendicants, and the Birgittines, to whom he allocated five marks.⁵⁰⁰

The earliest donation after Marienkrone's foundation was made by Jacob von Hiddingen, which has been recorded in the town book. In July 1422, he donated for the salvation of his soul a farm with all its belongings located outside the town gates and "near the monastery".⁵⁰¹ Jacob von Hiddingen was an alderman of the Cloth Merchant Company and also one of the first foreseers (Lat. *provisores*) of the monastery together with the councillor Simon von Orden.⁵⁰² In 1424, He bequeathed Marienkrone again with a permanent rent of one "last" barley from the village Grabitz on Rügen for the memory of his deceased wife Elsebe.⁵⁰³ The bond between Marienkrone and the von Hiddingen family stretched to the next generation as well. Besides Jacob, also his daughter Metteke donated to Marienkrone an eternal rent of sixteen "scheffel" barley in Pantelitz west of Stralsund. In July

⁴⁹⁷ Lusiardi 2000, 88.

⁴⁹⁸ Reitemeier 2009, 59–88.

⁴⁹⁹ Previous research has established that the connection between the Town Councils and the religious institutions were close in the late medieval Hansa towns. See, e.g., the contributions in Graßmann (ed.) 2009.

⁵⁰⁰ Lusiardi 2000, 187.

⁵⁰¹ StAS, HS 004, f. 36r.

⁵⁰² The Cloth Merchant Company was one of the wealthiest and most influential corporations in the town alongside the Town Council and at times involved in power struggles with it. See Hillebrand 2018, 65–6; Lusiardi 2000, 87.

⁵⁰³ StAS UMarienkrone 191; LM II nr. 559.

1446, the burghers Hans Ruwyng, Merten Krakow (who possibly was a grandson to Jacob) and Hinrik Bullenspeck confirmed the donation and stated its conditions: the sisters and brothers would pray for the souls of Metteke, her father, her husband, and all her kin.⁵⁰⁴

Through the wills and entries in the copybooks, the ties between certain families and Marienkrone are traceable. Another example is the von Orden family. Several members of this family showed an interest in the monastery.⁵⁰⁵ Simon von Orden was the person who at the foundation donated the adjacent garden of the chapel of Mary Magdalene, which he had bought only to donate for this purpose. He can thus be regarded as one of the main figures behind Marienkrone's foundation. In July 1456, his sons Heinrich and Gories von Orden confirmed their father's will where he especially favoured Marienkrone: they announced that Simon had given a rent of fourteen marks in five farms in Viersdorf as a testamentary donation to the monastery. The incomes were to be used for buying wine and wafers for the eucharist:

For these aforementioned fourteen marks, as well as the yard and garden that our father gave the aforementioned monastery, which he bought from Everd Rubenow, where the sisters have their lodgings and where they live. The persons in the aforementioned monastery that now live there and in generations to come shall: firstly, for our mother and secondly, for all the other of our family celebrate with vigils and masses and into their eternal commemoration they shall inscribe our father Simon, aforementioned, his wife, his parents and children for all time and faithfully pray to God for their souls that God almighty mercifully and compassionately will award them with eternal life [...]⁵⁰⁶

The von Orden family thus requested specific memorial services of the monastery and Simon's sons emphasised that their father had endowed the monastery with its lodgings, emphasizing the great favour their family had shown Marienkrone. However, even if they asked for special memorial services for their family, they did not ask for burial places within the Birgittine church. At other locations, the founders of a monastery commonly also wished to receive their final resting place in its church and the Birgittine churches were quite popular burial churches, especially for the nobility.⁵⁰⁷ The burial church of the von Orden

⁵⁰⁴ StAS UMarienkrone 48.

⁵⁰⁵ Rauer 1974, 23–24.

⁵⁰⁶ "Vor desse vorbenometen veerteyn mark gheldes vnde vor den hof vnde bûmgarden den vnse vader gaf dem borbenometen kloster den he kofte van euerd rubenowen dar de Juncurwoen ere wonÿnge vnde buwete vppe hebben hir vor scholen de personen des kloster vorbenomen de nû Jegenwardich vnde noch tokamende sint ene vnse moder vnder slechte alle iar twige began mit vilgen vnde selemissen vnde scholen ze schriuen an ere ewighe dachtnisse vnser vader Simon vorbenomen sin husvrowen sine olderen vnde kindere to ewigen tiden vnde bidde got truweliken vor ere zele dat en almechtigen got gnedich vnde barmhertich sy vnde geue en allen dat ewighe leuent(...)", StAS, Rep. 10 U, U Marienkrone, nr. 74.

⁵⁰⁷ When Vadstena was founded, King Magnus Eriksson seems having had far reaching plans for making it a royal burial church. These plans were never realized but the importance of Vadstena as the final resting place for the elite and the Vadstena Diary contains several mentions of nobles being buried there. Added to this, when King Erik's wife Philippa died, she was

family was, however, in the parish church of Saint Nicholas and in his will from 1464, Hinrik van Orden requested to be buried in this church “where my father lies buried”. The choice of burial location did accordingly much depend on customs and traditions, while personal preferences could be manifested through lavish endowments and the commissioning of special memorial services by the Birgittines.⁵⁰⁸

In his will Hinrik endowed all the most important churches, chapels, monasteries, convents, beguine houses and hospitals in and around Stralsund: the parish churches Saint Nicholas, Saint Mary and Saint Jacob; the Dominicans at Saint Cathrine’s, the Franciscans at Saint John’s; the beguines at Saint Gertrude, Saint Catherine and Saint John’s; The hospitals of the Holy Ghost and Saint George; the Augustinian friars in Anklam; the Cistercian nunneries in Krummin, Bergen and Verschen; the Birgittines; and finally life annuities to individual priests. From these institutions he commissioned prayers, vigils, and masses for the salvation of his and his parents’ souls. However, especially the church of Saint Nicholas and the Birgittines were awarded with the most expensive bequests. The Birgittines received fifty marks for a mass that would be sung for the entire von Orden family:

Further, I give to Saint Birgitta’s for an eternal mass in which they shall pray for the entire family van Orden to God’s grace 50 Stralsund marks⁵⁰⁹

Hinrik thus commissioned a special mass for the entire von Orden family from the Birgittines, just as his father had done, whereas the other institutions would specifically only pray for him and his parents. It thus seems that the von Ordens preferred the Birgittines for the cure of their souls in form of vigils, prayers, and masses for the family members. Even though Saint Nicholas was the main church of the councillors, the Birgittines also functioned as an important institution for the care of souls. As previously has been stated by Lusiardi, the professionalism of the Birgittine brothers may have been a pull factor when it comes to the ordering of masses from them as they were educated priests. Hinrik requested special memoria for the sake of his entire family, which is an example of how Marienkrone nonetheless played a prominent role in caring for the souls of its founders and their kin.⁵¹⁰

The chapel of Mary Magdalene, before it became the foundation of the Birgittine monastery, was a relatively popular burial place, besides the parish churches, and thus the burials at Marienkrone also followed a longer tradition at the location.⁵¹¹ Among the 182 testaments that directed bequests to the Birgittines during the period 1421–1524, fourteen were given for a burial in their

buried in Vadstena, and Erik planned to build a chapel in the church for her memory. Cf. Fritz 1992, 115–29.

⁵⁰⁸ StAS, Testamente 1, nr. 0651.

⁵⁰⁹ “Item so geue ik to sunte Birgitten to ener ewigen missen dar men Inne bidden schal vor dat gantze slechte der van Orden tome leuen gode veltich mark sundesch”, StAS, Testamente 1, nr. 0651.

⁵¹⁰ See further Lusiardi 2000, 88.

⁵¹¹ Schildhauer 1992, 27; Lusiardi 2000, 156.

church.⁵¹² Women were quite regularly giving testamentary bequests to the Birgittines and requested burial in the monastery. Maybe Marienkrone as a religious house for women motivated women to choose it as their final resting place. Some of these cases are of an early date as when Ghebbeke Brandenborgh, wife of the councillor Arnd Brandenborgh, in 1428 wished to be buried at Marienkrone. She is perhaps identical with the Ghebbeke whose heirs in December 1427 confirmed her donation of a sixteen-mark rent in Gustow in Schaprode on Rügen. This was made only six years after the foundation and the church of the monastery could not have been entirely finished at this point, which suggests that a burial at Marienkrone without further specifications could as well be imply a burial at the chapel cemetery.⁵¹³

Being buried inside the church of the monastery was as a special favour granted its benefactors. The nearer the main altar the more prominent was the spot of the grave. A person, who was not among the founders of the monastery, but who showed a special interest for Marienkrone was the councillor Gerd Blome who in his will of 1474 wished to be buried in the monastery. He also had specific wishes for the funeral: the executors of the will would order a grey cloth of fine quality eight ells long, which would be placed on his sarcophagus during the ceremony and his best cloak was to be placed on the cloth. After the funeral, these belongings were to remain in the monastery's possession, and he also donated a book of devotional content in German to the abbess and a psalter written in German to the lay brothers. The will thus gives a rare glimpse into the devotional relationship between Marienkrone and one of its benefactors.⁵¹⁴

Furthermore, Gerd Blome occurs in the documents regarding Marienkrone on several occasions. On 21 January 1480 he issued a letter where he declared himself owing sister Kyneke in Marienkrone 200 marks for her life annuity in the monastery. Kyneke is titled as his "vedderken" which meant that she probably was his niece or perhaps his aunt.⁵¹⁵ Gerd Blome was possibly also a representative of the second generation of his family who supported the Birgittines. Among the councillors who founded Marienkrone was the burgomaster Heinrich Blome who probably was related to Gerd Blome in some way, possibly his father. Accordingly, also members of the Blome family were Birgittine benefactors for at least two generations.⁵¹⁶

⁵¹² StAS, Test. 1, nr. 556, 570, 575, 645, 665, 689, 795, 806, 808, 843, 875, 881, 917, 957.

⁵¹³ In the *Liber Memorialis*, an entry dated around 25 December 1427 describes the heirs of a woman named Ghebbeke who confirmed their mother's donation of a sixteen-mark rent in Gustow in Schprode on Rügen which she had transferred it to the Monastery via the squires von Platen and that the letter concerning the lease was drawn up by a notary. This letter has not survived but it seems likely that this is the same Ghebbeke who also endowed Marienkrone in her will. LM V nr 31, 25 December 1427. StAS, Test. 1, nr 556, 612 645, 689, 778.

⁵¹⁴ This was though not the only book donation to the monastery. In will number 346 of 1446, a book ornated with a blood red stone on its cover donated to the monastery, according to Schildhauer who does not give any further information on the bequest. See Schildhauer 2000, 78.

⁵¹⁵ 'Vedderke' in Middle-low German can either refer to a niece or an aunt. Schiller and Lübben 1880, 217.

⁵¹⁶ StAS UMarienkrone 101 & 106; LM II 559.

Moreover, Gerd Blom was connected to Marienkrone in other terms than as a benefactor. He and his son, who also was named Gerd, acted as sealing witnesses together with two Birgittine brothers and other members of the Town Council representing Marienkrone in 1477. The errand concerned settlement of rents in the village Jarkvitz.⁵¹⁷ Gerd Blome the elder also sealed a charter along the other councillors in 1450, then as an alderman of the cloth merchants, when the Town Council acknowledged that Mathias von der Lippe had bought the village Seelvitz on Rügen on behalf of Marienkrone.⁵¹⁸ Thus the wills and other documents from Marienkrone demonstrate that certain circles in the Town Council and among the aldermen of the Cloth Merchant Company were actively supporting the Birgittines, not only as benefactors but also when practical issues concerning the monastery's landed possessions were negotiated and settled.

The testamentary gifts given by persons who were members of the two leading institutions of Stralsund, the Town Council and the cloth merchant company, were generally higher than the endowments by others to Marienkrone. The wills of councillors and aldermen were usually consisting of quite high bequests. Accordingly, when these persons directed costly bequests to the Birgittines, that was not necessarily a token of their particular interest in Marienkrone since their testamentary gifts overall were higher than the average. The circle of Birgittine benefactors tied to the Town Council and the other leading companies and brotherhoods in the town is thus supported by the fact that persons connected to them not only commemorated Marienkrone in their wills, but also acted as sealing witnesses on behalf of the monastery. They were in this sense interacting with the Birgittines also in other errands.⁵¹⁹

The many testamentary gifts by persons belonging to the urban elite who endowed Marienkrone among other religious houses in their wills do not stand out in comparison to endowments of other religious institutions in and around Stralund. Additionally, since the abbesses were daughters of prominent families

⁵¹⁷ StAS UMarienkrone 94a.

⁵¹⁸ StAS UMarienkrone 61.

⁵¹⁹ At least these following persons with connection to the Town Council and the Cloth Merchant Company commemorated Marienkrone: 20.6.1457 Johan Bere, burgomaster, 20 marks (Test. 629); 11.1.1480 Lubbrecht Bere, son of burgomaster Johann Bere, 20 marks (Test. 712); 11.2.1421 Clawes Bischoff, burgomaster 10 marks; 28.3.1472 Gerd Blome, burgomaster, burial (Test. 689); 15.5.1422 Arnd Brandenburg, councillor, 6 marks (Test. 540); 22.6.1428 Ghebbecke Brandenburg, wife of Everd Brandenburg, alderman of the Cloth Merchant Company, for burial in the monastery (Test. 556); 17.3.1456 Ivar Closterman, provisor 10 mark (Test. 628); 21.6.1485 Mathias Darne, burgomaster, a rent of 8 marks in Wittow (Test. 737); 9.2.1449 Heinrich von Haren, councillor, 10 marks (Test. 615); 2.6.1468 Hermen Manegold, councillor, 5 marks (Test. 652); 1.6.1474 Everd von Molen, councillor, 1 Rh. fl. (Test. 691); 24.3.1498 Roloff Möller, burgomaster, 60 marks (Test. 817); 8.8.1435 Conrad (Kurd) v. Orden, 5 marks (Test. 584); 25.7.1464 Hinrik v. Orden, 50 marks (test 651); (13.7.1456) Simon v. Orden + his sons Hinrik and Gories (StAS, UMarienkrone nr. 74); 1.8.1448 Ludeke v. Odmersen, alderman of the Cloth Merchant Company, 20 marks (Test. 612); 4.5.1468 Johannes Swarte, burgomaster, 2 marks (Test. 666); 21.3.1475 Otto Voghe, burgomaster, 20 marks for construction (Test. 696); 12.9.1433 Gottskalk Widdenbrugge, councillor 10 marks (Test. 581); 10.2.1452 Molteke Wittow, widow of the councillor Nicholas Rötger, 20 marks (Test. 852).

that had connection to the Cloth Merchants Company and the Town Council, their connections confirm the mutual tie between the monastery and the urban elite. Accordingly, some clusters around the families von Orden, Lippe, Blome, and Hiddinghen are distinguishable although the connections cannot be studied in detail.

Marienkronen as creditor

The main part of the documents from Marienkronen in the Stralsund City Archives concern investments that the monastery made in landed property in the Stralsund region and on Rügen (see map 2). The monastery's incomes were mainly based on annual rents and revenues from farms, forests, windmills, fishing waters, and meadows. These investments are documented through letters drawn up when laypersons either sold or pawned annual rents in individual farms or parts of villages to the monastery. The transactions to Marienkronen, however, give some information on the relations between the monastery and the local community. Marienkronen collected, as was customary, its annual rents around Saint Martin's Day (11 November) each year. These were paid in Stralsund marks, shillings, and pennies, or in kind, but the value of a rent in a cottage or a farm could additionally be measured in hens and eggs. In due time, Marienkronen came to possess full jurisdiction and rents from the entire villages of Seelwitz and Jarkwitz, and it either purchased or received rents in individual farms in villages located in Rügen and in the region around the towns Stralsund-Greifswald-Anklam.

In addition to the rural demesne, the monastery also received incomes from some houses or parts of them inside Stralsund. The possession of urban property and receiving incomes from rents was nothing unique to Marienkronen. The large monasteries on the countryside in Vorpommern did similarly own houses inside Stralsund. In 1257 the Cistercian monastery of Neuenkamp had a house in the outskirts of the western part of the town and the monastery of Hiddensee, also Cistercian, acquired a house in the same neighbourhood in 1306. In 1466, the Cistercian monastery of Eldena outside Greifswald owned a house in Stralsund near the Dominican convent of Saint Catherine. The function of the Cistercian houses in Stralsund was to give residence to monks or representatives of the monasteries when they needed to visit the town and to function as a basis for the selling of the surplus of the produce from their agriculture.⁵²⁰

In Marienkronen's case, the monastery was evidently not in need of a town house as residence for its representatives because the monastery was located just outside the town gates, but the houses in the town brought incomes to the monastery and life annuities to Birgittine sisters and brothers through the rents paid by the inhabitants and small businesses, such as stores and workshops, housed in the properties. The function of Marienkronen's town property is thus to be regarded primarily as a source of income to the monastery.⁵²¹

⁵²⁰ Möller 2014, 326–28.

⁵²¹ StAS UMarienkronen, nr. 80, 81, 98, 101, 140; StAS Test. 1, nr. 605, 736

Marienkronen had acquired some of the rents and farms through donations and legates, but the main part of its real estate property was sold or pawned to the monastery. As many of the sales came with the precondition that the vendors or their families could, if they wished, repurchase the estates, how many of them that actually later reclaimed their pawned estates and how many estates that stayed in the monastery's possession is though uncertain. Marienkronen did accordingly quickly accumulate enough wealth to start reinvesting it in rents and farmland.⁵²²

Not only Marienkronen arranged the economy based on investments in rents as this was common practice at the Pomeranian monasteries. Gudrun Gleba, who has studied the economy of the monasteries, maintains that the fifteenth century was a time of reform and some monasteries of the older orders were struggling with their economy. Whereas others of the northern German monasteries such as the Cistercians in Doberan, Dargun, and Neuenkamp seem to have recovered during the century and become prosperous again. At these monasteries, the financial contacts were mainly conducted with the ducal families, the nobility and the patrician families in the Hansa towns who sold them rents and incomes in farmland.⁵²³

Meseritz, Gütskow, Ziethen, Tribsees, and Barth. Some of the revenues in these estates were, however, co-owned with the duke and some of them were later taken away from the monastery. The Cistercian monastery of Hiddensee on Rügen did also receive revenues from farmland in Trent and Schaprode. In any case, the landed estates of the Birgittine monastery followed a long Pomeranian tradition.⁵²⁴

The two earliest charters concerning individual laypersons who sold their property to Marienkronen are from 1430. The first is dated on 7 January, when the squire (Ger. *knappe*) Kurd Platen in Retelitz on the island of Rügen sold a rent rent encompassing eight Stralsund marks in the farm where he lived. The price of the farm was one hundred Stralsund marks, and the prerequisite of the sale was that the seller or his heirs would be able to reclaim it.⁵²⁵ The other case is from 5 September that same year when squire Clawes Norman in Tribbevitz in Neuenkirchen parish on Rügen sold a rent of seven Stralsund marks and four schillings in a farm in that same village. The property encompassed twenty morgen farmland and was sold to a value of one hundred marks. Furthermore, Clawes Norman and his relatives would have the possibility to reclaim the estate for the same value. If they wished to do so, they would announce this to the mon-

⁵²² Reclaimable sales to Marienkronen: LM V: 5; StAS UMarienkronen, nr. 26, 27, 31, 36, 38, 42, 47, 58, 72, 85, 88, 102, 108, 110, 111, 140.

⁵²³ Gleba 2009, 367–374.

⁵²⁴ Heyden 1957, 124–26.

⁵²⁵ The von Platen family was probably settled on Rügen island in the end of the twelfth or early thirteenth century. The members of this family seem to have many connections to the town of Stralsund and the monasteries Hiddensee and Colbatz. The family owned estates, besides Retelitz, on various locations on Rügen, in Jarkvitz, Schaprode, Tribbevitz, and in Wittow parish on the mainland. See 'von Platen' in Bagmihl 1847, 134–44. StAS UMarienkronen nr. 26.

astery at Easter, have the entire sum of money prepared at the next Saint Martin's Day, and within eight days afterwards, they would transfer the sum to the monastery along with that year's rent.⁵²⁶

The finances of the Hansa towns and the merchants were especially in focus of research in the 1970s and 1980s.⁵²⁷ In the Hansa region, the prices were usually given in mark and some Hansa towns had their own currency. Stralsund had its own currency since 1319: the "sundische mark" (Stralsund mark). One Stralsund mark was divided into sixteen silver shillings and twenty-eight pennies. No study has been made for Stralsund on the price development over time, but for Rostock, Ursula Hauschild has studied prices and salaries through the accounts of the town treasury (Ger. *Kämmereirechnungen*) covering the period from 1250 to 1530. The annual salary of a farm worker (Ger. *Arbeiter in der Landwirtschaft*) in 1442 was 56 marks 4 shilling.⁵²⁸ Thus, to put the investments of the monastery into perspective: when Kurd Platen in 1430 sold a rent to the price of 100 marks, that implied according to Hauschild's calculations, that the annual rent approximately corresponded to two years' salary of a farm worker. The annual feeding cost around 1430 was circa 52 marks.⁵²⁹

The historian Konrad Fritze argues that the countryside around Stralsund became of ever-increasing importance to the town in the late Middle Ages as the Town Council, individual merchants, and religious institutions then started to invest their surplus in tenant farms and villages rendering annual rents, in cash and in kind. The rents were often bought and sold at a quite rapid pace which indicate their value as a quite risk-free means of placing capital. As an example, Fritze calculated that around 1450 the von Külpen, Wulflam, and von der Lippe families in Stralsund owned rents in eleven villages which they owned entirely or partly, nine manors and estates, as well as rents in individual farms in thirteen more villages. The possessions of the von Külpen family alone was valued to 8 000–9 000 marks, which means that they had enormous assets.⁵³⁰

The land-owning of the Stralsund burghers has also been in focus of the research by Johannes Schildhauer who in his *Hansestädtischer Alltag* discussed their possession of landed estates, based on the c. 1 000 remaining medieval wills from the town.⁵³¹ Already from the early fourteenth century, the citizens invested their capital in landed estates and in landed rents on the countryside around Stralsund. In total, 108 villages are mentioned in the wills of the Stralsund burghers. To purchase rents in landed property had accordingly become a common form of investment. The rents could vary from the smallest an-

⁵²⁶ The Norman family is mentioned in the sources from the early fourteenth century and the family had acquired large landed possessions on Rügen. See 'von Normann' in Bagmihl 1846, 147–54. StAS UMarienrkone, nr. 27

⁵²⁷ Fritze 1979, 109–117; Fritze et al (eds) 1981; Sprandel 1975; Hauschild 1973.

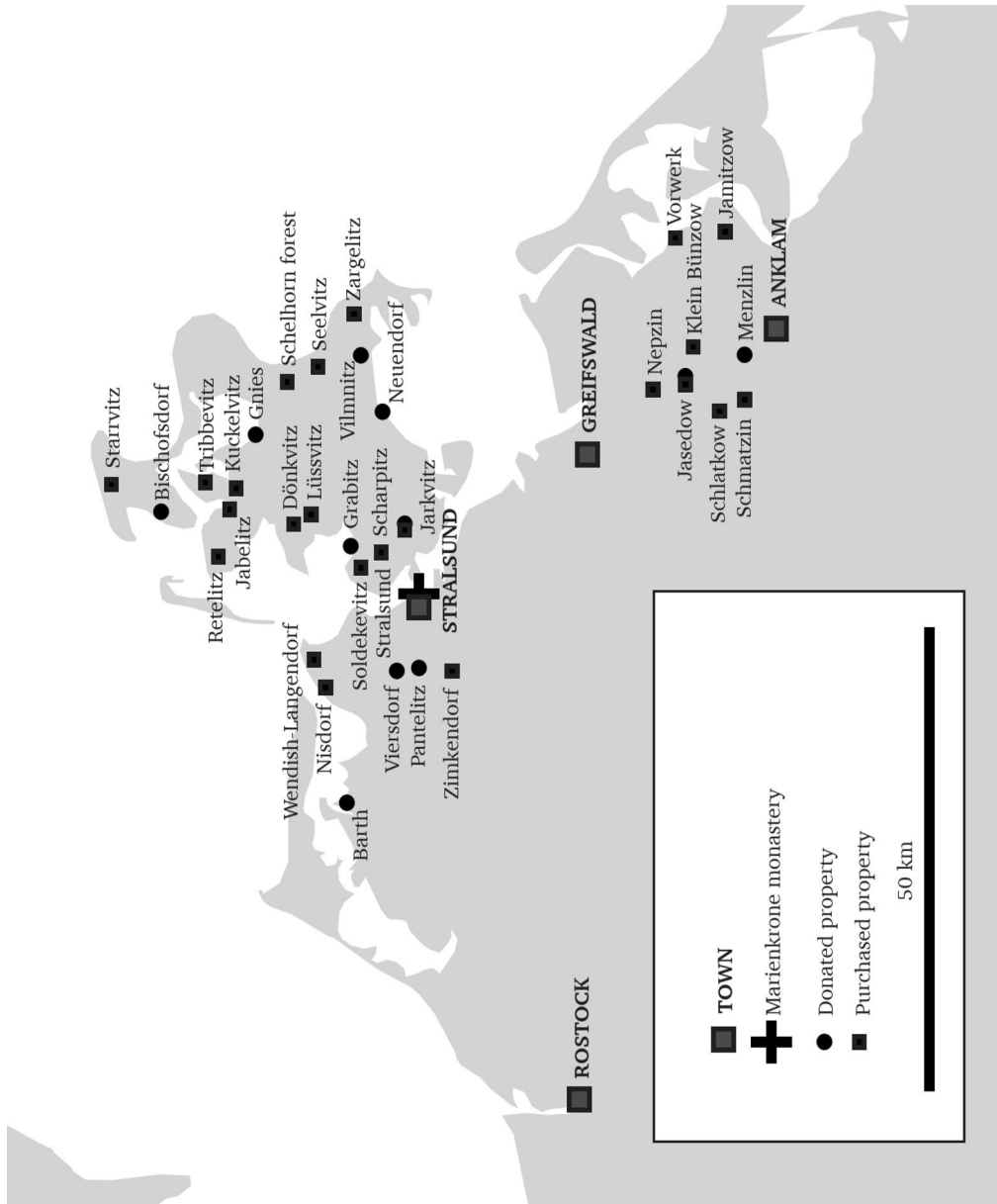
⁵²⁸ Hauschild 1973, 4–9, 38.

⁵²⁹ Regarding the prices around 1430 (approximately) 1 barrel (ger. tonne) of bread costed 1 mark 2 shilling, 1 barrel of beer 1 mark 8 shilling, 1 barrel of butter 12 marks, 1 bushel (ger. scheffel) rye 4 shilling, a pig 5 marks, a sheep 10 shilling, 1 ell cloth 6–7 shilling. Hauschild 1973, 65–113, 190.

⁵³⁰ Fritze 1967, 96–101.

⁵³¹ Schildhauer, 1992.

Map 2. Marienkrone's landed property



Map: © Panu Savolainen & Anna-Stina Hägglund

nual rents of 24 shilling up to 2–7 marks, and more considerable rents encompassing 30–50 marks and exceptionally large sums of 64–100 marks.⁵³²

The revenues that Marienkrone received from rents in the landed estates, which were either sold or given to the monastery, were generally of small or average size. The rents encompassed all from the tiniest sums of three marks up to more average sums of 11–18 marks. However, considering the fact that the monastery owned a large quantity of landed estates rendering annual rents, its landed estates in total must have brought quite sizeable annual revenues.

There are thirty-five letters of sale to Marienkrone where persons sold rents to the monastery. Out of these cases, 18 included the possibility for the sellers to repurchase the sold estates for the same amount of money that the rates were sold for plus the annual rent. If a person wished to repurchase property, the procedure was usually as follows: the sellers or their heirs would inform the monastery half a year in advance that they wanted to repurchase the estate, usually at Easter or Midsummer, and then they guaranteed to have the entire sum prepared at the next Saint Martin's Day or during the following week from the 11 November.⁵³³

The charters over sold property are generally not detailed regarding the context of the transactions, often the sum is stated to already have been transferred before the charter was made. In some cases, the preserved charter is merely a confirmation of the deal that a person had made with Marienkrone, and they are only referring to a main charter where the conditions and the price of the deal were more precisely determined. This was, for example, the case when Lubbrecht Bere, burgher in Stralsund and a son of the late burgomaster Johann Bere, in 1476 sold a rent in some farms in the village Scharpitz on Rügen:

“I Lubbrecht Bere, son of the late *herr* Johann Bere, by God's grace burgher in this town of Stralsund [...] have rightly and justly sold and transferred, now sell and transfer in pursuance of this letter [...] to the venerable and religious persons Anne Holsten, abbess, and Nicolas Boytin, general confessor, and all the other sisters and brothers and all your future generations of the monastery Marienkrone [...] for a denominated sum of money that we have agreed on and which already has been fully prepared and charged before the making of the letter, my estate situated on Rügen in Scharpitz[...]"⁵³⁴

⁵³² Schildhauer 1992, 62–63.

⁵³³ StAS UMarienkrone 26, 27, 31, 35, 36, 38, 40, 42, 47, 49, 58, 69, 70, 73, 74, 75, 84, 85, 88, 91, 93, 93 a, 95, 102, 105, 106, 108, 110, 111, 114, 117, 118, 120, 124, 131, 140.

⁵³⁴ “[...]Ik lubbrecht Bere zelighen Her Johan beren Sone deme god gnedich sy Borgher thome Sunde [...] hebbe rechtliken vnde reddelken vorkoft vnde vorlaten vorkope vnde vorlate Jegenwardighen In krafft desses breues[...] Den Erwerdighen vnde ghestliken personen Anne Holsten Abbatissen vnde Nicolao Boytyn ghemenen bichtegere vnde allen anderen Susteren vnde broderen myd Eren ewighen nakamelinghen Des closters Marienkrone [...] vor eyneme bonomeden ztummen penninghe alze wy des auer eyns syn vnde de my to vulkamener noghe wol boreth vnde botalet is vor der makinghe desses breues myn ghudt Boleghen vppe Ruyen to der Scherpetze [...]”, StAS, UMarienkrone 93.

Lubbrecht Bere and the representatives of the monastery, the abbess and the general confessor, had accordingly already agreed to the price of the estate in Scharpitz and it had already been transferred. Curiously, the value or the price of the estate was not mentioned, which indicates that this charter was a confirmation of another main charter in the same errand.⁵³⁵ However, in the eighteenth century *Diplomatarium Coenobii Mariae Coronae*, Johann Dinnies recorded that Lubbrecht Bere in 1476 sold a rent of three marks and two shillings to the price of thirty marks to Marienkronen.⁵³⁶ From earlier charters, Lubbrecht Bere's acquisitions in Scharpitz are traceable and he purchased them during the period 1427–1462. In 1427 the brothers Zabel and Magnus Segefrid sold a rent of thirteen marks to Lubbrecht's father Johann and during the period 1454–1462 Lubbrecht himself purchased rents to a total value of thirty-eight marks in Scharpitz. Simultaneously, Marienkronen bought rents in the same village, in 1444 the monastery bought a rent of four marks in Scharpitz from the councillor Laurentius von Lunden for fifty marks. This rent was however sold with the precondition of being reclaimable while the rents that Marienkronen bought from Lubbrecht Bere included all judicial rights to the estates and were not reclaimable. The example of Scharpitz shows that Marienkronen strategically invested in landed estates on certain locations. Possibly, the monastery took the initiative and approached Lubbrecht Bere asking to buy his possessions in Scharpitz, considering that Marienkronen already had made investments in the village.⁵³⁷

The assets the monastery invested in Scharpitz and other estates most likely originated from donations, testamentary bequests, and votive gifts by visiting pilgrims on the one hand, and the annual rents that the monastery collected from its estates on the other. The donated assets thus enabled the monastery to reinvest these incomes in farms and rents. However, the documented purchases that Marienkronen made are mainly dated after 1430, which suggests that the monastery at this point had accumulated enough wealth in order to start investing the surplus.⁵³⁸

Even though most purchases of rents are from the period after 1430. One earlier case, dated already on 14 December 1426, has been noted in the *Liber Memorialis*. It concerns the sale of a reclaimable rent in the village of Zimkendorf (Simmekendorf), approximately six miles southwest of Stralsund. The seller was the Town Council, and it serves as a good example of how the transactions in some instances are difficult to categorize either as sales or loans because they can be regarded as both. The document from 1426 in the *Liber Memorialis* is labelled with the heading "Letter of rent granted s. Birgitta" ("Litere patentes monasterio s. Birgitte concessa") and runs as follows:

"For all those who this present letter see or hear being read, we burgomasters and councillors of the town of Stralsund, are announcing for our sake and for

⁵³⁵ StAS, UMarienkronen 93.

⁵³⁶ StAS HS 0389.

⁵³⁷ StAS, UMarienkronen, nr. 93a

⁵³⁸ The donations before 1430: LM II 559; StadtA Stralsund HS 0004, f. 23 r–v; LM V:31; StAS UMarienkronen, nr. 25; Dinnies 1783, 156.

our successors, publicly declaring in this letter, that we rightly and justly for an eternal sale, have sold and transferred and now sell and transfer in this present letter to the honourable religious persons Wolbrecht Mollensthen, the mother, and Petrus Bleseuisse, father, and all the sisters and brothers of the two convents at the monastery Marienkronen near our aforementioned town (...) for 400 Stralsund marks, in currency that now is given and valid, which we before the making of this letter, to our content, have received and that we already have altered and invested for the needs of our town, for 32 mark rent in money requested and pledged in the village Zimkendorf in the following of our estates, the farms and cottages with all their belongings where now lives and accommodates Hans Gryse 7 marks, Busschenhagen 10 marks, Heyneke Peter 4 marks, Mathias Rode 2 marks, Hans Voet 8 marks Stralsund currency [...]"⁵³⁹

The letter further stated that the monastery was to keep the rent in the village until the council of Stralsund wished to re-purchase the estates in the village of Zimkendorf.⁵⁴⁰ Consequently, this transaction is similar to the later ones that Marienkronen made with lay persons where the vendor claimed the right to reclaim the estates. As it seems, the council had a specific purpose for the selling price of 400 marks and the money was, as is stated in the letter, already invested. The terms used in the letter is “ewigen kope” (eternal sale) and “vorkopen” (to sell), but the council withheld the right to reclaim Zimkendorf.⁵⁴¹ If it wished to do so it would, as was customary, announce it half a year in advance to Saint Martin’s Day and by then have the sum prepared to transfer back to the monastery.

Thus, the sale of Zimkendorf and other similar examples raises the question what is to be regarded as a sale and what is a pawn? No clear defining line between these two categories can be drawn. A person could sell an estate or a

⁵³⁹ “Vor alle den yenen, de dessen yeghenwardigen breff seen edder horen lesen, bekenne wi borgermestere vnde radmanne der stad Stralessunde vor vns vnde vor vnse nakomelinge vnde betugen openbare in dessem suluen breue, dat wi rechte vnde reddeliken to eneme ewigen kope vorkofft vnde vorlaten vnde vorkopen vnde vorlaten in dessem yeghenwardigen brew de erwerdigen gheestliken luden Wolbrecht Mollensthen der moder, Petrus Bleseuisse vader vnde allen susteren vnde broderen beyder convente der clostere Marienkronen bi vnser vorbenomeden stad [...] vor ver hundred mark sundescher penninghe munthe, de nu ghenghe vnde gheue is, de wi van en vor der makinghe desses breues to vnser nughe entfanghen hebben vort an ghekeret vnde vort gelecht hebben in vnser stad nut vnde behuf, twe vnde druttich mark ewiges gheldes pacht, bede vnde plege in deme dorpe Symmekendorpe van vnser guderen nascreuen, alse van den houen vnde hutten mit alle eren tobehoringe, dar nu ane wonet vnde buwet Hans Gryse VII ½ mark, Busschenhagen X mark, Heyneke Peters IIII mark, Mathias Rode II ½ mark, Hans Voet VIII mark sundescher munthe.” LM V:5.

⁵⁴⁰ I have not been able to locate Simmekendorf but according to an eighteenth-century treatise on the Pomeranian landscape the village was located in the Stralsund area. Dähnert 1767, 142.

⁵⁴¹ Besides the terminology “kope” that is used in the letter is “entvriegen” which in modern German means “entledigen”, or in English, to “dispose of” and further in the same sentence is also the word “wedderlosen” which according to Schiller-Lübbers’s Middle Low German dictionary meant “Wiederlösung” (to redeem) or “Zurückkauf der Rente” (to re-purchase a rent). Thus, in this case it seems that the Council of Stralsund deposited the interest of 32 marks in the village Simmekendorf to the monastery, which Marienkronen was free to manage until the Council wished to reclaim it and had repaid the sum of 400 marks. Schiller-Lübbers 1880, 381 & 631.

yearly rent in a farm but keep the right to reclaim it at a later point. However, the seller or his or her heirs could also choose not to reclaim it and then the property remained in Marienkronen's possession. Despite the possibility that the sellers could reclaim the sold estates, this type of transaction was advantageous to Marienkronen as the monastery would lift the yearly rents from the farms as long as they were in its possession. If the farms later were reclaimed, the monastery was compensated with a corresponding sum to the original selling price plus the incomes in rents of that year. In the case of Zimkendorf, the sum of 400 marks would have refunded itself in twelve years' time as the rent rendered thirty-two marks annually. Interestingly, though, the council made the loan/sale to the Birgittines merely five years after the foundation, which means that the monastery already at this point was in such a financial position to purchase landed rents for such a large sum.

As was discussed above regarding the foundation of Marienkronen, the monastery is to be regarded as a project that mainly was initiated and conducted by the council of Stralsund. The monastery filled, of course, a religious function but one can furthermore argue that it also played a social and an economic role to the inhabitants of the town and the surrounding region. This economic tie became evident when reading the council's letter upon the foundation in 1421, which is copied in the *Liber Memorialis*. According to the statement of the letter, the monastery could not buy estates, farms, or any other kind of property without the council's approval:

They may not buy any other land, areas, places, or properties or any other goods (...) neither extend nor multiply their buildings if they do not do this with our consultation and with the knowledge, consent, and favour of the foreseers,⁵⁴²

This, in addition to the fact that the councillors of the town often appear in the sources regarding Marienkronen's land-owning, indicates that the council kept a close tie to the monastery not only for the spiritual services in form of the intercession that they ordered for themselves and their family members, but also in a more worldly sense when they used the monastery as a deposit for liberating monetary assets.

Marienkronen's acquisition of the village Seelvitze

Another illustrative example of such connections between the council and Marienkronen is the case of the monastery's acquisition of the village of Seelvitze in the parish of Zirkow, which was located east of Putbus on Rügen. This evolved into a complicated affair that dragged out over a period of twelve years and involved the inhabitants in Seelvitze, the council of Stralsund, burghers in the towns

⁵⁴² "Nec debent aliquas terras, spacias, locas, possessiones aut alia bona sibi comparare (...) nec edificia sua ampliare seu plurificare, nisi hec omnia fiant de nostro consulatus et procuratorum predictorum scitu, beneplacito et voluntate", LM II:559.

Stralsund and Greifswald, duke Barnim VIII, and representatives of the monastery.⁵⁴³

The starting point was in 1440 when the Stralsund burgher Henning Unrow and his son Johann Unrow, archdean of Tribsee, on 12 March sold what they owned in Seelwitz for 800 marks to Abbess Alheid Holthusen and the General Confessor Jacob Roperstorp. The sold property encompassed a rent of 57 ½ marks and 40 hens. The sale was reclaimable, and they had received the entire sum of 800 marks from the monastery in ready money before the writing of the charter. For this sum, the monastery received the right to collect the annual rent in the farms of the village. As was customary in the charters written at the official transaction between the parties, the farms and the men holding the farms were listed and how much rent they were to pay annually. In this case, the following men are listed as living on the farms from which Marienkrone was to collect the rent: Hinrik Dober twelve marks, Hans Silant four marks, Mathias Vrome fifteen marks, Claws Kronas twelve marks, Tesslaff Lokenvitz eight marks, and Hans Rades six marks and for the remaining one and a half mark each of the farming households were to pay ten hens to the monastery annually.⁵⁴⁴

As usual, the rents were to be paid to the monastery at Saint Martin's Day each year. The village Seelwitz had originally belonged to the influential noble family von Putbus on Rügen but was sold by the knight Stoislaf von Putbus in 1329 to the Stralsund burgher Johann Schelhorn for 500 marks. Since then, the village was bought by the Unrows and was then transferred to Marienkrone with all the liberties of old in accordance with the old sales contracts where the terms of ownership were further stated. "The main letter" of the original purchase by Johann Schelhorn and all the old charters concerning Seelwitz were now transferred to Marienkrone. Thus, even though the transaction had the character of a loan the monastery received full rights to the property.⁵⁴⁵

Four years later, in 1444, Johann and his widowed mother Ebele, issued another charter where Johann declared that he had pawned an additional hundred marks from Seelwitz, which he now owed the monastery. Consequently, when he wished to reclaim Seelwitz he would pay the 800 marks for the property and an additional 100 marks to pay his debt. If he or his heirs would sell or alter the property, then the monastery would have the right to claim the debt and be compensated. The next year, in 1445, Johan issued a third charter and declared that he now owed Marienkrone 1 000 marks and pledged himself to pay this entire sum to the monastery when he wished to reclaim Seelwitz. This was an exceptionally large sum of money and curiously Johann did at two occasions after the sale in 1440 pawn an additional sum at a total of 200 marks. As he was the archdeacon of Tribsee it also means that he on behalf of the bishop was the overseer of the monastery. Accordingly, both the secular and ecclesiastical authorities made quite considerable loans from Marienkrone.⁵⁴⁶

⁵⁴³ Before briefly described in Hoogeweg 1925, p. 742.

⁵⁴⁴ StAS UMarienkrone 38.

⁵⁴⁵ StAS UMarienkrone 3 & 4, 38.

⁵⁴⁶ StAS UMarienkrone 42 & 43.

On 17 January 1450, a notary instrument was issued at Johan Unrow's house in Stralsund. In the document, the terms regarding the pledges from half of the village of Seelwitz were clarified. The letters describe how the burgher Mathias Lippe had bought half of the village from Johann and his mother, and that he had acted on behalf of the monastery. Apparently, he had resolved Johan's debt with the monastery's money. Now he had pledged half the village to Johann and his mother and put the sum to the town of Stralsund's disposal. Furthermore, he made an agreement with the general confessor Jacob Roperstorp that Ebele would receive a life annuity of four marks and three or four hens that from the incomes that Marienkrone withdrew from Seelwitz. Ebele, in her turn, declared that she agreed on the sale of Seelwitz by her late husband and her son, but she wanted this lifelong annual sustenance as compensation. The general confessor agreed on these terms.⁵⁴⁷

The many turns in the deals between Johann Unrow and Marienkrone are informative regarding how the different parties acted together and how the whole affair was settled over a ten-year period. Four months after the notary instrument was written, in May 1450, Johann and his mother sold the entire village to Mathias Lippe for 2 100 marks, with the consent of all other persons that had an interest in the village: Ebele's guardians Henning Budde, Clawes Hagedorn, and Gerwen Ronnengarven, and further with the consent of Albert Wennemar with his wife Barbara (Ebele's sister), the brothers Gerd and Hans von der Specke, Paul Symen and his wife Tilseke, as well as the burgomaster in Stralsund Sabel Segefrid who acted as a guardian of the minor Helmich von der Specke. Why were all these persons involved in the selling of Seelwitz? Simultaneously as Henning's and Ebele's businesses regarding Seelwitz were settled with Marienkrone, the von der Specke brothers, in 1446, sold a rent of eighteen marks and eighteen hens to the price of 200 marks to their brother-in-law Albrecht Wennemar, who in his turn in 1448 transferred a rent of nine marks in Seelwitz to the town's scribe Bertold Ruizen for the 110 marks he owed him. Furthermore, Albert Wennemar also sold a rent of four marks to the councillor Cord von Vloten for 50 marks that same year.⁵⁴⁸

Thus, a large group was involved in the selling of Seelwitz to Mathias Lippe in May 1450. After the many turns regarding the ownerships in Seelwitz, the whole village was sold with the full legal rights to Mathias Lippe who acted on behalf of Marienkrone for 2 300 marks in November 1450. In the letter issued by the Town Council of Stralsund the given sum is 2 350 marks, and Mathias was mentioned to have received the sum from the monastery for the purpose of purchasing the entire village. Mathias Lippe was not a member of the Town Council but he was connected to it as his father was Nicholas Lippe, one of the burgomasters involved in the foundation of Marienkrone. Mathias' role as intermediary for the

⁵⁴⁷ StAS UMarienkrone, nr. 59 & 61. In Marienkrone's archival entity, two documents were issued by the knight Stoislaus von Putbus in 1329 and 1331 when he sold the village Seelwitz with all belongings to the Stralsund burgher Johann Scheleborn for 500 marks. The value of the estate was thus nearly doubled when Marienkrone bought the estate a little more than a century later. StAS UMarienkrone 3 & 4.

⁵⁴⁸ StAS UMarienkrone 46 & 64; StASHS 0389.

monastery is another example of how the connections between the monastery and the founding families continued to the second generation. Mathias himself was a member of the Cloth Merchant Company and a distinguished person in the politics of Stralsund in the middle of the fifteenth century. Thus, he acted on behalf of Marienkrone through his connection to the Town Council even though if he was not a member of it himself.⁵⁴⁹

The story regarding Marienkrone's possession of Seelvitz did however not end with the monastery buying the entire village. To further confirm Marienkrone's ownership and rights to Seelvitz, duke Barnim VIII granted the monastery all rights to the village, including the forest Schelhorn, in May 1450. He granted them the same rights as the privileges that were granted when the knight Stoislaf von Putbus originally sold the village to the burgher Hans Schelhorn in Stralsund in 1329. No person would thereafter be able to put any claim on the village. In return of this confirmation of the pertaining privileges to Seelvitz, the duke wished for the prayers of the sisters and brothers for himself and his parents.⁵⁵⁰

However, the confirmation of the ducal privileges was not the end of the affair. As it turns out, two persons, the squires Emeke Wusseke and Clawes Bonow, put their claims on Schelhorn. The two men claimed that they possessed the right to fell wood in the forest. Marienkrone settled the claim with them during the following years where the council of Stralsund acted as intermediary between the monastery and the two men. Eventually Emeke and Clawes were judged to pay a remaining rent of twelve marks at Pentecost the following year and the monastery would let them take wood from the forest, apart from the wood reserved for the peasants. Claus and Emeke would also pay the monastery half a "laken" cloth from Leiden. Subsequently the Town Council stipulated that they would let the monastery cultivate the forest: "and after that you will put the aforementioned forest space to the sisters' and brothers' disposal as you verbally have accepted and promised".⁵⁵¹

The case of Seelvitz is complicated but interesting from multiple viewpoints when exploring Marienkrone's role in the local community and how it interacted with the authorities as well as with the locals. What becomes evident is that the secular authorities, the council, and the duke of Pomerania, acted on behalf of the monastery in awarding the rights to the village and settling the conflict with Emeke Wusseke and Clawes Bonow. The many turns in the pledging and ultimately in the sale of Seelvitz is another evidence of how the monastery sometimes functioned as a deposit. In Johan Unrow's case, he was probably not financially able to reclaim the parts of Seelvitz that he and his father had sold to Marienkrone. Therefore, he and his relatives eventually transferred it in its entirety to the monastery. Or maybe the monastery wished to permanently purchase

⁵⁴⁹ Schildhauer 1992, 122, 125–26.

⁵⁵⁰ StAS, UMarienkrone nr. 63.

⁵⁵¹ "vnde vp det se dessen susteren vnde bruderen in dem vorbenomen holte Rume vnde vrige schede schicken scolen also se mundliken annamet vnde lauet hebben." StAS, UMarienkrone, nr. 67, 68, 71.

Seelwitz and gain full landownership of it? Whoever was the initiator, the sale was an advantageous business for Marienkronen as it then also received the ducal privileges to it, with all pertaining benefits.

The purchase of Jarkvitz

Another village that came into full possession of Marienkronen was Jarkvitz in Gustow parish on southwestern Rügen, not far from Stralsund. In 1444, some burghers in Greifswald, Johannes Plate and Jasper Pentin along with their wives Dorothea and Tilseke, sold their parts of the village, encompassing a rent of twenty-five marks, to the councillor Bernd Vlesch in Stralsund. The notary instrument of the sale was drawn up in the cemetery of Saint Nicholas church in Greifswald on 15 November at 5 o'clock in the afternoon.⁵⁵² Bernd Vlesch would in his turn, first in 1470 and again in 1472, issue letters where he declared having sold the property in Jarkvitz to Marienkronen, to a price that "we on both sides have completely agreed upon". None of the two documents mention a price of the sale.⁵⁵³

In 1444 when Bernard Vlesch bought Jarkvitz, he was councillor in Stralsund, but he would eventually advance to the office of burgomaster.⁵⁵⁴ His sale in 1470 encompassed half the village and was transferred permanently, with the full legal rights, to Marienkronen.⁵⁵⁵ The other half of the village came into the monastery's possession already in 1430 when the priest Jürgen Munther, vicar in the parish of Neuenkirchen, donated rents encompassing twenty-five marks in the village. Munther had purchased the rents in Jarkvitz as late as in 1416 and 1422 from the brothers Wennemar and Albrecht Buckhorn.⁵⁵⁶ Wennemar Buckhorn, who was a burgher in Greifswald, did also sell a further rent in Jarkvitz directly to Marienkronen in 1438 for fifty-five Rhine Guilders. The rent encompassed thirteen marks in four farms.⁵⁵⁷

Marienkronen and Bernd Vlesch co-owned the village from 1444 until 1470 when Bernd decided to transfer his part to the monastery and thus Marienkronen owned the whole village with full legal rights. However, the monastery was as well involved in a legal dispute concerning Jarkvitz in 1488 when a man named Desslaff Padel put claims on half a farm in Jarkvitz. He had allegedly inherited the property through his mother, and originally it belonged to his father. However, the Town Council of Rostock, which acted as arbitrator in the case, declared that Marienkronen would pay twelve Rhine guilders as compensation to Desslaff Padel and afterwards he would not put any further claims on it. However, in the 1470s and 1480s some other issues concerned the division of Jacob Padel's inheritance in Jarkvitz, which indicates that the monastery did no longer at that point possess the entire village. In 1490, the burgher Hans von Rethen sold a rent of twenty-

⁵⁵² StAS UMarienkronen 44.

⁵⁵³ "Also wij vnder vns to beiden syden gantz wol eens sint", StAS UMarienkronen 89 & 91.

⁵⁵⁴ StAS U Marienkronen 25, 36; Hoogeweg, 1925, p. 747–48.

⁵⁵⁵ StAS UMarienkronen 89 & 91.

⁵⁵⁶ StAS UMarienkronen 17 & 20.

⁵⁵⁷ StAS UMarienkronen 36.

four shillings in Peter Stoltevoth's farm which once belonged to Jacob Padel who had assigned it to "Bernd in the council", that is, Bernd Vlesch.⁵⁵⁸ The last documentation regarding sales in Jarkvitz is from 1509 when the head of the Kaland Brethren in Stralsund sold a rent encompassing eight marks in Jarkvitz to the price of fifty marks to Marienkronen. The Kaland brethren had in their turn acquired it already in 1459 through a legate from the priest Petrus Remmeler in Stralsund who had inherited it from his father who had bought it from Bernd Vlesch. Thus, the implication of the statement regarding the division of ownership over the village in two halves between Marienkronen and Bernd Vlesch is unclear since other owners also seem to have owned incomes and farms in the village.⁵⁵⁹

Hence, the examples of Seelvitz and Jarkvitz show that the rents in farmland often were sold and purchased and sold again in a long chain of various owners. According to the documents, the transfer meant that the incomes in form of rents changed owner. In Seelvitz, Marienkronen was the main landowner and controlled the use of the land and, for example, the right to fell wood in the forest Schelhorn. To possess the full legal right to the landed estates was accordingly not the same as owning the right to collect the income in form of annual rents in the farms. Owning land was tied to old privileges granted by the dukes, which duke Barnim VIII granted Marienkronen regarding Seelvitz in exchange for intercession for himself and his family. The privilege to Seelvitz that duke Barnim VIII granted also presents a further example of how the economic and spiritual spheres were intertwined. In this way, the legal right to the land was part of the spiritual economy as it generated prayers by the monastery for the ducal family when the landed privileges were transferred to the Birgittines.⁵⁶⁰

The two examples of Seelvitz and Jarkvitz represent two different scenarios of how Marienkronen acquired the villages and interacted with the other landowners. Seelvitz was eventually transferred to Marienkronen through a long and complicated sequence of reclaimable sales while a major part of the incomes in Jarkvitz were sold, and donated, permanently to the monastery. The possibility of re-purchasing the property was part of the convention and by selling a rent in farmland the vendors could accordingly liberate assets tied to the land when needed. What this means from the perspective of the monastery was that it invested its incomes in the rents, a practice that was profitable to Marienkronen, even if the estates later were repurchased. In the meanwhile, Marienkronen could collect the rents while it held the ownership and was fully compensated when a person wished to reclaim it.

⁵⁵⁸ StAS UMarienkronen 104, 105, 113; StAS HS 0389.

⁵⁵⁹ StAS UMarienkronen 124

⁵⁶⁰ StAS UMarienkronen 63.

Conclusions: Marienkrone as a dynamic religious and economic centre

Marienkrone's significance to the local community can be traced from the remaining sources in the charters, copy books and chronicles. The foundation of Marienkrone was initiated by the Town Council of Stralsund and the project was approved by the dukes of Pomerania. Marienkrone was founded in 1421 at the chapel of Saint Mary Magdalene and was erected only 200 metres from the town, which came to give the monastery an urban character even though located outside the walls of Stralsund. Brothers and sisters from Marienwohlde near Lübeck were sent to supervise the new monastery in the daily routines of the Birgittines and their monastic rule. The plans of founding a Birgittine monastery arguably interrupted the previous plans of founding a nunnery of the order of Saint Clare. The Birgittines represented a novelty, a new type monastery in Stralsund, and the spirituality of the order corresponded well with the devotional culture of the Hansa town. The generous privileges and indulgences of the order made Marienkrone prosperous, and it quickly became a fully established monastery led by abbesses and general confessors originating from prominent Stralsund burgher families. Its position outside the town gate came to give Marienkrone close ties to the town, which also rendered the monastery an urban character: most of the inhabitants originated from the urban elite, the citizens of Stralsund were regularly endowing the monastery, and many chose it as their final resting place. Added to the religious functions, the monastery filled a significant role as an institution for elderly care.

The local circumstances influenced the organization of the monastery. The urban character and local practices are visible in how Marienkrone organized its economy and its role in the local community as the monastery quickly became wealthy and reinvested its income in landed rents, mainly on the island of Rügen and the region around Stralsund. The Birgittine landscape of Marienkrone was accordingly concentrated to Rügen. An important societal role of the monastery was its role as a creditor to both authorities and those in need of turning their landed property into ready money. Already in 1426, the Town Council of Stralsund sold a reclaimable rent to the price of 400 marks to Marienkrone in the village of Zimkendorf. The line between sales and loans is though not always clear since all such transactions were termed as "sales", but the possibility of reclaiming the sold rent, which occur in more than half of the cases, indicates that the sales are rather to be understood as pawns or loans for an indefinite period of time. If the sellers or their heirs could not reclaim the property, then the monastery could keep the rents and the legal rights to it.

Another important relation between Marienkrone and the local community was the cure of souls and liturgical services. Testamentary bequests among the Stralsund burghers were regularly directed towards the Birgittines along with other churches, chapels, convents, and hospitals in the town. In the wills, Marienkrone was less popular than the parish churches, but nonetheless, the mon-

astery acquired a permanent place among the most important religious institutions in and around the town. Furthermore, some circles of benefactors among the patrician families in connection to the Town Council and the Cloth Merchant Company can be traced. Especially members of the von der Orden, Blome, and von Hiddingen families showed an interest in the monastery. Otherwise, an especially prominent benefactor was the noblewoman Elsebe von Putbus who made large endowments to Marienkrone and entered the monastery to become a Birgittine sister herself. She had a vast personal network with connections to the political elite of the Kalmar Union and to the Teutonic Order, but she only stayed for some years at Marienkrone before she moved to Mariendal. Apart from Elisabeth, little information exists on Birgittine supporters among the nobility in Vorpommern and Mecklenburg. One explanation is that Marienkrone was firmly anchored in the urban sacral topography, while the nobility traditionally supported the Cistercians, Premonstratensians, and the Benedictines on the countryside in Pomerania and Mecklenburg. The local circumstances shaped the monastery and its role in the local community. Marienkrone came to be the Birgittine monastery, which had the most distinguished urban character of the Birgittine monasteries in the Baltic Sea region.

5 Nådendal: a rural monastery

Then we for many various reasons find it more useful, especially for the sake of the preaching, confession, and indulgence that take place and are performed within the Order of Saint Birgitta of Vadstena more than in other monasteries, that a monastery of that order will be founded there. Where sisters and brothers are sent according to God's special will in his service for the sake of all sinful humans, for their solace and remedy of their sins. Consequently, we have all together in unity with the consent of our graceful King Erik, who is not now present, founded a monastery of the aforementioned Order of Saint Birgitta on the place, which originally was intended for the Order of Saint Dominic.⁵⁶¹

Nådendal was founded on 30 August 1438, three years after the revocation of Pope Martin V's prohibition bull against the double monasteries at the Council of Constance.⁵⁶² Accordingly, the monastery was part of the second wave of Birgittine establishments in fifteenth century Europe. The timing is though also closely connected to the inner politics of the Kalmar Union, as the foundation took place at an assembly of the Swedish council of the realm in Södertälje, a town located circa twenty-four miles southwest of Stockholm, only two years after the Engelbrekt rebellion (1434–36) against King Erik. Present at the occasion were the bishops and representatives of the high nobility from all parts of the Swedish realm.

The quotation above is from the large foundation charter that was written at the assembly, sealed by all members of the council. By this foundation charter, the council of the realm altered the original plans of founding a nunnery of the Dominican Order in the diocese of Turku, as the members of the council considered that a monastery of the Birgittine Order was more to the benefit of the laity in the diocese than a monastery of another order. The Birgittine brothers would preach and, at least to some extent, hear confessions. Another motive to the foundation of a second Birgittine monastery within the Swedish realm was the contemporary political situation. The Engelbrekt rebellion was directed towards King Erik due to an increasing discontent within the Swedish realm with his tax politics and his costly war against the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein that he

⁵⁶¹ "tha tykker os nyttoghare wara fore manga handa saka skuldh, serdelis fore predican, sriiff-tamaal oc affladz skuldh, som ythermeer ær oc skeer j sancte Birgitte ordon aff Wadzstena æn j androm clostrom, at ther stichtadhes eet closter aff then ordon, som badhe systrer och brødher æræ vtj skikkadhe epter Gudz eenkanelighom wilia, honum til thienist oc syndughom menniskiom til hungnat oc syndæbætringh. Ther vppa haffuum wj alle saman eendregthelica vppa waars nadugha herres konungh Erics trøøst, som nw ey nerwarande ær, stichtadh eet closter aff forn:de sancte Birgitte ordon j then stadhen, som thenkt war til sancti Dominicj ordon" DF 2265.

⁵⁶² The prohibition lasted from 13 February 1422, when Pope Martin V issued his bull of separation, until 18 March 1435 when Pope Eugene IV issued the bull that revoked the previous one. This bull states that Birgitta had founded an order primarily for women and therefore the Birgittine monasteries were to be regarded as female monasteries and not as double monasteries. Cnatingius, 1963, pp. 169–75.

aspired to incorporate with the Danish kingdom. In 1438, the king had withdrawn to Visborg castle on the island of Gotland where he remained until 1449 when he returned to Pomerania. Even though Erik still in 1438 was king of the Nordic kingdoms by title, the Swedish realm now was governed by the council presided by the regent (Swe. *riksföreståndare*) Karl Knutsson (Bonde, 1409–70) who ruled until 1441 when King Christopher of Bavaria (1416–48) was elected king over the three Nordic Kingdoms. The council motivated the foundation of a monastery as an appeal to God in hope of stability and peace in the Realm after the uncertain times of the rebellion.⁵⁶³ Even though the political motive of the council is not explicitly outspoken in the foundation charter of Nådendal, the council evidently favoured a domestic religious order. The fact that the new monastery would have close connections to the motherhouse in Vadstena certainly must have been an important argument to the foundation of a Birgittine monastery as an attempt to tie the diocese of Turku closer to the Swedish realm.⁵⁶⁴

The medieval diocese of Turku encompassed approximately the geographical area that is modern day Finland plus the region of Carelia and the town of Viipuri. The diocese belonged to the church province of Uppsala. During the Middle Ages, the name Finland was only used for the region in the southwestern part of the country which approximately corresponds to the present-day region of Finland proper (Fin. *Varsinais-Suomi*, Swe. *Egentliga Finland*). The Birgittines were the first monastic order to be established in the diocese, but not the first religious order. In the middle of the thirteenth century, the Dominicans arrived in Turku and established the convent of Saint Olav at the outskirts of the town.⁵⁶⁵ Apart from Turku, the Dominicans also established a convent in the town of Viipuri. The order was much involved in the missionary activities of the thirteenth century and the Dominican influence over the diocese remained strong throughout the medieval period. Additionally, the Franciscans were as well established in the diocese and had convents in the towns of Viipuri and Rauma, as well as on the island Kökar in the Åland archipelago. Exactly when the Franciscans arrived in the diocese is not known and they are mentioned only from the fifteenth century, but they were probably established there already before that.⁵⁶⁶

Considering this context, the female monastery in Nådendal filled a vacuum as it not only was the first monastery for women in the diocese, but also the first actual monastery to be established. This position also brought a great interest and support towards the new monastery among the local nobility and the burgher population in Turku, which is displayed through the many donations of landed property that Nådendal attracted, especially during its first two decades.

⁵⁶³ DF 2265.

⁵⁶⁴ For the position of the Birgittines in the politics of the Kalmar Union during the reign of King Erik and King Christopher, See Olesen, 2018, pp. 67–88; Olesen, 1991, 169–219. The political situation has also in the historiography of medieval Finland during the twentieth century been viewed in a more nationalistic manner as an attempt of the Swedes to overrun the interest of the Finnish speaking inhabitants of the diocese. Maliniemi 1943, 13–119.

⁵⁶⁵ DF 98; Jakobsen and Räsänen 2018, 132–39.

⁵⁶⁶ Leinberg, 1890, 103–7; Lahtinen and Ijäs (eds) 2015.

Legally, Nådendal was located in the province of Norrfinne, which was one of the two legal administrative units in medieval Finland. These two legal units were created by King Erik of Pomerania as late as 1435 when Finland was divided into the provinces of Norrfinne (northern Finland) and Söderfinne (southern Finland) headed by the lawmen (Swe. *lagmän*). The border between the two jurisdictions was approximately drawn along the Aura River which debouches into the Baltic Sea in the town of Turku.⁵⁶⁷ The provinces were again divided into smaller units or districts (Swe. *härad*) led by the district judges (Swe. *häradshövdingar*). The main task of the lawmen and the district judges were to represent the crown and council on a local level and to hold district courts and assemblies (Swe. *lagmansting* and *häradsting*) with the inhabitants in their districts. At the assemblies in the districts, transfers of landed estates were made and publicly acknowledged. Accordingly, Nådendal was frequently represented at the assemblies in errands concerning its estates, and sometime assemblies were even held in the adjacent town Naantali that was founded with the monastery.

The foundation of Nådendal

The need of a nunnery in the diocese of Turku is addressed in Nådendal's foundation charter issued by the council of the realm in Södertälje in August 1438. The preparations of a Dominican nunnery in Raisio near Turku, dedicated to Saint Anne, were at this point well underway when interrupted in favour of the Birgittines.⁵⁶⁸ How advanced the plans of Saint Anne's monastery were at this point is not known, but it had already received financial contribution from the laity through donations and by the Cathedral Chapter. In 1433, a widow named Cecilia donated an estate to the monastery where she referred to it as "being planned and begun" in the parish of Raisio.⁵⁶⁹ The witnesses of the donation were Bishop Magnus Tavast and the knight Klas Lydikesson who was castellan (Swe. *hövitsman*) of Turku castle. Bishop Magnus has been identified as the actual initiator and leader of the project. Later, he also took an active role in the foundation of the Birgittine monastery and also transferred to it some of the estates that initially were intended to the monastery of Saint Anne.⁵⁷⁰ The bishop was participating at the meeting of the council in Södertälje and was well initiated in the change of plans in 1438. At the meeting he was entrusted with the task of finding a suitable location for the Birgittine monastery on one of the pertaining estates of the crown manor of Stenberga in Masku parish, which was donated for the construction of the monastery. The relatives of Klas Lydikesson were also involved in the foundation of the Birgittine monastery: his brother Bengt was a member of the council of the realm and he was also present at the meeting in Södertälje as one of the noblemen sealing the foundation charter. Klas' son Henrik, for his part, was together with his wife Lucia one of the local founders of

⁵⁶⁷ REA 456.

⁵⁶⁸ DF 2081, 2249.

⁵⁶⁹ DF 2081.

⁵⁷⁰ Klockars 1979, 12–18; Suvanto, 1976.

Nådendal, as the couple four years after the foundation donated the landed estate upon which the monastery was built.⁵⁷¹ Accordingly, the planning of the Birgittine monastery was overtaken by the same circle of people who were involved in the planning of the Dominican nunnery. Another contributing factor to the change of plans lies in the lifting of the papal prohibition of the double monasteries in 1435. Before this date, the foundation of a Birgittine monastery was not possible, which may be the reason why the founders first settled for the Dominicans. After the lifting of the ban and the ending the Engelbrekt rebellion the situation was different and more advantageous for the foundation of a Birgittine monastery.

As already discussed in the previous chapters on the monasteries Marienkrona and Mariendal, the process of founding a monastery was preceded by years of preparations and the initial plans could during this process change in favour of another order. In Stralsund, a Franciscan nunnery gave way to the Birgittines and in Nådendal, the project was changed from a Dominican to a Birgittine foundation. Other contributing factors speaking for the Birgittines were the generous indulgences of the Birgittine Order and the work of the priest brothers at a Birgittine monastery. Through its own convent of priests, the Birgittine monastery was not depending on spiritual support by another male monastery, which would have been the case at a Dominican nunnery.⁵⁷²

An exact date for the foundation of a female monastery in the diocese is not possible to determine, but the plans were probably commenced long before 1438. In the foundation charter, the bishop and laity in the diocese were mentioned to “for long” (*“langhligha”*) have demanded that a monastery for women would be built there.⁵⁷³ The historian Birgit Klockars has stressed the possibility that the plans may go back as far as the early 1420s and that Bishop Magnus Tavast already at this point was negotiating with Vadstena regarding the foundation of a Birgittine monastery. However, when Pope Martin V at the Council of Constance prohibited the double monasteries in 1422, the foundation of a new Birgittine monastery was not possible until 1435 when Pope Eugene IV at the Council of Basel revoked the prohibition against the Birgittines. Klockars supposed that the ban and the uncertain situation for the Birgittines may well have changed the plans in the Turku Diocese in favour of the Dominicans instead.⁵⁷⁴

The ending of the Engelbrekt rebellion in 1436 and the annulment of the prohibition in 1435 were accordingly two factors that enabled a change of plans. Furthermore, the fifteenth century saw an emerging process of state formation in Scandinavia and the Baltic Sea region. In this political context, the cult of Birgitta was increasingly centred on her as a Swedish saint, which probably was one

⁵⁷¹ DF 2265, 2469.

⁵⁷² Salonen 2011, 75–92

⁵⁷³ DF 2265.

⁵⁷⁴ Cnattingius 1963, 169–75; Klockars 1979, 12–16.

further motive of the Swedish council to found a Birgittine monastery. The foundation of a second Birgittine monastery in the Swedish realm can therefore also be viewed against that context.⁵⁷⁵

The question of Nådendal's location

All councillors of the realm who were present at the meeting of the Council in Södertälje, confirmed the foundation of a Birgittine monastery near Turku by attaching their seal to the large parchment charter that was written on the occasion. Every diocese and all the jurisdictions of the realm were represented, which shows that the foundation was an issue that concerned the whole Swedish realm. This was even more furthered by the fact that the monastery was founded in the name of the patron of the realm, Saint John the Baptist, besides the Birgittine patron saints: the Virgin Mary, Saint Anne, and Saint Birgitta.⁵⁷⁶

When investigating the foundation of the monastery it becomes evident that the enterprise not only engaged the council of the realm, but also the local nobility in southwestern Finland. The foundation charter states that the nobility and inhabitants in the diocese since long had demanded that a nunnery was to be founded in their region. The Council of the Realm appointed the task of finding a suitable location for the monastery to Bishop Magnus Tavast and Hans Kröpelin,⁵⁷⁷ who succeeded Klas Lydikesson as castellan of Turku castle. Two brothers were also sent from Vadstena to assist and supervise the planning of the new monastery.⁵⁷⁸

To finance the project, the council gave the royal manor Stenberga in Masku parish to the monastery. This was an estate that Queen Margaret had bought from the knight Jakob Diekn and its extent was further specified in a charter issued by the council two years later, in 1440. Apart from the main holding in Stenberga, it encompassed approximately twenty-two farms as well as three and a half islands. These were scattered around the region, located in both the jurisdiction of Norrfinne and Söderfinne, but the main part of the land was located in

⁵⁷⁵ Tjällén 2007; Oertel 2016; Gustafsson 2006, 205–20.

⁵⁷⁶ The sealers were: **Archbishop elect** Nils of Växjö; **Bishops:** Bengt in Linköping, Sven in Skara, Thomas in Strängnäs, Magnus in Turku, Olof in Västerås; **Seneschal** (drots) Kristiern Nilsson, **Lord High Constable** (marsk) Karl Knutsson Bonde; **Knights:** Gotskalk Bengtsson, Niklis Ärengislesson (lawman in Södermanland), Laurens Ulfsson, Bengt Stensson (lawman in Närke), Gustav Algotsson, Bo Stensson; **Lawmen:** Thure Stensson in Uppland, Karl Bonde Tordsson in Västmanland, Knut Jonsson in Västergötland, Arvid Svan in Tiohärad, Sone Sonesson in Norrfinne, Mattis Martinsson in Söderfinne; **Squires:** Karl Ormsson, Niklis Jönsson of Djursholm, Bengt Gotskalksson, Bengt Jönsson of Salesta, Karl Kristiernsson, Niklis Stensson, Bengt Lydikesson, Mattis Ödgislesson, Bo Knutsson, Ärengisle Niklison, Johan Gädda, Gustav Sture, Johan Karlsson, Gustav Laurensen, Klas Platen. The charter is well-preserved with all thirty-six seals intact. The parchment letter itself measures 25 cm x 46.5 cm. DF 2265.

⁵⁷⁷ One of the first brothers to arrive in Nådendal was Hans Kyle, who had entered the Birgittine order as late as 1436. He was close to king Erik and when the tide changed against the king, Hans Kyle joined the Birgittines in Vadstena. Hans Kyle was also a friend of Hans Kröpelin and Janken Myrdal has emphasized that it may have been a reason why Kyle chose to go to Finland when Kröpelin was the captain of Turku Castle. Myrdal 2020, 59–76; SBL 'Kyle, släkter' <<https://sok.riksarkivet.se/sbl/artikel/11904>> (accessed on 4 September 2021).

⁵⁷⁸ DF 2265, 2269; DV 480, 489, 501, 510; Klockars 1979, 32.

the neighbouring parishes of Masku.⁵⁷⁹ Even though the Stenberg manor was of substantial size, it could apparently not on its own finance the foundation, which is why the council also enfeoffed the tithes from the Åsunda district in the region of Uppland north of Stockholm for a period of thirteen years.⁵⁸⁰ This annexation also motivated at least one donation of an estate located there to the new monastery. In 1444, the noblewoman Birgitta Magnusdotter (Porse) donated the estate Ullbro in Tillinge as an entrance fee for a woman named Margit Jacobsdotter. Birgitta made donations to multiple ecclesiastical institutions in Sweden, but Nådendal deviates since the monastery was geographically distanced from her other donations which were mostly directed towards institutions in central Sweden. Thus, this donation can be directly linked to the enfeoffment of Åsunda to Nådendal.⁵⁸¹

Quite shortly after the foundation, it became obvious that the first location for the monastery in the village Karinkylä, pertaining to Stenberg, was not suitable. The construction work was already begun and the first brothers and sisters from Vadstena had settled there. However, the sanitary conditions on the spot proved to be deficient, and the grounds were unsuitable for erecting stone buildings on the site. After the Vadstena brothers, who were sent to lead the foundation, had expressed their complaints regarding the location, Archbishop Nils in Uppsala and the regent Karl Knutsson (Bonde) gave the monastery an additional estate in 1441. The bad conditions in Karinkylä were described in detail in the charter:

[...] And they have let us know, both by letter and by official messengers, that the space, whereupon the monastery now stands, is very uncomfortable to them and useless both because the ground is deep, loose, and yielding so that nothing out of stone can be built there and they do not have clean or sanitary water which they cannot do without due to the enclosure. Therefore, they could never, or seldom, be of health there because of the foul stench which is always rising from the bottom. They are also suffering much discomfort both at autumn and spring because of exceeding floods and dirt. As they cannot find a space on their own estates, that are now in their possession, that could be to their convenience and comfort for the construction of their monastery and enclosure [...] Therefore, we have allowed and given, now allow and give, added to that we already have given, an estate of the crown named Helgå in Perniö parish, with all the pertaining farmers who have belonged and now belong to it, which we with all incomes, lots, fields, meadows, works, mills and river mills, fishing waters, woods, outlying lands, and drover's roads and all incomes to the aforementioned Helgå estate and all its tenant farmers which now belong, and have belonged of old, nothing excluded, in eternal possession. [...] ⁵⁸²

⁵⁷⁹ DF 2355.

⁵⁸⁰ DF 2355.

⁵⁸¹ Margit Jacobsdotter never went to Nådendal and the prebend was two years later transferred to Birgitta Jönsdotter who already was living in the monastery. DF 2572 & 2659.

⁵⁸² “[...] Ok haffua the læthit os första badhe met breffuum ok myndoghum budhum, ath thet rwmit, som clostrit nw vppa staar, ær thöm alzstingis obequæmeleghit ok onytta badhe fore thy ath grwnden ær diwper, lös ok weker, swa ath ther kan engthe vppa mwras ok haffua ey renleghit ok helsampt watn, the ængoledhis vmbæra kunna fore inlykktet skuld, ok kunna the

Since the brothers from Vadstena and the other persons involved in the planning of the monastery had not been able to find another suitable location on the Stenberg estate, the Council donated the estate Helgå in Perniö (Swe. *Bjärnä*) parish for the purpose of relocating it there.⁵⁸³ This estate had once been pledged by Queen Margaret and King Erik to a nobleman named Gödik Fincke and his heirs. The councillors now wrote a letter to Gödik Fincke where they encouraged him to immediately hand over the estate with all underlying tenant farmers (Swe. *landbor*) to Nådendal with a promise of compensation for the entire sum that had been pledged.

Nådendal was though never moved to Helgå as another estate was donated on 5 May 1442 by the couple Knight Henrik Klasson and Lady Lucia Olofsdotter. The donation was made in Stockholm where the couple issued their donation charter of the estate Ailos in the parish of Raisio (Swe. *Reso*). Present as witnesses were Bishop Magnus Tavast and the Knight Henrik Bidz (Henrik Klasson's brother-in-law) who accordingly also had travelled to Stockholm to witness the donation. The donation was though made with the condition that Nådendal also was to be built on the estate, otherwise it would be reversed and the estate return to the original owners.⁵⁸⁴

Henrik and Lucia's donation has been much discussed in previous research on Nådendal's foundation and it has been established that the reason for terms and the timing of the donation were the difficulties of finding a suitable place to build the monastery. The presence of Bishop Magnus, who was appointed by the council to find a suitable location for the monastery, suggests that he maybe motivated the couple to make their donation. Nonetheless, the move of Nådendal to Ailos was motivated because the estate was nearer to Turku and more easily accessible than Helgå.⁵⁸⁵

The following year, in 1443, King Christopher of Bavaria confirmed the move of Nådendal to Ailos in a charter that he issued in Copenhagen. He then confirmed that Helgå would remain in the monastery's possession. Interestingly enough, he also claimed the title of founder and patron of the monastery:

[...]Therefore, our aforementioned father Bishop Magnus is humbly asking that we mildly allow and acknowledge that you may move your monastery, which previously was intended to Helgå, to Ailos in Raisio parish with such liberties and town privileges and other pertaining rights, as we before awarded you in

ther aldregh eller siælden wara helbrygdho til theras liff fore onda lucht skuld, som ther stigher vp aff æwio butnen, ok lidha the ther mangahanda ogagn badhe höst ok waar fore offmykla wæzsko ok orenlikheetz skuld, ok kunno engthe thet rwn finna j theras æghom, som the nw haffua, thet thöm ware nyttoght ok bequæmlighit thil thera bygning ok closterstadh [...] tha haffwum wij vnt ok giffuit, vnnom ok giffuum til thet wij ther för tilgiffuit haffuum, en crononna gardh, kalladhan Hælghaa, j Berna sokn, med allom thöm landbom vnder honom lighat haffua ok æn nw liggia, hwelkin wij met allom tillaghom, tomtptom, akrom, ængiom, werkum, qwernom ok qwernaströmum, fiskewatnom, skoghum, vtmarkum ok fægangum ok allom tillaghom, som fornempda Hælghaa gardh ok landbo gozom nw tilliggia ok aff alder til lighat haffua, ængo vndantaghno, til æuærdelegha ægho [...]" DF 2398.

⁵⁸³ DF 2398.

⁵⁸⁴ DF 2469.

⁵⁸⁵ Klockars 1979, 26–30; Suvanto 1976.

Helgå, as if you had moved your monastery there as intended. Which we in honour of God, Virgin Mary, and Saint Birgitta lovingly give and allow, that you may do so. However, so that we will become the founder and patron to your aforementioned monastery as if it had been built in Helgå, which we first gave you as a spot for your monastery. [...] ⁵⁸⁶

King Christopher came to power in 1441 and was not previously involved in the foundation. Now he, however, wanted to claim the title of patron and to be regarded as Nådendal's founder. Furthermore, in a letter of privilege that he issued in 1444, in Stockholm, he stated that he was patron of the monastery:

[...] In that Saint Birgitta's monastery in Nådendal, in Finland, whose patron we are, may further be built and improved [...] ⁵⁸⁷

The motive to the king's actions can probably be explained by the strong symbolic value that Vadstena, and the Birgittines, had acquired as a religious centre in Scandinavia. For the new king, who arrived in Denmark in 1439 from Bavaria, the support of the Birgittines and claiming the title of Nådendal's founder was a means of legitimising his position, primarily in the Swedish realm. King Christopher claiming the title of patron to Nådendal can be contrasted to the actions of his successor King Karl Knutsson (Bonde). In 1457, King Karl issued a letter of privilege on behalf of Nådendal where he did not title himself patron of the monastery, even though he, as intermediary ruler of the Swedish Realm in 1438, was presiding the meeting in Södertälje where the decision to Nådendal's foundation was made. Despite his active role in the foundation, Karl Knutsson did not claim the title of being its patron. Neither his successors, King Christian I, King Hans, nor Regent Sten Sture the elder, titled themselves as patrons of Nådendal. ⁵⁸⁸ Against this background, claiming the title of patron of Nådendal seems having been especially important to King Christopher. When he came to power as king in Denmark in 1440 and subsequently in Sweden in 1441, he continued on the road that his predecessor King Erik had taken in promoting the Birgittines and the cult of Saint Birgitta. The name Nådendal (Lat. *Vallis Gratiae*) has often been connected to King Christopher, as he also participated in the foundation of the Bavarian Birgittine monastery Gnadenberg (Lat. *Mons Gratiae*) which his parents founded around 1420 near Altdorf in the Nuremberg region. Christopher was of

⁵⁸⁶ “[...] Therefore bidhir for:de waar fadher biscop Magnus oc i ydmykelica, at wij wildum milde-
ligha vnna och tillstædiæ ati matten flytthiæ idhert closter, som i för tenkt haffden till Helgha,
jn till for:da Ayles i Resa sokn met swaadane friihet oc priuilegiis vm köptorp oc annar tilhø-
rilsse, som wij idher för vnt haffdum i Helgha, vm i haffdin thiit idhert closter fört som för
wor tilempnat, hwilkit wij i Gudhs hedher, juncfru Marie oc sancte Birgitte kerlica vnnom och
tilladhum, ati oc swaa göræ maghum, thoch swaa at wij bliue fundator oc patrone tiil for:de
ethert closter liigherwiis som thet bygdht wora i Helga, som wij ethir först till closter stædh
vnt hathæ. [...]” DF 2539.

⁵⁸⁷ “[...] pa thet at Sancte Birgitte Clostre i Nadendall i Finland som wi patron til ære maa the
ydermere bygges oc forbedres.[...]” DF 2588.

⁵⁸⁸ **Karl Knutsson**: DF 2322 (as regent), 2328 (as regent), 2355 (on behalf of the Swedish Council), 2398 (on behalf of the Swedish Council), 2761 (as King); **King Christian I**: 3049, 3050, 3063; **Regent Sten Sture the elder**: DF 3516, 3873, 3874, 4211, 4369, 4876; **King Hans I**: DF 4838; **Regent Svante Nilsson**: DF 5024; **Regent Sten Sture the younger**: DF 5670.

the house Wittelsbach and his parents were Count Palatine Johann of Neumarkt (1383–1443) and Duchess Catherine of Pomerania (King Erik's sister, 1390–1426). It has traditionally been presumed that the name of the new monastery outside Turku was influenced by King Christopher. However, this claim is wrong as the name Nådendal was used already before he was arrived in Denmark and in Sweden. The earliest use of the name is in a letter of protection of the monastery issued on 31 January 1440 by Regent Karl Knutsson.⁵⁸⁹ Nevertheless, the chance of participating in such a major foundation was of importance to the new king who wished to consolidate his power in the three Nordic kingdoms. Supporting the Birgittines and becoming founder and patron of Nådendal was part of his programme.⁵⁹⁰

The foundation of Nådendal can accordingly best be described as a co-operation between the bishop of Turku and the local nobility on the one hand, and the Swedish council of the realm and the regents of the Kalmar Union on the other. Bishop Magnus Tavast, who was one of the main actors behind the foundation, had showed a special interest towards the cult of Saint Birgitta already prior to the foundation of Nådendal. In 1421 he founded an altar in the Cathedral of Turku in honour of Corpus Christi, all angels, and Saint Birgitta. This action has been interpreted as a manifestation of the bishop's interest in promoting the cult of Saint Birgitta. His remains were also buried in the same choir as the altar.⁵⁹¹

The correspondence between Vadstena and Nådendal remained frequent after the sisters and brothers from Vadstena who had participated in the foundation returned to the motherhouse. Local women and men from the neighbouring parishes of Nådendal also joined the monastic community early on, either to enter one of the convents or to live there as lay sisters and brothers. However, monastic life in Nådendal must have been rather temporary in the beginning before the convent buildings and the church were erected, just as was the case at Marienkrona and Mariendal. The construction of Nådendal lasted for two decades and the monastery could be officially inaugurated by Bishop Konrad Bidz in 1462.⁵⁹²

Nådendal's ties to the regents

During the years after the foundation, Nådendal received extensive tax privileges from the council of the realm and the regents. The ten-year enfeoffment of the Åsund district, in addition to the royal estates that were donated to Nådendal, was an important contribution to sustain the new monastery economically. Moreover, the pertaining farms to the monastery's estates were liberated from all tithes and taxes so that Nådendal could benefit from all the incomes from their produce.⁵⁹³

⁵⁸⁹ DF 2322.

⁵⁹⁰ Olesen 2016, 67–87; Olesen 1991, 169–219.

⁵⁹¹ REA 391.

⁵⁹² Klockars 1979; DF 3185.

⁵⁹³ DF 2265, 2355, 2398.

Even though the town of Turku was not far from Nådendal, none of the locations where the monastery was planned were located close enough so that visitors could easily reach them from Turku. Ailos in Raisio, where Nådendal ultimately was constructed, was located closer to the town, but still about half a day's journey by foot from the town of Turku (c. 16 km). Consequently, lodging for visitors was needed at the monastery. In the same charter where Nådendal received the Helgå estate, the Council of the Realm also decided to found a town in the immediate vicinity of the monastery. The motive for the foundation of the town is stated as follows:

Further, so that the monastery will not be burdened by continuous visits or bothered by arriving people, we have granted and permitted, grant and permit, a market place to be built at the same location where the sisters and brothers, with the advise of the Bishop and several good men of the land, choose and select the place of their monastery, where lodgers, innkeepers, and stable masters can be established, where pilgrims and other travelling people will find shelter for themselves and their horses. And the burghers who settle there, may have salt, hops, iron, cloths, and other goods of tradesmen which they freely may sell with impunity to farmers and others who they see fit. And so, we grant the aforementioned burghers that they may enjoy town privileges and implement the same town justice and law book, liberties, and privileges granted other trading towns and marketplaces in the kingdom [...]⁵⁹⁴

Trade in medieval Sweden was prohibited outside the towns and marketplaces that were granted town privileges. The town which was founded near Nådendal received the same privileges as other towns, which implied the full right to perform trade. The new town would thus also implement the town law,⁵⁹⁵ which meant that it would have a council and a town hall (Swe. *rådstuga*). It may seem strange that another town was founded so near the larger town of Turku, but in practice, the town of Naantali would remain small, and its main purpose was to sustain the necessary infrastructure around the monastery. Because the Birgittine monasteries became religious centres and attracted many pilgrims, the vis-

⁵⁹⁴ " Item ther vppa ath clostrit ey skuli thungas aff idhekeleghe gæstning ok aff tilkomanda folke omaak lydha, tha haffwum wij vnt ok tillathit vnnon ok tillathum, ath widh sama rwmit, ther fornempda syster ok brödher met biscopens ok flere godha manna radhe ther j landet kesa ok vtwælia thera closterstadh, skal ok maghe byggias et köptorp ther herbergherara, krögara ok fodhermarska agha vtj wara som pelagrimum ok wæghfarande folke skulu skepa thera barning til sik och sina hæsta. Ok the borghara ther inne byggiandæ wardha, magho haffua salt, humbla, jern, klædhe och andra köpmanna waru som the magho frilegha ok aat saklöso sælia ok föryttra bondom ok andrum thöm ther til sökia wælia. Ok vnnom thöm fornempda borgharum ath the magho niwta ok brwka köpstadzs ræt ok laghbook, frijhet ok priuilegia som andre köpstædher ok köptorp j rikeno niwta ok brwka j alle matto [...]" DF 2398.

⁵⁹⁵ Since the middle of 1350 two law codes were implemented in the Swedish Kingdom: the country law and the town law. These law codes were issued by King Magnus Eriksson and formed a unified praxis based on the previous laws where each region had its own code. The unification of the laws of the kingdom was a step towards consolidation of power in the fourteenth century. The country laws were further updated in the fifteenth century by King Christopher of Bavaria. See *Kulturhistoriskt lexikon för nordisk medeltid* (Henceforth KLNLM) XI 1966, 222–27.

itors had to have some place to stay. The town foundation at Nådendal was analogue to the other Scandinavian Birgittine monasteries Vadstena, Maribo, and eventually Mariager (founded in 1446). Since the monasteries were income-bringing from their landed estates, their adjacent towns were necessary as a market for the surplus. The town in Nådendal remained small and its function was primarily to sustain the monastery and house pilgrims. The monastery and the town were depending on each-other, and the town seal was often hung under documents concerning Nådendal's landed estates.⁵⁹⁶

Nådendal also maintained its bonds to the rulers who renewed the monastery's privileges granted by their predecessors, took the monastery into their protection, and perhaps also extended the privileges. This tradition was begun with Karl Knutsson who was elected regent in Sweden some months after the assembly in Södertälje 1438. When he visited Vadstena in January 1440, he issued a letter of protection in favour of Nådendal. In the letter, he took the monastery in his protection and thus prohibited all violations and transgressions on the monastery's property. All such transgressions were laid under the punishment of forty marks.⁵⁹⁷ In another letter, issued in Turku in May 1440, Karl Knutsson acted in the name of his office as protector of the realm and forbid under the threat of penalty anyone to withdraw the tax or other annual fees from the underlying farms to the Stenberg estate, as these now belonged to Nådendal.⁵⁹⁸

The privileges gave the monastery authority and evidence of ownership in cases when the possession of an estate was questioned in court. The letters of privilege for its estates were kept in its archive and were brought to court as evidence when needed, which is also why Nådendal applied for new privileges on a regular basis when its landed possessions grew through donations and purchase.⁵⁹⁹ The letters of privileges and protection were important factors in maintaining the bond between Nådendal and the rulers as it created a sense of stability and continuity for the monastery when a new ruler came to power. Customarily, the new regents extended the tax liberties for the estates which Nådendal had accumulated since the previous letter of privilege, as well as affirming the old privileges. Apart from Karl Knutsson, such letters liberating the monastery from taxes were issued by all his successors until the reformation.⁶⁰⁰

⁵⁹⁶ Fritz 2019, 153–55.

⁵⁹⁷ These fines were hereafter implemented when the laity transgressed or violated estate belonging to Nådendal. From the end of the fifteenth century, several sentences were issued by the provincial courts (*landsrätt*) as well as the district assemblies (*häradssting*) concerning complaints by the monastery regarding its landed estates that had been withheld or abused by persons putting claims on them. Before the reformation, these sentences concerning Nådendal's estates were always issued in favour of the monastery and the defendants were condemned to pay the fine of forty marks for violating the land of the monastery. DF 3656, 4136, 4208, 4209, 4237.

⁵⁹⁸ DF 2322, 2328.

⁵⁹⁹ DF 4455 (See section on legal disputes below).

⁶⁰⁰ DF 2265, 2322, 2328, 2355, 2398, 2440, 2539, 2588, 2761, 3049, 3050, 3063, 3516, 3873, 3874, 4211, 4369, 4838, 4876, 5024, 5670.

In the same letter where Nådendal was given the estate Helgå, the monastery also received the patronage over the church in Perniö, which gave it right to appoint the vicar and collect tithes from the parishioners. The purpose was evidently to give further economic sustenance to the monastery and to create the parish of Nådendal. When the monastery in the following year was moved to Ailos instead, it received the patronage over the adjacent parish of Masku. Nådendal did, however, keep the patronage over Perniö as it still in 1511 exercised its right to elect the vicar of the parish.⁶⁰¹ Kirsi Salonen argues that the integration of the parish in Masku occurred at the time of the relocation of the monastery and that Bishop Magnus Tavast then transferred it to Nådendal. The bond between Masku and Nådendal would become strong, and the monastery received a relatively large amount of donations from the parish, which most probably was related to the fact that its parish was integrated with the monastery. Such a close tie between the monastery and the parish is not visible with Perniö even though the monastery kept the patronage after the move to Ailos. The geographical closeness between Nådendal and Masku parish was therefore also important in maintaining the bond between them.⁶⁰²

The Birgittine monasteries were as well allowed to collect taxes for the maintenance of the buildings and especially for financing the early stages of a new monastery. This tax, also known as Our Lady's pence (Lat. *Denarius beate Virginis*, Swe. *Vårfrupenningen*), was prescribed in the *Regula Salvatoris* and imposed on all inhabitants from the age of sixteen and older, in the region or realm where the monastery was located, only clerics and servants were excluded. This tax privilege was confirmed by the secular rulers.⁶⁰³ Vadstena could collect the tax from the middle of the fourteenth century onwards, but as Lars-Arne Norborg discussed in his research on Vadstena's economy, the tax-collection was variously successful depending on how willing the inhabitants in a diocese were to pay the tax.⁶⁰⁴ When Nådendal was founded, as the second monastery of the Birgittine Order within the Swedish realm, at least some of the *Denarius beate Virginis* ought to have been paid to the new monastery. Whether the tax was collected in favour of Nådendal in both the western and eastern parts of the Swedish realm is, however, not certain. Not much information is given on Nådendal's tax collection, but a letter written by the General Confessor Arvidus Nicolai in Nådendal in 1496 gives some hints that the collection of the monastery's taxes was not always unproblematic. Arvidus then reported some grave news to Vadstena regarding the state of his monastery and the troubles in the eastern parts of the realm due to the ongoing war with Moscovy. The political circumstances made the tax collection in the regions of Viipuri, Tavastia, Uusimaa, and

⁶⁰¹ In the correspondence between Bishop Arvid Kurck and the Regent Svante Nilsson in 1511, the bishop addressed the issue of appointing a new vicar in Perniö. In his letter the bishop mentions a candidate favoured by the Council of the Realm, but he remarked that the brothers in Nådendal had the last word in the matter and that they had suggested another candidate. DF 5514.

⁶⁰² DF 5514.

⁶⁰³ Hollman (ed.) 1956, 142.

⁶⁰⁴ Norborg 1958, 240–53.

northern Bothnia impossible. The tax that he named “Saint Birgitta’s pence” (*sancte Birgitte penninge*), would during normal circumstances bring 150 marks to the monastery only from the Viipuri region, and thus the fail to collect the tax meant considerable financial losses to Nådendal. This occurred at a point in the monastery’s history when it also otherwise suffered from crisis due to repeated outbreaks of plague.⁶⁰⁵

Overall, the foundation of Nådendal is to be understood against the background of the inner politics of the Swedish realm at the point of its foundation. The monastery’s connection to the ruling elite was strong and the privileges from the regents enabled it to grow in wealth and to protect its estates from claims by persons contesting the ownership rights. The support of the regents and the council of the realm is though only one side of the coin, the role of the local nobility in southwestern Finland was equally important to sustain Nådendal financially through the generous gifts of landed estates.

Nådendal in local society

Nådendal received donations of landed property especially during the two following decades after its foundation. The donations continued on a relatively regular basis until 1520, a few years prior to the Reformation. In contrast to Mariendal and Marienkrone, relatively many charters of donation survive from Nådendal. The majority of its landed estates were donated by laypersons, but Nådendal also acquired landed estates through purchases, pawns and exchanges. This also meant that the Birgittine monastery became the second largest landowner in the diocese next to Turku Cathedral and its altar foundations. According to the calculation of the monastery’s estates made by Seppo Suvanto in 1979, Nådendal possessed around two hundred holdings across the diocese, most of them located in the neighbouring parishes to the monastery but some were located as far off as the Viipuri region, Ostrobothnia, or Kemi in northern Bothnia (See map 3).⁶⁰⁶ The calculations by Suvanto give an estimation regarding the provenance of Nådendal’s estates, according to which approximately eighty-four per cent of the monastery’s estates were acquired through donations.⁶⁰⁷ The Birgittine landscape around Nådendal was thus characterized by the close ties between the monastery and its neighbours who were both from the local nobility and the merchant elite in Turku. However, Nådendal was also regularly interacting with the farmers. They exchanged fields and meadows with the monastery, they visited the town Naantali on market days and they might also have visited

⁶⁰⁵ DF 4705, 5402; DV 1000.

⁶⁰⁶ Suvanto 1976, 118–28.

⁶⁰⁷ When Suvanto made his tables of the monastery’s landed possessions, each farm, farmland, or parts of a village were counted individually and thus he counted estates donated on the same occasion separately. The reason why this way of counting may be somewhat misleading is that the charters not always specify whether the property consisted of a village, parts of the village, or individual farms. Therefore, an exact estimate of the number of holdings the monastery owned in a particular village is impossible to make. Suvanto 1976, 121, 128; Kalloinen 2018, 153–71.

Map 3: Nådendal's donated property



Map: © Panu Savolainen & Anna-Stina Hägglund

the monastery's church at the same time. The bonds were especially strong to Masku parish and its parishioners as Nådendal owned most of the estates there and held patronage over the parish church. Thomas Henriksson who was vicar in Masku and appointed by Nådendal was frequently present as witness when landed property was transferred to the monastery. He may moreover have been an important intermediary between the Swedish speaking Birgittines from Vadstena and the Finnish-speaking locals.⁶⁰⁸

The circle of benefactors: donors and sealing witnesses

Most of the donations to Nådendal were made with some kind of explicit request that the donor or donors bestowed upon the monastery. Apart from the commissioning of prayers, the donation would often finance the entry of a woman into the monastic community, either for the donor herself or a daughter or female relative. Added to the donations for people joining the monastic community, a considerable proportion of such donations, functioning as entrance fees, were made for elderly persons who wanted to live in the monastery and be sustained by it.

One of the earliest donations was made on 12 April 1442 by Bishop Magnus Tavast with the consent of the cathedral chapter. The donation concerned five estates (Montiskala, Kemppilä, Kerttula, Ylikylä, and *Böle*) in Raisio that the cathedral chapter first had bought for the convent of Saint Anne, but now transferred to Nådendal. The donation was made a month prior to Lucia's and Henrik's donation of Ailos, and the monastery had not yet, at least not officially, received its final location. The bishop's donation was made conditionally if Nådendal for one reason or another would not be realized, the estates would be transferred to Saint Anne's altar in the Cathedral of Turku.⁶⁰⁹

Undoubtedly, the donation was an important financial contribution to the new monastery, although the size of the estates was not specified. They should have been quite large as the bishop mentioned that the Cathedral Chapter had bought them from the squire Peder Ingonen for a sum of 825 Swedish marks which was paid "in gold and ready money". The money was taken from assets of the church and from alms that had been collected in the name of Saint Anne. The purchase of the estates was accordingly part of the preparations for a female monastery in the diocese. Since the Dominican nunnery was honouring the mother of Virgin Mary and the estates were collected in the name Saint Anne, she was as well chosen to be one of Nådendal's patron saints. Considering that the cults of Saint Anne and the Virgin Mary were central to the Birgittine liturgy, the choice of making her one of the patrons of the monastery was natural and then Nådendal could keep the donations that previously were collected for Saint Anne's convent.⁶¹⁰

When Henrik Klasson and Lucia Olofsdotter made their donation of Ailos in 1442, they made it for the sake of themselves and the souls of their parents. The

⁶⁰⁸ Salonen 2011, 75–92.

⁶⁰⁹ DF 2455.

⁶¹⁰ Räsänen 2009, 107–9.

estate was Lucia's inherited property of which she gave one half and Henrik the other half, which he committed to compensate her. Thus, the couple donated an equal amount each of the estate to Nådendal, even though Henrik sealed the letter on behalf of both of them along with Bishop Magnus Tavast and the Knight Henrik Bidz.⁶¹¹ The couple, and the circle around them, came to have especially close ties to Nådendal and they are often mentioned in the preserved sources from the monastery. Shortly after the donation was made, Henrik was appointed to the office of lawman in Norrfinne and in this office, he frequently sealed charters of donations to Nådendal.⁶¹²

The donations that were made during the first decade after the foundation were sometimes of a practical character rather than religiously motivated. Nådendal negotiated with its neighbours concerning the landed property that it needed for its sustenance. In 1446, for instance, the priest Peter Japsson at Saint John's altar in Turku Cathedral together with some farmers on the island Luonnonmaa gave a piece of land in a strait called Rauma for the purpose of Nådendal building a watermill. However, they specified that the donation was only for the construction of the mill and they did not give the Birgittines right to use the pertaining fishing waters. Luonnonmaa was adjacent to the monastery, and thus Nådendal and its representatives probably had searched for a suitable location for the construction of the mill and then approached the owners of the land.⁶¹³ Present as sealing witnesses were some men belonging to the inner circle of benefactors to the monastery: Bishop Magnus Tavast and the three noblemen Nils Olofsson (Stjernkors), the district judge in Vehmaa (Swe. *Vemo*) Greger Andersson (Garp), and the district judge in Masku Peder Karpelan. These men witnessed the transaction on behalf of the farmers who issued the charter as they did not possess seals of their own. A common practice when persons without a seal of their own issued charters was that they asked another person to seal the document on their behalf.⁶¹⁴

One way to identify the circle of benefactors is to study the sealing witnesses of donation charters besides the actual donors. Seals were personal identifiers as well as markers of social status and political authority. In the later Middle Ages, the use of seals was ubiquitous and spread over all strata of society. Yet only a few owned a seal, and the use of seals was predominantly a phenomenon among the nobility, although it also was relatively common that people in the towns had seals. Seal ownership was not an exclusively male phenomenon as female landholders could own seals of their own. However, the use of seals was often linked to persons holding an office such as the lawmen, district judges,

⁶¹¹ As remarked by Charlotte Cederbom, the donation is a typical example of how women's actions have been diminished through presumptions of researchers that women did not actively administer their landed property. Because Lucia did not seal the donation it has been presumed that Henrik was the active part behind it. Cederbom 2018, 69–76. See also Elina Räsänen's research on Lucia Olofsdotter's veneration of Saint Anne. Räsänen 2007, 245–61.

⁶¹² Charters sealed by Henrik. Donations: 2469, 2544, 2710, 2727, 2796, 2807, 2818, 2879. Sales: 2443, 2901. Legal sentences: 2714.

⁶¹³ DF 2653.

⁶¹⁴ Vähäkangas 2006, 99–114; Männikkö, 265–78.

town councillors, clerics, and so on. In other words, persons in frequent need of identifying themselves and using their authority.⁶¹⁵

In total, circa one hundred persons were sealing donation charters between 1441 and 1520, most of these are mentioned as sealers only once or twice, usually as a donor or as a witness to a donation by a family member. A smaller group was though more frequently mentioned in the donation charters. Those in this group can be identified by the fact that they were interacting with the monastery on multiple occasions, not only at their own donations. The men of this group holding legal offices in Norrfinne, but the women were as well actively supporting the monastery. Their donations were usually adjoining their daughters and other women who were given to Nådendal to enter the monastic community. This group of benefactors thus bridged the boundary of the monastery's precinct and the enclosure with the outside world.⁶¹⁶

The act of sealing charters filled practical as well as symbolic functions. In a time when the majority of persons were not able to read, the visual layout of the seal served as a token of validity and revealed the identity of the issuer and the witnesses who had hung their seals beneath it.⁶¹⁷ Investigating the sealing witnesses is possible through the relatively many surviving donations and other types of documents from Nådendal. The sealing practices can thus be used as a means of identifying the group of benefactors, as well as the monastery's interactions with the lay community.

The most common sealing witnesses were men holding legal offices in the parishes near Nådendal along with the bishops and provosts of Turku Cathedral. They sealed charters together with relatives of the donors. In the first generation of Birgittine benefactors in Nådendal these persons both donated and acted on a regular basis as sealing witnesses. As is illustrated in Table 3, these persons were often also tied to each other through marriage and family ties. The abovementioned group of the three aforementioned noblemen (Nils Olofsson, Greger Andersson, and Peder Karpelan) were again sealing a donation charter together on 8 October 1446. Bishop Magnus Tavast and the procurator Jöns Hansson were also mentioned as present at the occasion although they did not seal the document.⁶¹⁸ The charter was accordingly made on the next day after the feast of Saint Birgitta's canonization, which was a major celebration in Nådendal. The bishop and the four other men had assumably travelled to Nådendal for the feast day celebration and accordingly this was a suitable occasion for writing the charter when they all were gathered there. The donor, Margit Vibrudsdotter, lived

⁶¹⁵ Johns 2016, 79–90; Bedos-Rezak 1988, 61–82.

⁶¹⁶ On Lucia's donations, cf. Räsänen 2007, 245–61; Klockars 1979, 31–32, 46–47, 51, 78, 99–105, 112–13, 119–121; Cederbom 2018, 67–76.

⁶¹⁷ These sealing practices also help present-day scholars to identify seal owners. The heraldry on the front side of the seals gives information on the person's family ties or their social status. Seals belonging to the nobility show the family weapons, while the seals of burghers usually have individual signs that identify the owner. The legend usually contains the abbreviated name of the seal holder. Johns 2016, 84; Hausen 1900.

⁶¹⁸ The noblewoman Margit Vibrudsdotter confirmed her and her husband Bengt Krok's previous donation of an estate in Taivassalo. DF 2624.

since two years in Nådendal together with her husband the squire Bengt Krok as elderly and received their sustenance from the Birgittines.⁶¹⁹ In this case, all the sealing witnesses were men who repeatedly hanged their seal under charters of donation in Nådendal. Margit and Bengt seem not to have been Giving an overview over the overview over the connections and the networks of the donors is though difficult without mentioning too many names that makes the argument hard to follow. Thus, I have listed those men who had ecclesiastical or legal offices and through family connections were closely related to Nådendal as donors and sealers. In table 3 I have listed the donations and wills where they acted as sealing witnesses of donations and wills during the period 1430–98. The table thus covers the period of the first generation of Birgittine Benefactors in the Turku Diocese.

A few words on the origins and composition of the nobility in the Turku diocese are appropriate before continuing the discussion on the Birgittine benefactors in Nådendal. It is not surprising that the local nobility was engaged in making donations to the Birgittines in Nådendal since the first steps towards founding the monastery originated from that same circle. As concluded in research on gift-giving, donations to monasteries were an important part of the elite lifestyle.⁶²⁰ The foundation of Nådendal and the subsequent donations to it can thus be linked to the aspirations of the local nobility to maintain a lifestyle inspired by its counterparts in other parts of the Swedish realm and on the continent. The late date of Nådendal's foundation, in 1438, is possibly also related to the fact that the nobility, primarily residing in the regions of Finland proper and Uusimaa, grew more influential only from the fourteenth century onwards.⁶²¹

Most Finnish noble families derived their origin from immigrated nobles from central Sweden, Denmark, and from other parts of northern Europe, or from ennobled burghers.⁶²² Characteristic for the nobility in the diocese of Turku was that most families belonged to the so-called lower nobility where the men held the title of squire (Swe. *väpnare*). The nobility in Finland during the Middle Ages was generally less wealthy and owned fewer landed estates, than the noble families in the Swedish mainland. Some nobles were also burghers in the towns of Turku and Naantali and the limits between the social groups were fluctuating. Thus, the identification of a person's social status on the basis of the source material is sometimes difficult. In the charters, the nobles were usually, but not always, addressed as well-born (Swe. *välboren*) or "of weapon" (Swe. *av vapen*), while those outside the nobility were titled merely as honourable men and women (Swe. *dandemän/dandekvinnor*), or as sensible men and women (Swe. *beskedliga män/kvinnor*). Burghers, members of Town Councils, and burgomasters are also usually named with their titles. Even if the titles were not used con-

⁶¹⁹ DF 2624.

⁶²⁰ Silber 1995, 209–243; White 1988, 19–39; Jamroziak 2013, 92–123.

⁶²¹ Haggrén & Koskinen 2020, 77–100; Anthoni 1970.

⁶²² The nobility in Sweden was since the Ordinance of Alsnö (*Alsnö Stadga*) in 1280, issued by King Magnus Ladulås, liberated from tax in exchange for their cavalry service.

sistently, they can identify the social status of the persons named in a document.⁶²³ Peder Karpelan, district judge in Masku, is the person who most frequently acted as witness of donations, and other errands that concerned the landed property of Nådendal. Apart from his two own donations, that he made together with his wife Ingegerd in 1449 and around 1470, he witnessed thirteen other donation charters and acted as a sealing witness of eight sales of landed property and one exchange of pastures. He also presided as a judge at one district assembly where the Nådendal's property was disputed.⁶²⁴ His residence was located in Masku, not far from the monastery, which probably is one contributing factor to why he often acted as sealing witness to charters, as he lived only a short journey from Nådendal. The other reason is his legal office as judge in Masku parish, which was annexed to Nådendal. Peder's and Ingegerd's first donation in 1449 was witnessed by Henrik Klasson and the procurator of the monastery Jöns Hansson of Villilä. Their second donation in 1470, was witnessed by Bishop Konrad Bidz, Hartvik Japsson (Garp) (who was Henrik Klasson's successor as lawman in Norrfinne), and the provost Magnus Nilsson (Stjernkors, the future Bishop of Turku and whose family also created a close bond to Nådendal, see table 3 and discussion below). The two donations by Peder and Ingegerd exemplify how the network of the first and second generation of friends to the monastery is manifested through the witnesses.⁶²⁵

Nils Olofsson (Stjernkors), who on at least three different occasions sealed donations did not donate any property to the monastery himself, or at least, no donations by him are mentioned in the sources. However, his widow Elin Nilsdotter (Tavast, a niece to bishop Magnus Tavast) donated in 1458 when the distribution of estate after him was settled at their residence in Särkilahti in Tavassalo. She then donated the estate Kynämäki in Perniö to Nådendal together with her daughter Adlize. The present witnesses were Bishop Olaus Magni, Henrik Klasson (Diekn), Elin's brothers Jöns and Henrik Tavast, the canon Nils, as well as her brothers-in-law, the squires Laurens Valdemarsson, Jon Stensson and Olof Kirves. The original document of her donation has not survived, but the donation was described in a later confirmation charter issued in 1465.⁶²⁶

Elin's son Magnus Nilsson was studying in France in 1458 and was accordingly not present at the division of the estate.⁶²⁷ Later though, when he became bishop, he often visited Nådendal and acted as a sealing witness to donation charters. At his mother's donation of Kynämäki, he was though not at first content with his mother's donation and opposed it, but she eventually convinced him to

⁶²³ Vognsen 2018, 51–76.

⁶²⁴ Sales: DF 2696, 2901, 2946, 2947, 2948, 2949, 3132, 3260, Exchanges: DF 2811, Pawns: DF 2657 District assemblies: 2890.

⁶²⁵ DF 2796, 3454.

⁶²⁶ DF 3261.

⁶²⁷ Ferm & Mornet 2021, 882; Czaika 2007–2011, <<https://sok.riksarkivet.se/sbl/artikel/34523>> (accessed on 5 September 2021). Magnus Nilsson also visited Rome in 1465–1466, see Salonen 2020, 2–13.

Table 1: The most frequent sealing witnesses of donations 1440–70

| |
|--|
| Magnus Tavast, bishop (1412–50) |
| Lucia Olofsdotter (Skelge) & Henrik Klasson (Diekn, DF 2469) |
| Laurens Fres, priest (DF 2544) |
| Bengt Krok & Margit Vibrudsdotter (DF 2580) |
| Peter Japsson & farmers on Luonnonmaa (DF 2653) |
| Lars Ingemundsson, priest (DF 2710) |
| Greger Andersson (Garp), district judge in Vehmaa (DF 2787) |
| Nils Olofsson (Stjernkors), royal judge († 1455) |
| Bengt Krok & Margit Vibrudsdotter (DF 2580) |
| Peter Japsson, priest & farmers on Luonnonmaa (DF 2653) |
| Margit Vibrudsdotter (DF 2674) |
| Peder Karpelan, district judge in Masku (1444–70) |
| Bengt Krok & Margit Vibrudsdotter (DF 2580) |
| Peter Japsson & farmers on Luonnonmaa (DF 2653) |
| Margit Vibrudsdotter (DF 2674) |
| Lars Ingemundsson, priest (2710) |
| Anna Torkilsdotter, procurator Jöns Hansson's mother (DF 2727) |
| Anna Jönsdotter, Greger Andersson's wife (DF 2776, 2849, 3108) |
| Squire Olof Svärd, district judge in Northern Bothnia (c. 1443–c.1451) & his wife Elin Jönsdotter, sister-in-law to Bengt Lydekesson (uncle to Henrik Klasson) (DF 2879) |
| Arvid Klasson (Diekn), Henrik Klasson's brother (DF 3092) |
| Elin Nilsson (Tavast), wife Nils Olofsson (Stjernkors) and niece to Bishop Magnus Tavast (DF 3261) |
| Magnus Niklison, burher in Turku (DF 3313) |
| Margit Pedersdotter, daughter of nobleman Peder Danske (DF 3314) |
| Squire Påval Skytte & Ragnhild Pedersdotter, sister to Margit Pedersdotter (DF 3341) |
| Birgitta Nilsson (Stjernkors), daughter to Elin Nilsson & Nils Olofsson, sister to bishop Magnus Nilsson (DF 3399) |
| Greger Andersson (Garp), district judge in Vehmaa (c. 1445– c. 1449) |
| Peter Japsson & farmers on Luonnonmaa (DF 2653) |
| Margit Vibrudsdotter (DF 2674) |
| Anna Jönsdotter, his wife (DF 2776) |
| Jöns Hansson, procurator of Nådendal (c.1442– c. 1459) |
| Bengt Krok & Margit Vibrudsdotter (DF 2580) |
| Lars Ingemundsson, priest (DF 2710) |
| Anna Torkilsdotter, his mother (DF 2727) |
| Peder Karpelan & Ingegerd Jönsdotter (DF 2796) |
| Lucia Olofsdotter, will nr. 1 (DF 2818) |
| Squire Olof Svärd and his wife Elin Jönsdotter (DF 2879) |
| Henrik Klasson (Diekn), lawman in Northern Finland (c. 1448–59) |
| Laurens Fres, priest (DF 2544) |

| |
|--|
| Lars Ingemundsson, priest (DF 2710) |
| Anna Torkilsdotter, widow, procurator Jöns Hansson's mother (DF 2727) |
| Peder Karpelan, & Ingegerd Jönsdotter (DF 2796) |
| Squire Olof Svärd and his wife Elin Jönsdotter (DF 2879) |
| Lucia Olosdotter, his wife, will nr 1, 2 & 3 (DF 2818, 2886, 2970) |
| Konrad Bidz, provost (1450–60) & bishop (1460–89) |
| Arvid Klasson (Diekn), Henrik Klasson's brother (DF 3092) |
| Elin Nilsson (Tavast, Stjernkors, DF 3261) |
| Lucia Olofsdotter (DF 3311) |
| Magnus Niklison, burgher in Turku (DF 3313) |
| Margit Pedersdotter, daughter of nobleman Peder Danske (DF 3314) |
| Birgitta Nilsson (Stjernkors), daughter to Elin Nilsson & Nils Olofsson, sister to bishop Magnus Nilsson (DF 3399) |
| Peder Karpelan & Ingegerd Jönsdotter (DF 3454) |
| Hartvik Japsson (Garp), district judge in Vehmaa (c. 1454– c. 1460) & lawman in Northern Finland (c. 1460– c. 1486) |
| Anna Jönsdotter, 2 donations (DF 2849 & 3108) |
| Lucia Olofsdotter, will nr. 2 and one donation (DF 2886 & 3311) |
| Henrik Klasson, will nr. 2 & 3 (DF 2908 & 2918) |
| Arvid Klasson (Diekn), Henrik Klasson's brother (DF 3092) |
| Elin Nilsson (Tavast DF 3261) |
| Magnus Niklison, burgher in Turku (DF 3313) |
| Margit Pedersdotter, daughter of nobleman Peder Danske (DF 3314) |
| Påval Skytte & Ragnhild Pedersdotter, Margit's sister (DF 3341) |
| Birgitta Nilsson (Stjernkors, DF 3399) |
| Peder Karpelan, & Ingegerd Jönsdotter (DF 3454) |
| Magnus Nilsson (Stjernkors), provost at Turku Cathedral 1465–89, bishop of Turku (1489–1500) |
| Lucia Olofsdotter (DF 3311) |
| Squire Jeppe Pedersson (DF 3474) |
| Sten Henriksson (Renhufvud), disctriict judge in Piikkiö and acting lawman on behalf of Hartvik Japsson (DF 4316) |
| Laurens Suupää, provost at Turku Cathedral 1490–1500, bishop of Turku 1500–1506 (DF 4317) |
| Anna Olofsdotter, widow after Naantali burgomaster Magnus Friis (DF 4809) |
| Squire Jöns Håkansson of Sukkis & his wife Elin (DF 4810) |
| Brothers Erik, Arvid, Olof & Henrik Pederssöner (Lille, DF 4813) |

Sources: DF, SDHK, Ramsay 1909; Anthoni 1970.

accept it. All the details are described in the confirmation charter that she made on 2 May 1465 when he had returned to Finland.⁶²⁸ Even though Magnus at first contested the donation for his sister joining the monastery, his relation to the Birgittines in Nådendal was otherwise good. At a later point he also donated an estate himself in the parish of Vehmaa for the entrance of his nieces Ursula and Dorothea as nuns in Nådendal.⁶²⁹ This means that at least five women of the Stjernkors family entered the monastic community in Nådendal. Apart from Adlize also another sister of Magnus Nilsson, Birgitta, entered the monastic community in 1469 after she was widowed. She then donated the estate Kurkisaari in Sauvo for her entrance. In her donation charter, she further mentioned that her mother Elin Nilsdotter already had donated a part of this estate when of Birgitta's daughter, who also was named Elin, joined the female convent. Thus, Magnus Nilsson had two sisters and three nieces who joined the female convent in Nådendal.⁶³⁰

Henrik Klasson was present, in the role of lawman in Norrffinne, at the distribution of estate after Nils Olofsson in Särkilahti, but Henrik was possibly also as a friend to the family. Considering the fact that the Finnish nobility was a limited social group, one must assume that they also knew each other on a personal level. These men often met when they presided legal courts and sealed charters together. Plausibly, they may as well have inspired each other to make donations to Nådendal. Apart from the fact that they often witnessed each other's donations, the nobles frequently mentioned that their donation was made "with the advice from friends and family" as, for example, was the case when Peder Karpelan and his wife Ingegerd donated in 1449:

It shall be known to all honourable men who hears or sees this letter, that I Peder Karpelan of weapon and my wife, Ingegerd Jönsdotter, acknowledge with this our open letter, that we both have agreed and by good will, having well considered with the completion and advice from our friends and family, have allowed and given in the honour of God and the Virgin Mary, Saint Anne, and Saint Birgitta to the monastery of Nådendal [...] ⁶³¹

This excerpt is quoted from the first donation by Peder Karpelan and Ingegerd Jönsdotter. They made it for the entrance of their daughter Elin into the monastic community. Apart from Peder himself, the donation was sealed by Henrik Klasson and Jöns Hansson in Villilä, the procurator of the monastery. In the arenga of the charter, as quoted above, they stated that they had made the donation with the advice of friends and family. According to the law code in the Swedish realm, the family of the donors had to be informed about a donation and had the right to contest it if the donated property was inherited. In total, a person could only

⁶²⁸ DF 3261. He also issued a confirmation charter himself some years later in 1468. DF 3357.

⁶²⁹ REA 652.

⁶³⁰ DF 3399.

⁶³¹ DF 2796. "Thet skal allom dande mannom withirlighit vara, som thetta breff höra ællir see, thet iac Pedher Karpalaen a wapn oc myn hustrv, Ingegærdh Jönisdotter, kænnomps met tæsson waro epno(!) breffue, thet wi met bæggias wara samtykkio oc godhom vilia, væl fortænkthe met wara vinna oc frændæ fulbordhan oc radhe hafuom vnth oc giffuit j Gudz hedher oc jwmfru Marie, sancte Anne oc sancte Byrgitte til Nadhendals closter (...)"

donate one tenth of the inherited possessions, which is why the family's agreement is addressed in nearly all donations to ecclesiastical institutions.⁶³² The inclusion of friends in the opening phrase is though not that frequent and did not have the same judicial meaning. Rather it displayed that the donors were involved in a circle of people who made donations and encouraged each other to give their property to pious purposes. Among the donations to Nådendal, "friends" are mentioned in fourteen donations: all but two were made by nobles. The number corresponds to approximately eighteen per cent of the donations. The inclusion of the phrase was possibly an addition by the scribe who wrote the letter and part of his preferred formula. The inclusion of this phrase in the letters does not necessarily reveal the actual motive or inspiration of the donors. Nonetheless, as it the friends were almost exclusively mentioned in noble donations, it can also be regarded as a way to credit the persons who were present at the event and possibly had inspired the donors.⁶³³ Peder Karpelan and Ingegerd's donations are illustrative examples of how important acquaintances and relations to other persons from the same social strata were when donating property to a beneficiary outside the family.

The sealing witnesses were persons who themselves were donors, or otherwise had a close connection to Nådendal as was the case of Jöns Hansson who was the first procurator of the monastery.⁶³⁴ Another example of these persons acting together was the donation by the priest Lars Ingemundsson that he made in 1447 that was witnessed by Bishop Magnus Tavast, Henrik Klasson, Peder Karpelan and Jöns Hansson. The trio consisting of Henrik Klasson, Peder Karpelan, and Jöns Hansson acted again as sealing witnesses when the squire Olof Svärd (district judge in Northern Bothnia) and his wife Elin Jönsdotter in 1451 donated half of the estate Peinikkala (Swe. *Pennis*) in Lemu. The other half of this estate was previously donated by Elin Jönsdotter's sister, Valborg, and her husband Bengt Lydikesson, who was an uncle to Henrik Klasson and who participated in Nådendal's foundation as one of the councillors who sealed the foundation charter.⁶³⁵

The donations of Peder Karpelan and Ingered, Olof Svärd and Elin Jönsdotter, as well as Elin Nilsson (Stjernkors) demonstrates how the circle around Henrik Klasson and Lucia Olofsdotter supported Nådendal. What they all have in common is that they were linked to the province of Norrfinne. Why the nobility in the province of Söderfinne was not involved in donations to Nådendal, otherwise than as sporadic sealing witnesses, is more difficult to explain. Landed estates were donated to Nådendal in the province of Söderfinne, but mostly by persons connected to Norrfinne. The absence by nobles in the Söderfinne province suggests that the project of founding Nådendal first and foremost was a project endorsed by the noble families in the province of Norrfinne. As previously has

⁶³² Korpiola 2018a, 149–65; Korpiola 2018b, 378–403; Korpiola & Önnersfors 2018, 29–65; Lahtinen 2017, 146–64; Lahtinen 2004, 32–56; Bjarne Larsson 2010; Bjarne Larsson 2019; Winberg 1985.

⁶³³ DF 2709, 2710, 2776, 2796, 2808, 2879, 3314, 3341, 3399, 3836, 4316, 4809, 4810, 5908.

⁶³⁴ Se also Klockars 1979, 32–35.

⁶³⁵ DF 2710 & 2796.

been established by the historian Catharina Andersson, the religious donations in late medieval Sweden could also be a strategic career move for young nobles who aspired to gain political influence. By donating to monasteries and giving their daughters to certain nunneries, they could show their loyalty to the rulers who were connected to the same religious institutions.⁶³⁶ Vadstena was such an institution supported by the ruling elite. The endorsement of its daughter foundation in Nådendal could thus possibly also be a strategic carrier move. Considering the close ties between Nådendal and persons holding legal offices in the jurisdiction of Norrfinne it seems plausible that endorsing the monastery also was expected of persons reaching these positions. All lawmen in the jurisdiction were connected to Nådendal: Sone Sonesson (sealed the foundation charter), Henrik Klasson (donations)⁶³⁷, Hartvik Japsson (donation, and sealed charters)⁶³⁸, Henrik Bidz (donation and sealed charters)⁶³⁹, Henrik Stensson (Renhufvud, sealed donation charters)⁶⁴⁰.

A shift in the generation of benefactors took place at the end of the fifteenth century, but the connection to nobles in the province of Norrfinne is still visible in the circle of benefactors to the monastery. Birgit Klockars identified this second generation of “friends to the monastery”, as she called them, in her seminal study on Nådendal from 1979. She mainly focused on the persons inside the monastery and observed that around fifty years after the foundation, a distinguishable shift in the generation of benefactors occurred. Lucia Olofsdotter, who was an important benefactress, was mentioned as dead in 1498 and she was probably the last person alive of the founding generation.⁶⁴¹

The successors of Henrik Klasson as lawmen in Norrfinne were also making donations to the monastery and sending their daughters to Nådendal. However, couples who did not have any children of their own to send to the monastery, could adopt women to give as their daughters to Nådendal. On 16 June 1486, Hartvik Japsson, Henrik’s successor as lawman, and his wife Ingeborg Fleming made two separate donations that would finance the entrance of two women. The donations were made in Nådendal in the presence of Bishop Magnus Nilsson, who sealed on behalf of Ingeborg, and some noblemen who also acted as sealing witnesses of the two donations. As lawman in Norrfinne, Hartvik Japsson acted, just as his predecessor, as sealing witness of donations on a regular basis; the first time, when he still was a district judge Vehmaa, was already in 1447. He and Ingeborg were accordingly of high age when they donated the estates to Nådendal almost forty years later, in 1486. Apparently, the couple was childless, which is why they in their donations mention that they adopted the women “as their own daughters” to give to the monastery.⁶⁴²

⁶³⁶ Andersson 2013, 219–45.

⁶³⁷ Donor & testator: DF 2469, 2817, 2908, 2918. Sealer: 2544, 2710, 2727, 2796, 2818, 2879.

⁶³⁸ Donor & testator: 4086, 4111. Sealer: 2849, 2886, 2918, 3092, 3108, 3261, 3311, 3313, 3314, 3341, 3399, 3454.

⁶³⁹ Donor: DF 5171. Sealer: 4810, 4813.

⁶⁴⁰ Sealer: DF 5171, 5173, 5908, 5919.

⁶⁴¹ Klockars 1979, 125–29.

⁶⁴² DF 4085 & 4086.

Hartvik Japsson probably died shortly after his and Ingeborg's donations were made, as another nobleman, Henrik Bidz, is then mentioned as lawman in Norrfinne. He was assumably holding this office for about fifteen years, as his widow Anna Hansdotter (Tott), in 1506, posthumously confirmed a donation by her husband. She mentioned that he had expressed his wish to donate just before he had died. His death seems to have been quite sudden, as Anna mentioned that he did not have any time to make a charter for the donation as "his lifetime was cut short"⁶⁴³, which was the reason why she now confirmed it. Her confirmation was made on their estate Nyynäinen (Swe. *Nynäs*) in Nousiainen and the only sealing witness along with Anna was the district judge in Vehmaa Henrik Stensson (Rehnhuvud), who succeeded Henrik Bids as lawman. The fact that he was the only witness indicates that the confirmation was issued shortly after the death of her husband and there had been no time to call in other witnesses or to travel to Nådendal to make the donation in front of a larger group of persons.⁶⁴⁴

The connection between the Bidz-family and Nådendal was as well stretching over generations. Henrik's uncle was Bishop Konrad Bidz who often sealed donations to the monastery, but the Bidz family's ties to Nådendal stretches all the way to the foundation. Henrik's father, Henrik Bidz the elder was present in Stockholm in 1442 and sealed the charter when Henrik Klasson and Lucia Olofsdotter donated Ailos. Henrik Bidz the elder, was a lawman in Söderfinne, and he was as well related to Henrik Klasson through marriage as his wife was Henrik Klasson's sister Anna. Bishop Konrad Bidz was thus Henrik Klasson's nephew. The Bidz family was one of the leading noble families in medieval Finland as its members held both prominent ecclesiastical and legal offices. Primarily, the members of the Bidz family in the jurisdiction of Norrfinne were benefactors of the monastery. In March 1506, a month after Anna Hansdotter confirmed the donation of her deceased husband, his paternal cousin Katarina Klasdotter (Bidz) donated an estate in Sauvo (Swe. *Sagu*) together with her husband Matts Filpusson who was district judge in Satakunta (also in Norrfinne). Their donation was made on the couple's residence in Kokemäki (Swe. *Kumo*), and present as witnesses were Bishop Laurentius Suurpää and the district judge in Vehmaa, Henrik Stensson. The donated estate would also finance the entrance of their daughter Anna into the female convent.⁶⁴⁵

The procurators of Nådendal were as well elected among the noble neighbours of the monastery, when the position was not held by one of the lay brothers.⁶⁴⁶ This was probably a practical arrangement from the monastery's perspective as these men were easily accessible and could represent the monastery when needed. The main task of the procurator was to manage the estates of the monastery and he was also responsible for the communication between the monastery and the underlying tenant farmers and collected the annual fees and

⁶⁴³ "Ok mædan hans tyma war swa stækot, thet han kwnde icke ther vppo breff ok bewisning giffua, tha stadfæster iak hans ytersta wilie i the hilge trefoldighetz namn met wener oc frænders iaa, samtyckio ok godwilie." DF 5171.

⁶⁴⁴ DF 5171.

⁶⁴⁵ DF 5173.

⁶⁴⁶ Mentions of titled procurators in Nådendal documents DF 2654, 3666, 2804.

revenues from the farms. The choice of a local person as procurator was thus convenient since he was well-known to the local community and knew the farmers.⁶⁴⁷

Nådendal's first procurator was Jöns Hansson in Villilä whose parents were the nobleman Hannes van Arsten, who is not known otherwise than by name, and Anna Torkilsdotter. Jöns Hansson was often representing the monastery in various errands concerning its estates and he was often acting as a sealing witness of donations. The family residence Villilä was located in Masku and close to Nådendal. Jöns was accordingly easily accessible when needed. The choice of him as procurator is another example of the close bonds between Masku and Nådendal. At the end of the century, Jöns Filpusson (Jägerhorn) from Luonnonmaa (also in Masku), which was an island adjacent to the monastery, is mentioned as procurator and possibly his brother Martin succeeded him in this office. The parents of Jöns and Martin Filpusson were Filpus Jönsson and his wife Margit Peder Danske's daughter who also were well-known friends of the monastery. Filpus often acted as a sealing witness to donations and Margit, as a widow, donated for the entrance of their daughter to Nådendal in 1466. Accordingly, she two of her children can be seen as members of the monastic community in Nådendal. Furthermore, in 1467, Margit's sister Ragnhild and her husband the squire Påval Skytte donated two estates in Porvoo for the entrance of their daughter to Nådendal. The family of Filpus Jönsson was thus another example of how the neighbours of Nådendal supported the Birgittines.⁶⁴⁸

The relation between the bishop of Turku and the monastery was also depending on personal bonds, not all bishops were as friendly minded towards the Birgittines.⁶⁴⁹ The relations between Nådendal and the bishop were especially good during the periods of Magnus Tavast, Konrad Bidz and Magnus Nilsson as bishops. As discussed here, the families of these three bishops were also in the centre of the circle of benefactors.

When the bishop visited the monastery, he could stay for several days and Bishop Magnus tavast had built a bishop's residence in Naantali. In early October 1498, Bishop Magnus Nilsson stayed for at least a week in Nådendal and no less than three donations were issued in the monastery during this time. Two of them were sealed by the bishop, on the 4th and 9th day of the month. As the feast day of Saint Birgitta's canonization was celebrated on 7 October, this was the reason why the bishop stayed in Nådendal as Birgitta's feastday was one of the major celebrations in the monastery. The three donations issued during the week were all given on behalf of four women who would join the female convent. Many of the second generation of benefactors had gathered in Nådendal for the festivities and acted as sealing witnesses for the donations: Henrik Bidz, Martin Filpusson, the district judge in Masku Didrik Hansson, and the archdeacon Arvid. The former procurator, Jöns Filpusson, was probably also present at the celebration even though he is not mentioned by name because he at this point had, together

⁶⁴⁷ See Klockars 1979, 126.

⁶⁴⁸ DF 3314 & 3341. The donations Filpus Jönsson sealed: DF 2583, 2471, 2893, 2929,

⁶⁴⁹ See Salonen 2011, 75–92, especially 79.

with his wife, retired to the monastery's lay community and lived outside the enclosure in Nådendal.⁶⁵⁰

A rare glimpse into the sealing practices is given in a charter, which was a confirmation to a donation issued by the burgomasters of Naantali written on 7 November 1504, which was the Thursday after the Feast of all saints. In the letter, they stated that after attending the high mass at the feast of all saints, they were approached by a widow named Anna Hansdotter who then asked them to confirm her donation to the monastery. Anna and her son-in-law Jöns Olofsson were residents in Lieto (c. 25–30 km east from Nådendal) and accordingly they must have travelled to the monastery for the purpose of making the donation. She is referred to as a widow after the nobleman Inge Bakaren, who is not known from other sources.⁶⁵¹ The donation shows that donors from further away travelled to Nådendal at major feastdays as that would be a time when many men who could act as witnesses were gathered there. Anna's donation charter, which also has been preserved, was sealed by the district judge Olof Andersson in Piikkiö and the squire Jeppe Pedersson as well as the burgomasters. The burgomasters thus hanged the seal of the town under both the donation charter and later issued the charter of confirming it. The occasion suggests that the practice of drawing up a charter of donation was connected to occasions when the required number of persons, who could seal it, were assembled in the monastery. Especially when persons who did not have enough vast personal network needed sealing witnesses to their donations, the feast days in Nådendal must have been a perfect occasion for the making of charters as well.⁶⁵²

Entrance donations and Nådendal's care for the elderly

Just as Marienkrone and Mariendal, Nådendal started to accept new members into its convents at an early stage after the foundation although the monastery still was in the phase of planning and construction. The church in Nådendal received its official consecration in 1462 but by then the monastery had already taken up new members for two decades. The majority of the donations were also financing the entry of a person into the monastery: either as a lay sister or brother outside the enclosure, or to become a full member of the monastic community. The noble families who lived as neighbours to Nådendal did as well frequently send their daughters to the Birgittines to become nuns.

Historian Marko Lamberg has suitably described the monastic community in Nådendal as heterogeneous. In contrast to the motherhouse in Vadstena, at least three languages were used parallelly in Nådendal: Swedish and Finnish, as well as Latin used by the priest brothers. Additionally, some of the sisters and brothers from burgher families may also have been speaking Middle-low German. The Birgittine monastery in Nådendal was thus a multilingual community. Most of the sisters and brothers from the local society did probably have at least some

⁶⁵⁰ DF 4809, 4810 & 4813. Klockars 1979, 125–26.

⁶⁵¹ He is not possible to further identify, his name suggests though that he possibly was a burgher who had attained the status of nobleman. DF 5080.

⁶⁵² DF 5080 & 5081.

knowledge and understanding in both Finnish and Swedish. Letters from Vadstena brothers visiting Nådendal bear witness to the fact that Finnish was a language used in the monastery and that it seemed foreign to the visitors from the motherhouse.⁶⁵³ The community in Nådendal was though also heterogeneous in the sense that it housed persons of different age and of various social and geographical backgrounds.⁶⁵⁴

One of the first entrance donations to the monastery was given by the burgher Lars Goldsmith in Turku who in 1441 donated for the sustenance of his daughter Margareta who already had joined the monastery as a novice. He then gave Nådendal a meadow in a village named Sargala valued to twelve marks. He owed the monastery this sum for Margareta's stay in the monastery that year and he further bound himself to pay twelve marks annually until his daughter gave the monastic vows. Then he promised that either he or his heirs would give the monastery a donation for her entrance. Lars did not pay a full entrance fee until his daughter officially joined the sisters' convent and only then he would pay for her entrance into the female convent. The *Regula Salvatoris* stipulated that a person who entered a Birgittine monastery to profess and become a full member of its community had to be at least eighteen years of age or older and had to stay in the monastery as a novice for a year before giving vows. These measures were taken in order to secure that the persons entering the monastic community were aware of the ways of life in the monastery and that they knew what was expected of them. When entrance donations were given to Nådendal, the charters do not usually give any information whether the person already lived in the monastery.⁶⁵⁵

The charter of Lars Goldsmith is interesting also in the sense that he issued it at a point when Nådendal not yet had a permanent location. Only a year later it received Ailos and was moved to that estate in 1442/1443. Several gifts for entrances were dated in the 1440s, but the conditions must still have been rather temporary at this point as the construction of the monastery had merely begun, but this was evidently no obstacle to accept novices into the monastic community under the surveillance of the sisters and brothers from Vadstena. According to the *Regula Salvatoris*, the convent buildings were, besides the church, the first buildings to be built when a new monastery was constructed since the monastery could not be functioning without them. Accordingly, some temporary buildings must have been built on the site during the time of construction.⁶⁵⁶

Among the donations to Nådendal, thirty-six were given to finance the entrance of a person into the monastery. Twenty-three of these were made for a

⁶⁵³ Lamberg 2013, 149–93.

⁶⁵⁴ Lamberg 2011, 93–108.

⁶⁵⁵ DF 2388.

⁶⁵⁶ *Regula Salvatoris* ch. 20; The archeological excavations of the monastery and the plan of Nådendal have been discussed lately by Immonen & Harjula 2021, 85–98 in reference to the older research on the architecture, see Hausen 1922 & Lilius 1969.

daughter (or daughters) or a female relative,⁶⁵⁷ seven for a woman whose relation to the donor was not further defined,⁶⁵⁸ four were made by women who themselves wished to enter the female convent,⁶⁵⁹ and ultimately two were given for priests to enter the male convent.⁶⁶⁰

Entrance donations given on behalf of men to join the male convent are rare, maybe the competence of the educated priest brothers was considered as enough contribution to the monastery. However, it seems though that also priest and laybrothers also made some sort of payment for their entrance into the monastery. Two entrance donations for priests survive and both were made by widows of lawmen in Norrfinne who fulfilled their husband's last wish. The first was made by Lucia Olofsdotter who in 1466 honoured the wish of her then deceased husband, Henrik Klasson, who on his deathbed had uttered a wish to give a priest to Nådendal. The second was made in the same manner by Anna Hansdotter (Tott) who in 1506 fulfilled the wish of her recently deceased husband Henrik Bidz. The two donations thus manifest the special bond that the lawmen in Northern Finland had created with the Birgittines. The donation for a priest joining the monastic community in Nådendal was a gift that served the spiritual well-being of the entire monastic community and not only the welfare of the donor's soul. A priest would perform the liturgy in the monastery and tend to the spiritual needs of the monastic community.⁶⁶¹

In addition to the donations given for priests, some references of men who had given themselves to the monastery are mentioned in other sources from Nådendal. In 1488, some farmland in the village Saksila near the monastery was disputed and in the charters issued by the provincial court (Swe. *landsrätt*) and the district assembly, it becomes evident that this land was given by a man named Henrik Munk who had donated it for his entrance as a lay brother of the male convent.⁶⁶²

Some donations were made for two daughters who simultaneously joined the female convent, the district judge Sten Henriksson even gave three daughters to Nådendal, although at two different occasions.⁶⁶³ Childless couples, like Greger Andersson and Anna Jönsdotter, or Hartvik Japsson and Ingeborg Fleming, adopted women who they then gave as daughters to the monastery as is stated in their charters. In both cases the spouses made individual donations and did thus not donate together. The "adoptions" did as well mean that women who perhaps did not have de financial assets themselves to make a donation for becoming a member of the female convent also had the opportunity to join the monastic community and take up a religious life. The women who they gave to the

⁶⁵⁷ DF 2388, 2674, 2796, 2807, 2808, 2893, 3261, 3313, 3314, 3341, 3399, 3454, 3474, 3836, 4316, 4317, 4809, 4810, 4813, 5173, 5908, 5919; REA 652.

⁶⁵⁸ DF 2572, 2659, 2776, 2787, 4085, 4086, 5994.

⁶⁵⁹ DF 2629, 2929, 3073, 3399.

⁶⁶⁰ DF 3311, 5171.

⁶⁶¹ DF 3311, 5171.

⁶⁶² DF 3132, 3235& 3260; 4209

⁶⁶³ DF 3836, 4810.

monastery were naturally expected to especially make prayers for their benefactors and their parents. Thus, both parties benefited from the practice.⁶⁶⁴

Saint Birgitta had envisioned her monastery to include not only wealthy women and she wanted to secure this principle by the system of inherited prebends.⁶⁶⁵ At the general chapter of the order held in Gnadenberg in 1487 the representatives from Nådendal stated that the sisters' convent then housed 54 sisters. The female convent was accordingly not complete, but the number of sisters nonetheless exceeded the number of documented entrance donations. Accordingly, some sisters in Nådendal did not necessarily bring any landed property with them when they joined the community.⁶⁶⁶

Accordingly, women may have joined the community in Nådendal without bringing with them a donation. The sixty-two-member-ideal of the female convent was a high number and in sparsely populated regions, such as medieval Finland, the monasteries did maybe not receive enough new members to fill the posts after deceased sisters and brothers if they had not accepted persons from more modest background into their community. The remaining sources do not display if the monastery always expected the entering members to give a donation, or if proceeds from estates that deceased members had brought with them could finance the sustenance of new members who could not afford to pay an entrance fee. However, a parallel can be drawn to Marienbrunn in Gdańsk where the penitent women whose convent was annexed to the Birgittine monastery, complained that those who did not have money were not accepted into the female convent of the monastery to become full members of the order, although this monastery originally was founded for penitents without large financial assets.⁶⁶⁷ The example from Marienbrunn suggests that the Birgittines indeed expected their new members to bring a financial contribution that would cover their sustenance.

Apart from the women whose entry into the female community were financed through the donations, Nådendal also started to care for elderly people from the early days of the monastery. Already in May 1442, a widower named Mats Jönsson donated everything he owned in the village Hujala in Masku.⁶⁶⁸ At this point, Nådendal was still located in Karinkylä in Masku and in that same month Henrik Klasson and Lucia Olofsdotter donated Ailos. The case reminds of the example from Mariendal and the elderly burgher Wulfard Rosendal and his wife donated for their sustenance already in 1407. The cases from Mariendal and Nådendal show that the monasteries accepted elderly who received care by the monastery

⁶⁶⁴ DF 2776, 278, 4085, 4086.

⁶⁶⁵ Nyberg 1999, 179; *Regula Salvatoris* ch. 20.

⁶⁶⁶ At the general chapter of the Birgittine Order in Gnadenberg in 1487, Nådendal was stated to house housed fifty-four sisters, eight priest-brothers, but no lay brothers. The number of sisters and brothers given at the general chapter show that the majority of them are not mentioned in the remaining sources from the monastery. Nyberg 1974, 170–71.

⁶⁶⁷ Nyberg 1991, 161–225.

⁶⁶⁸ As he made his donation at the district assembly also indicates that he was not a nobleman as he in that case could have made his donation by gathering witnesses from his circle of family and friends. He did not possess a seal which is why he asked Nådendal's procurator Jöns Hansson to seal the charter on his behalf. DF 2471.

already from the start, just like they also accepted new members already before the permanent buildings of the convents were finished. Mats in Hujala was probably an elderly man who did not have any family that could care for him. Thus, at the district assembly in Masku, he donated all what he owned in Hujala and in Kårsämäki in Rântämäki parish near Turku. As the construction of Nådendal was merely begun at this point, the question is what it actually meant when donors asked to be sustained by the Birgittines. Mats did not ask for housing in the monastery, merely sustenance which may well have meant that he continued to live on his estate.⁶⁶⁹

Next case when Nådendal received a donation for this purpose was when the noble couple Bengt Krok and Margit Vibrudsdotter in 1444 donated their estates in the village Helsinki in Taivassalo and Kalela in Masku.⁶⁷⁰ The conditions of the donation was that the sisters and brothers would include them and their parents in their prayers, but also that they would receive their sustenance from the monastery in food and clothing as long as they lived and that one of their daughters would be accepted as a nun. This donation was renewed and confirmed by Margit two years later, as the couple after their original donation had bought more estates from her relatives. Margit's father, Vibrud Kortumme, had died leaving a considerable debt from sales contracts. Bengt Krok resolved the debts after his father-in-law in court as since the husband's duty, according to the law, was to administer his wife's property. Her consent was, however, needed when the estates were alienated, which is why Margit participated alongside her husband in the donation to the monastery. The additional estates that the couple had bought after their first donation were Ivars in Masku, Soini in Raisio, and Hadvalla in Piikkiö and Margit added them in her second charter to their original donation. The couple had loaned sixty marks plus four Turku marks from Nådendal in order to buy the estates from Margit's siblings. They subsequently donated the three estates to the monastery in payment for the debt and gave the surplus of the value for the care of their souls. Now she also specified that she and her husband would receive their sustenance from the monastery at the burgher's table ("borghara bordhet") outside the enclosure, and if either of them would fall ill, their food would be brought to them in their house.⁶⁷¹

The charter does not further specify the circumstances of the lodgings where the elderly were accommodated, but as is mentioned in the correspondence between Nådendal and Vadstena in 1496, the general confessor in Nådendal mentioned that plague had broken out in the "burgher's house" ("*wor borgare gaard*") at the monastery where no less than fifty persons had died. Probably Margit and Bengt also stayed at this house when they asked for their sustenance

⁶⁶⁹ LECUB I:4 1946; DF 2471.

⁶⁷⁰ This donation was the beginning of a series of charters issued for this estate confirming the donation. These stretched out over a period of eight years when first Margit and then their children confirmed the donation. The reason was that Margit had received some of this as heritage from her father Vibrud Kortumme who had considerable debts that his son-in-law, Bengt Krok, settled. DF 2580, 25581, 2585, 2657, 2674.

⁶⁷¹ DF 2657, 2580, DF 2674. Lahtinen 2004, 39–40; Cederbom 2018, 69–76.

from Nådendal. The letter from 1496 suggests that quite a large number of elderly persons lived outside the enclosure.⁶⁷² Throughout the fifteenth century, persons were regularly donating for their sustenance outside the enclosure. One well-known benefactor who wished to receive her sustenance outside the enclosure was Anna Jönsdotter who was a widow after the district judge Greger Andersson (Garp) in Vehmaa. In 1458 she donated the estates Uusikartano and Hieto in Vehmaa with the condition that she would become a lay sister outside the enclosure. She stated that due to old age she could not take vows and join the convent of the sisters. Instead, she pledged to live according to the Birgittine rule and adhere to the abbess and general confessor: outside the enclosure, but within the precinct of the monastery. In her letter of renewal of the gift the following year, she also wished for the same spiritual service after her death as was customary for a deceased sister or brother.⁶⁷³

The facility for elderly living in Nådendal enabled them to live according to the rule and receive food and shelter inside the monastery. As already discussed in the previous chapters, the elderly care was an important social service fulfilled by the Birgittines. At some extent, the Dominicans in Turku did also provide such care for the elderly, as the burgher Anders Kairis and his wife Margareta Jönsdotter received their sustenance by the convent in 1455, although it is not possible to know how common such a service was at the Dominican convent. The archives of the convent are almost completely lost, apart from a few documents and notices in the copy books of the Cathedral of Turku. Nonetheless, the Birgittines seem to have mainly attracted those living on the countryside, even though some burgher widows in Turku as well wished to stay with the Birgittines in Nådendal, maybe even to become sisters inside the enclosure.⁶⁷⁴

The alternatives for elderly care in medieval society were generally rather limited. Children or other close family members were, as specified in the law, expected to take care of their old parents.⁶⁷⁵ However, if they for one reason or another were not able to care for their elderly, or if a person was childless, then the private institutions for elderly care organized by the monasteries and the convents, were an alternative for persons who had the means to pay for their sustenance. As established Conny Blom regarding elderly care in medieval Scandinavia, a common sum for elderly care was three or four marks annually.⁶⁷⁶ That was also the sum Bengt Krok and Margareta Vibrudsdotter dictated their children would annually pay from the income of their estates to Nådendal, which sum covered their parents' sustenance in the monastery.⁶⁷⁷

The monastery also functioned as a private care giver in cases when a person was infirm, and for some reason unable to care for themselves. The long-term

⁶⁷² DF 4705.

⁶⁷³ DF 3073. Tuula Rantala has studied the donations to monasteries by widows and has concluded that a common practice was that they used the property they had received as morning gifts from their husbands when donating to monasteries as widows. Rantala 2018, 66–87.

⁶⁷⁴ REA 570.

⁶⁷⁵ Odén 1994, 92–108.

⁶⁷⁶ Blom 2000, 5–55.

⁶⁷⁷ DF 2580, 2581, 2609, 2674.

benefactors of Nådendal, Peder Karpelan and his wife Ingegerd Jönsdotter made one last donation around c. 1470 with the condition that it would provide for their daughter named Birgitta. In their long charter, Peder and Ingegerd described how all their other children (three sons) had died before them and as they had no other family that could provide for Birgitta, they chose to send her to Nådendal. Apparently, for some reason, she was not able to provide for herself. Her parents stated that Birgitta would not take the vows to become a sister inside the enclosure, as she due to poor health could not live a life following the strict rule inside the convent. Instead, she would live with the *focaria* ("stegherhws jomffrvr"), the kitchen maidens. The charter does not specify Birgitta's age or the nature of her health problems. Their choice of letting Birgitta stay with the kitchen maidens is somewhat peculiar considering that her poor health was the reason why they sent her to Nådendal in the first place and motivating their action by her being too infirm to to live a life strictly following the regulated life within the convent. Peder and Ingegerd mentioned that they were of old age and could no longer care for their daughter, and then Nådendal provided a secure place for Birgitta to stay. The letter does not mention if her sister Elin, whose entrance donation was given in 1449, was still alive at this point but if that were the case then Birgitta would also have had a close relative to look after her in Nådendal.⁶⁷⁸

For persons who were of high age with no heirs, the practice of donating their property to Nådendal presented a way to secure the fate of their landed property and other assets after their death. From time to time, donations were given with the terms that donors could stay on their estate against an annual fee, much like the case of the children of Bengt Krok and Margit Vibrudsdotter.⁶⁷⁹ When Greger Andersson in 1449 donated a fourth of his estates Kesoinen and Kyla in Vehmaa he also set the terms of his continued use of the land. He would continue to run the estates against an annual fee of one pound of rye and two pounds of butter. Greger Andersson may already at this point have been severely ill, as he is referred to as deceased when wife Anna Jönsdotter donated the island Villiluoto in Taivassalo the following year. The terms of her donation were that she would continue to collect some firewood from the island.⁶⁸⁰ The donations by the couple to Nådendal was possibly a way for them to decide how their property was to be managed after their death as they seem not to have had any children. By donating their property to Nådendal they could dedicate it for a pious purpose that would generate prayers for them and members of their family.

Furthermore, for persons who were nobles but not necessarily of large assets, this way of donating while still keeping the right to use the property could also be a means to meet the social expectations. The procedure can be regarded as a practical solution for both parties as the monastery did not need to find a suitable tenant and the previous owners could secure their livelihood until the end of their days without having the main responsibility for the estate. This was the

⁶⁷⁸ DF 3454.

⁶⁷⁹ DF 2580, 2581, 2787, 2849, 2878, 5080.

⁶⁸⁰ DF 2787, 2849.

case with the donation of the noble couple Lasse Bertilsson and Truda of Linnunpää in 1451 and also in Anna Hansdotter's donation of her estate in 1504. In both cases the conditions were that they would continue to use the estate as long as they were alive and the property, both alienable and inalienable, was fully transferred to the monastery only after their death. In Lasse's and Truda's example, the terms were also that the spouse outliving the other was allowed to stay on the estate against an annual fee of one pound of grain as long as they lived.⁶⁸¹

Legal disputes and heirs contesting donations

Heirs putting claims on donated property and contesting donations was relatively common. Nådendal was no exception from this practice.⁶⁸² The litigations usually concerned the lawfulness of a donation, territorial rights to farmland in the monastery's possession, or landed property that a person had withheld from the monastery.⁶⁸³ The number of legal records concerning Nådendal are few, suggesting that its property was not often disputed, although litigations involving the monastery were not unheard of. Sometimes it could even be a decade between the recorded disputes while from other periods disputes are recorded each or every second year. Around twenty charters concern legal settlements regarding Nådendal's property.⁶⁸⁴

In medieval Scandinavia, land was bound to the family instead of individual owners. Accordingly, the land was never freely inalienable, which also meant that landed property was legally regulated so that the individual could not sell or donate land without the consent of the family and kin. Land was bound to the livelihood of the family and, consequently, the inheritance of inalienable property was regulated in the provincial legislations, making it impossible to choose a preferred third party as heir above family and kin.⁶⁸⁵ In the mid-fourteenth century, King Magnus Eriksson commissioned the compilation of a law code encompassing the entire Swedish realm replacing the former provincial laws. According to Magnus Eriksson's law code (henceforth MEL) both sons and daughters inherited their parents; a son inherited two parts while a daughter inherited one part. In order to keep the landed property as complete as possible, spouses did not inherit each other, which meant that the landed estates of a childless couple was returned to their respective families after their death. Furthermore, the law code also made a difference of landed property acquired through heritage (Swe. *arvejord*) and landed property acquired through purchase (Swe. *avlingejord*). Purchased property was free to donate, exchange, or sell as the owner saw fit,

⁶⁸¹ Lamberg 2016, 190–91.

⁶⁸² See for example Rosenwein 1989; White 1988.

⁶⁸³ For studies on heirs contesting donations in medieval Scandinavia, see for example Bjarne Larsson 2019, 230–237; Bjarne Larsson 2010, 101–108; Esmark 2013, 181–218.

⁶⁸⁴ DF 2626, 2627, 2676, 2700, 2707, 2714, 2890, 3025, 3145, 3207, 3291, 3656, 3657, 3658, 3659, 4136, 4205, 4209, 4237, 4455, 4789.

⁶⁸⁵ Vogt 2017, 130–45.

without approval of the heirs. Whereas the family and children always had priority to inherited land and had to give their consent to the disposal of such property.⁶⁸⁶

All matters concerning landed property, such as sales, exchanges, value assessments, etc. were decided at the district assemblies. Thrice a year, the district judge presided legal assemblies with the inhabitants in the parishes of his district. Apart from the judge, the legal assemblies and courts were always also presided by a jury of twelve assessors (Swe. *fastemän*, or *fastar*) who were trusted men from the district.⁶⁸⁷ When Nådendal was involved in legal disputes concerning its inalienable property, these affairs were usually settled, either at the district assemblies or at the provincial courts held by representatives of the ruler in Turku.

Donors to Nådendal implemented four preventive strategies to avoid future problems with heirs. Firstly, they could promise the monastery a compensation for lost property if their donation was contested. As when Pålval Skytte and Ragnhild Pedersdotter donated an estate in 1467, they promised to compensate Nådendal with as much landed property from their estates equal to the value of the original donated property.⁶⁸⁸ Secondly, the donors could include the possibility for the heirs to exchange or repurchase the estate against a specified price, for example, when Anna Torkilsdotter in 1447 claimed that her son, the procurator Jöns Hansson could redeem her donated estate against a compensation of 60 Turku marks.⁶⁸⁹ Thirdly, they could grant family members the usufruct of the estate and that it would be fully transferred to Nådendal only after their death. For instance, when Bengt Krok and Margit Vibrudsdotter specified that their children had the right to stay on their donated estate as long as they lived against an annual rent of three marks to Nådendal.⁶⁹⁰ Fourthly, the donors could specify why the family and kin had no right to redeem the donated property. As when Peder Karpelan and Ingegerd Jönsdotter donated their estate Ukkila in Vehmaa, they explained that Peder and his brother Tord already had divided their paternal inheritance and that Peder had purchased a part of the donated estate. Thus, the inheritance was already divided and Tord did not have any legal claims to it.⁶⁹¹

Settlements between religious institutions and heirs regarding donated property were common practice in medieval Scandinavia. For instance, the Cistercian abbey in Sorø on Zealand in Denmark was frequently negotiating outside court and made settlements with persons who had put claims on the monastery's donated estates.⁶⁹² As Gabriela Bjarne Larsson has concluded, oral agreements

⁶⁸⁶ MEL JorPa I-XXXVI; Bjarne Larsson 2010, 105–107.

⁶⁸⁷ KLNLM IV 1959, 191–94; KLNLM XVIII 1974, 334–46.

⁶⁸⁸ DF 3341.

⁶⁸⁹ DF 2727.

⁶⁹⁰ DF 2580.

⁶⁹¹ DF 3454.

⁶⁹² Esmark 2013, 181–218.

were common in the peripheral parts of medieval Sweden and Norway (in Jämtland and Finveden).⁶⁹³

How such agreements between Nådendal and heirs of donors could be made is formulated in a charter, issued on 25 July 1463. Then the provincial court was gathered in the garden of the bailey at Turku castle. Present were Knight Erik Axelsson, and some other men representing King Christian I: Bishop Kettil of Linköping, Claus Rønnow, Lord high constable in Denmark, Knight Erik Nipert, and Knight Johan Kristiernson. At the court proceedings, they confirmed an agreement between the priest Olof Ingemundsson and Nådendal, which at the occasion was represented by the Birgittine brothers Olof Andersson and Jöns Andersson (Budde)⁶⁹⁴. Olof contested a testamentary donation of some estates in Mynämäki and Lemu that his uncle, the priest Lars Ingemundsson in Porvoo, had donated to Nådendal in 1447. The donation included a clause that the heirs had to compensate Nådendal with a value corresponding to a tenth of all Lars Ingemundssons landed property if they were to reclaim it.⁶⁹⁵ However, after the donation was made, the heirs of Lars Ingemundsson had confirmed that they approved of it in a charter that was issued in 1449 by Ingemund Olofsson who also was a nephew to Lars Ingemundsson.⁶⁹⁶ However, not all of Lars Ingemundsson's heirs were content with the donation, which is why Olof and his sister Cristin contested it at the district assembly. At the assembly, the donation was judged as unlawfully given to Nådendal but Lars and Cristin nonetheless had to compensate the monastery with every tenth coin of income from all of the estates belonging to Lars Ingemundsson, in accordance with a clause in the donation charter.⁶⁹⁷

The dispute between Nådendal and the heirs of Lars Ingemundsson originated in an inheritance dispute within the family. In his charter of donation (witnessed by Henrik Klasson, Peder Karpelan, and Jöns Hansson), Lars had, in fact, stated that his siblings had taken all parental heritage in their possession, which is why he now claimed that they had no further right to redeem the estates that he donated. If the siblings anyway were to contest Lars' donation, then Nådendal would be compensated until his siblings and their heirs had made a settlement with the monastery. However, when Olof Ingemundsson and Cristin contested the donation they managed to prove at the district assembly that the donation was not legally valid. The account of the previous legal procedure has been written down at the provincial court held at Turku Castle in 1463. At the court, Olof and his sister Cristin further made an agreement with Nådendal that they were bound to compensate the monastery in accordance with the original conditions of the donation. However, Olof Ingemundsson asserted that he and his sister were concerned for the sake of their souls and accordingly they did not wish to take back the donated estate from Nådendal as it had been given for the sake of

⁶⁹³ Bjarne Larsson 2010, 40–73. Korpiola & Trolle Önnerfors 2018, 378–403.

⁶⁹⁴ He was a prolific translator of texts and perhaps the most well-known individual from Nådendal. See Lamberg 2007.

⁶⁹⁵ DF 2710.

⁶⁹⁶ DF 2804.

⁶⁹⁷ DF 2710 & 2804.

their uncle's soul. Thus, they accepted Nådendal's right to the estates if the monastery compensated them with fifty marks (which sum they already had received in ready money and half a last of rye) conditioned that they were included in the spiritual benefits of the donation. Thus, the agreement between the two parties was already negotiated and the charter issued at the court was a confirmation on their agreement.⁶⁹⁸

The example of Lars Ingemundsson's donation give a little more information on the position of the heirs and their right to reclaim donated property from the monastery. In this case they had legal right, according to the district assembly, in reclaiming the donated estates as the property that their uncle donated was inherited. Instead of reclaiming all of it, they made an agreement with the representatives of Nådendal, in accordance with conditions that Lars Ingemundsson made in the charter of donation. The spiritual welfare of the souls seem to have motivate Olof Ingemundsson and Cristin to accept to compensate Nådendal against a promise from the monastery that they would be included in the Birgittine prayers. Thus, through this agreement Olof Ingemundsson and Kristin Ingemundsdotter and their other siblings also became included in the spiritual benefits of the gift. This case reminds of the practice of heirs making claims and quitclaims described by Barbara Rosenwein in her research on the high medieval donations to Cluny. Agreements between religious orders and heirs to donors was accordingly a well-established phenomenon. The dispute between Nådendal and Lars Ingemundsson's siblings is a further example of how the heirs could respect the spiritual motives of the donation by their kin, even though they contested its legality. In this manner, the act of donating property to a monastery stretched over decades and relatives and heirs of donors were included in the act and the spiritual benefits of their gift.⁶⁹⁹

Heirs and relatives who hindered Nådendal to collect incomes from donated estates, was thus not unheard of even though the documented cases of this practice from Nådendal are relatively few. One of the more complicated disputes enrolled in the end of the fifteenth century and concerned some estates that Lucia Olofsdötter (Skelge), as a widow had donated in Pohja in Uusimaa, in southern Finland. A maternal relative to Lucia, the squire Rötger Olofsson, then claimed the estates and caused prolonged negotiations between him, Lucia, and Nådendal. However, even though Lucia settled the inheritance dispute with Rötger and her other relatives, he did still put claims on the donated estates after her death. The dispute between him and Lucia was solved in the provincial court and the estates were declared lawfully given to Nådendal.⁷⁰⁰ In beginning of 1490, Lucia sold her remaining estates to some members of the council of the realm, namely Archbishop Jakob Ulvsson in Uppsala, Regent Sten Sture the elder, and the Squire Knut Posse. They subsequently donated the estates to Nådendal for the sake of their souls. The purchase and immediate donation to Nådendal was clearly a way

⁶⁹⁸ DF 2710, 2804, 3207.

⁶⁹⁹ Rosenwein 1989.

⁷⁰⁰ DF 3657, 3658, 3659, 3660, 4341, 4283, 4313, 4314, 4318, 4326, 4328, 4786.

for Lucia to avoid further disputes with her relatives. She and Nådendal did accordingly have powerful allies among the ruling elite of the Swedish realm, and the monastery won the dispute.⁷⁰¹

Nådendal also used royal charters as a strategy to defend its disputed estates. In the years 1488 and 1489 the provincial court settled disputes between the monastery and laymen on two occasions. On 11 October 1488, the provincial court was gathered in the town hall (Swe. *rådstugan*) in Turku. Then the General Confessor Arvid Nilsson and two other Birgittine brothers were representing Nådendal and made a complaint about the island Strömholm in Rymättylä, which a man named Hans Skräddare had withheld from the monastery. As evidence, they brought a sealed charter of privilege, written by the Archbishop Nils in Uppsala and Karl Knutsson (Bonde) who was titled Lord High Constable. This must accordingly be the charter of privilege issued in Svartsjö 14 October 1440 where they confirmed the donation of Stenberga for Nådendal's foundation and enfeoffed the Åsunda district in Uppland. In this charter all the pertaining farms and landed property to Stenberga was listed, among others an island in Rymättylä.⁷⁰² However, Hans Skräddare also presented a letter to the court where the lawman in Söderfinne, Sten Henriksson declared that Hans could use half of the island. This decision was now declared invalid by the provincial court and was torn apart. The court decided that the monastery had the legal possession of the whole island. Thus, the charters issued by the regents weighed heavily as evidence in court.⁷⁰³

The other case concerned some pastures in the village Saksila near Nådendal. This piece of land was disputed by a man named Olof Killainen who was summoned to the provincial court in 1488 but he did not turn up. Four local farmers were though present at the court and swore by the law book that Olof illegally for many years had obstructed the property. The court did accordingly sentence the disputed land back to Nådendal. As Olof Killainen was not present at the court negotiations in 1488, the dispute was finally settled in a district assembly held half a year later in Nådendal on 15 March 1489. From the sentence that was issued at the assembly, Olof Killainen was described to have withheld two bars (Swe. *stänger*) of land in Saksila. The monastery, represented by the brother Olof Diegn could prove that this land, a total of five bars, was donated to the monastery by the lay brother Olof Munk in Nådendal who on his old age had wished to be accommodated by the monastery. Furthermore, Nådendal presented as evidence at the district assembly a charter of privilege, issued by King Christian I (probably the charter he issued 20 October 1457). In the charter Saksila was included among the landed estates that were relieved from tax. The district assembly decided that the land was legally given, and Olof Killainen was to pay a penalty fee of forty marks to the monastery.⁷⁰⁴

⁷⁰¹ DF 4299.

⁷⁰² DF 2355.

⁷⁰³ DF 4205.

⁷⁰⁴ DF 4209 & 4237.

Accordingly, the royal letters of privilege, where the regents listed the landed estates that were exempted from tax, served as important evidence in the disputes with persons who had transgressed on the estates and prevented Nådendal from collecting the incomes from them. As discussed above, new regents customarily issued a charter of privilege and protection including all the estates that Nådendal had acquired since the previous charter was issued. Assumably the monastery applied for such a letter when a new regent came to power or when the monastery acquired some new estates.⁷⁰⁵

One final type of dispute was when the neighbouring farmers to the monastery's land made transgressions on it. In the diocese of Turku, the majority of the peasant population were freeholding peasants, which gave them quite a strong position in contrast to the tenant farmers (Swe. *landbor*) who did not own the land that they lived on and cultivated. At the district assemblies, the juries consisted mainly of freeholding peasants, and by local noblemen. The peasants did accordingly hold quite a strong position and influence in the local society.⁷⁰⁶

At the district assemblies Nådendal, or its representatives, came in contact with the inhabitants of the parishes where it owned land. In 1448, the incomes from Helgå in Perno were discussed at the provincial court presided by the knight Bengt Salesta from Uppland. The procurator of the monastery, Jöns Hansson, then made a complaint that the tenant farmers of Helgå had omitted to pay a third of the yearly incomes from the estates. Apparently, whether the farmers in Helgå were freeholding or if they were tenants pledged to pay an annual fee to the owner of the estate was unclear. The court examined two royal letters from the fourteenth century, issued by the Kings Magnus Eriksson and Albrecht of Mecklenburg. These letters were used as evidence to prove that these farmers were tenant farmers and would pay the annual rents to the monastery and do all the required dayworks. If anyone hereafter was to infringe upon Helgå they would be punished with a fee of forty marks.⁷⁰⁷

One further example is from 1451 when Peder Karpelan presided a district assembly with the commoners (Swe. *allmoghan*) in Masku. Present were also Bishop Magnus Tavast and the squires Filpus Jönsson, Påval Skytte, and Matts Finne. The General Confessor, Johan Kyle, then made a complaint that the inhabitants in Masku, Nousiainen, and Lemu, had transgressed on fishing waters belonging to the Stenberg estate. Four "old men", who knew how the fishing waters since long had been divided, were summoned as witnesses. According to their account, three boundary marks demarcated the boundary between the fishing waters of the Stenberg estate and the common fishing waters. As no one opposed their account, both the jury and ultimately Peder Karpelan judged the fishing waters firmly belonging to Nådendal. The account of the three men witnessing Nådendal's possession of the fishing waters is the only mention of how

⁷⁰⁵ In 1492, a man named Peder in Nujala in Raisio sold all what he owned in the village Nujala and according to the sale charter, the monastery already had petitioned for a letter of royal privilege of the land in Nujala and Karvetti from Sten Sture. DF 4419.

⁷⁰⁶ Kallioinen 2018, 153–71.

⁷⁰⁷ DF 2706.

boundary markers were set out to demarcate the borders between estates. Just as in the examples from Mariendal, the Birgittine landscape around Nådendal was physically demarcated in the land through markers of property belonging to the monastery.⁷⁰⁸

The landed possessions of Nådendal

The majority of the landed estates in Nådendal's possession were acquired through donations, but the monastery bought, pawned, and exchanged pastures and estates as well. Most of its landed property was located in the neighbouring parishes: Masku, Raisio, Vehmaa, Piikkiö, Sauvo, Halikko, Lemu, Taivassalo, Kaarina, Perniö, Maaria, Mynämäki, Parainen, Lieto, Nousiainen, Rymättylä, Rusko, Uskela, Laitila. Nådendal did acquire landed property on a further distance as well: in Uusimaa, Tavastia, Ostrobothnia, northern Bothnia, Karelia, and in the western parts of the Swedish realm (Uppland and Öland). Added to these, the monastery also owned some houses and storehouses in the towns Turku, Stockholm, and Naantali. (See maps 3, 4 & 5)⁷⁰⁹

Some of the possessions are documented in secondary sources such as the register compiled after the Reformation around 1530 when the possessions of the ecclesiastical institutions were registered and to a large extent confiscated by the crown.⁷¹⁰ Some landed possessions have also been noted through the legal disputes, where the origin of the estates often was described.⁷¹¹

Nådendal exchanging estates

In an attempt to keep some pastures or landed estates as coherent as possible Nådendal sometimes swapped outlying possessions. The monastery did not follow any evident strategy in making the exchanges of land. Often it seems that the swaps occurred on initiative of the monastery but at some instances the other party approached the Birgittines and initiated the exchange. In around twenty cases, covering the period from 1442 to 1495, Nådendal exchanged landed property. The exchanged property could encompass all from meadows and pastures to larger landed estates or houses in Turku and in Stockholm.⁷¹²

It seems that Nådendal, at least to some extent, exchanged outlying pastures in order to keep the management of the landed estates coherent. Still, the land that Nådendal exchanged was often located quite close in its neighbouring parishes, while it seems like it did not actively attempt to exchange landed property located further away (see map 4). However, one explanation why outlying es-

⁷⁰⁸ DF 2890.

⁷⁰⁹ Suvanto 1976, 118–19.

⁷¹⁰ KB A934, Walta 2013, 283–342.

⁷¹¹ This is a strategy that has been noted at other locations in medieval Scandinavia. See Esmark 2013, 182–218 and Emanuelsson 2005, 134–47.

⁷¹² DF 2452, 2453, 2454, 2458, 2513, 2590, 2591, 2592, 2594, 2766, 2774, 2810, 2811, 3709, 3711, 3740, 4136, 4205, 4208, 4209, 4237, 4283, 4313, 4314, 4318, 4326, 4328, 4455, 4484, 4786, 6694; Suvanto 1976, 120

tates, located at a longer distance, were not exchanged more frequently was possibly that landed property was a limited asset in fifteenth-century Scandinavia. In order to exchange property, Nådendal needed to find a suitable other party with whom it could make an exchange agreement.⁷¹³

The charters are not always specifying who initiated the swap: was it Nådendal or the other party? Usually though the exchanges were made in a way that profited both parties, for example, that both received land closer to home. One such case was when the monastery made an exchange with Anders Jacobson in Ulvila (Swe. *Ulfsby*) in September 1449. The deal was made in Turku in the presence of district judge in Vehmaa, Hartvik Japsson, and the procurator of the monastery, Jöns Hansson, who apparently represented Nådendal. Anders Jacobsson's brothers Sven, Jonis, and Niklis were also present as they issued a charter dated on the same day where they confirmed the exchange. Nådendal received the estate Kesois in Vehmaa instead of an estate that the monastery owned in Friitala (Swe. *Fridhaby*) in Ulvila. The charter does not include an explanation to the motives behind the exchange of land, but it seems plausible that the exchange was first and foremost a practical affair as Nådendal received an estate in a neighbouring parish instead of an estate located eighty miles away.⁷¹⁴

It seems though that Nådendal mainly tried to exchange property in the neighbouring parishes while it kept estates located at a long distance. For example, the monastery kept in its possession the land that it owned in the Bothnia region, probably because these estates included fishing waters that were important to the monastery.⁷¹⁵ It seems though that landed property was exchanged mainly for the purpose of keeping pastures and meadows coherent in the vicinity of Nådendal. When an exchange was initiated by the monastery, its representatives ought then to have contacted locals that potentially could be willing to exchange their property. In 1442, Nådendal exchanged some of its meadows on various locations in Masku against some meadows located in the village Kiriola, also in Masku. One of the persons with whom the monastery then the estate Haga in Kaarina 23 September 1444. Nådendal then received some farmland in a village named Haga in Kaarina from three landowners: Staffan in Voivala who received the monastery's farmland in Voivala, Olof Niklisson in Lieto received the monastery's farmland in Kärpis in Lieto, and Peder Ingonen in Lieto received some farmland in Paimio. After Nådendal had made the exchange, it in 1448 also received an exemption from tax by King Karl Knutsson for this and some other estates. Thus, Nådendal had exchanged some scattered farmland and meadow for the estate Haga. Subsequently the monastery also saw to that it received the proper privileges to it.⁷¹⁶

⁷¹³ Norborg, 1958, 44–48.

⁷¹⁴ DF 2810, 2811.

⁷¹⁵ DF DF 2625, 2626, 2627.

⁷¹⁶ DF 2590, 2591, 2592, 2594, 2761.

Map 4. Nådendal's exchanged estates



Map: © Panu Savolainen & Anna-Stina Hägglund

Sometimes though the laypersons took the initiative and approached Nådendal with a request of exchanging an estate. As when the widow Margit in Viipuri requested to exchange the monastery's estate Kilpilä in Rasalahti village (present day Russian *Novinka*) near Viipuri against her estate in Lemittylä in Taivassalo. In 1492, the abbess and confessor in Nådendal wrote a response to Margit. The monastery was though hesitant to make the exchange as it considered Lemittylä as too small since it only rendered eleven *øre* annually while the monastery received four marks annually in money or fish from Kilpilä. Additionally, the estate Kilpilä was exempted from tax, which Nådendal, according to its response to Margit, had been granted first by King Karl Knutsson and later by King Christian in 1457. The estate in Viipuri had thus been in the monastery's possession for at least forty years at the point when this letter was written. The exchange was accordingly not advantageous for the monastery and the fact that Kilpilä was located far away was apparently not considered as reason enough to have it exchanged for an estate located near the monastery.⁷¹⁷

However, from a letter issued by Nådendal two years later it becomes evident that the parties anyway had reached a concord and went through with the exchange:

For all those good men who this letter see or hear. We sister Anna Johannis, brother Arvid, General Confessor, and all sisters and brothers in both convents in Our Lady's and Saint Birgitta's monastery in Nådendal, are acknowledging that we have made a lawful agreement with the honourable and well-esteemed woman lady Margit, widow of the well-born man Claus Grampsson, in such a manner that we receive as much landed estate as she inherited with her children after her husband in Taivassalo parish, and she will take our estate in Rasalahti in Viipuri parish and will lift as much income annually, as we have received from it. For what our estate more valuable is, she has, to the monastery's content, pledged to annually compensate the difference as long as she lives. And when God summons her, then the estate will be free and liberated from tax as it has been until now, and she may do with her land [in Taivassalo] as she pleases.[...] ⁷¹⁸

Accordingly, Nådendal set the terms of the exchange and Margit had evidently agreed to them. She was allowed to use the monastery's estate in Viipuri as long as she lived with the condition that she compensated the surplus of its value compared to her estate in Taivassalo. When she died, the estate Kilpilä would return

⁷¹⁷ DF 4444 & 4617, these documents have only survived as contemporary copies on paper in the monastery's archive. The original letters sent to Margit have not survived.

⁷¹⁸ "For alle the gode mæn, som thetta breff see eller höre, bekennomns wy sysztir Anna Johannis, broder Aruid, confessor generalis, oc alment bodenn conuentz systror och bröder j varfrv oc sancte Birgitte closter i Nadendal oss haffua giort laglige byte met hederlig dande quinne hustrv Margit, velborens mansz Clauus Gramszons aterleffua, j sza motto, at wy ananom til oss sza myked jorda godz j Toffuesala sochn, som hon ther ærffde met synom barnom epter syn fore bonde, oc hon tager wort godz j Raselax i Viborgx sochn och vpbær szaa myked arlige aff affrad, som wy hær faam. Oc huad vort godz bætre ær, ther fore haffuer hon sik beplicted göre aarlige clostreno nögio och skæl j syns liffs tyme; och tha Gud henne kallar, skal closters godz wara friit och frælst vnder clostrid som thet her til varid haffuer, oc hon ma göre aff syne iord, som hennes teckis." DF 4617.

to Nådendal with all pertaining privileges and the estate in Taivassalo to Margit's heirs. The whole affair was based on the practical issues of managing and running of estates that were located far away. For the monastery, this was not an issue, but for Margit when she reached widowhood, an estate closer to home was more convenient to manage. The monastery was evidently a good party with whom to make such an arrangement since it owned estates all over the diocese. Yet, Nådendal kept the difference in the annual incomes and secured that the incomes stayed at the same level even if the estate in Taivassalo was smaller. The general confessor, Arvid Nilsson, also wrote a letter to the castellan of Viipuri castle, Knut Posse, telling him about the terms of the exchange. The confessor did though also ask Knut Posse to observe the affair with Margit and ensure that she had understood the terms of the exchange and that she would keep to her part of the agreement. Apparently, Nådendal seems to have raised some concerns that it possibly could have lost some of its incomes through the exchange, as Arvid also stated that the estate in Taivassalo was small.⁷¹⁹ For laypersons, landed property located far from home was more complicated to administer than for the monastery that could send its representatives to supervise the outlying estates.⁷²⁰

Yet, at the time when the exchange with Margit was done, the monastery actually experienced some difficulties, due to the ongoing war against Russia, with collecting taxes from Karelia and other more distant parts of the Turku diocese. This becomes evident in the letter from 1496 that General Confessor Arvid wrote to Vadstena. Here he complained about the difficulties of collecting the Birgittine *Saint Birgitta's pence* from Viipuri, and other parts of the diocese, as the Russians had plundered the territory in 1495 and burned all crops and houses. These were difficult times and evidently, Nådendal had problems collecting the incomes from those parts of the realm. This may have been a contributing factor for the monastery to agree on the exchange with Margit, even though it initially was reluctant. During times of war, it must undeniably have been more practical to manage and collect incomes from estates closer to home.⁷²¹

Apart from the farms, pastures, and fishing waters, Nådendal also exchanged some houses or plots in Turku and Naantali, as well as one house in Stockholm.⁷²² The monastery had acquired two of the exchanged houses through donations. In 1448, the burgher Jöns Friis in Turku and his wife Margit Nilsson made an exchange with the monastery where they swapped half a building lot in Turku for a storage house (Swe. *fælboodh*), which Margit's mother Katarina had donated for her entrance to the monastery three years earlier.⁷²³ The other case concerned a house in Stockholm that Nådendal in 1445 had received as a testamentary bequest from the vicar Henrik Makerland in Äyräpää, who made bequests to a great number of religious institutions and laypersons in his will. Nådendal

⁷¹⁹ DF 4596, 4617.

⁷²⁰ DF 3014.

⁷²¹ DF 4705.

⁷²² DF 2766, 2774, 2902, 3005, 3783.

⁷²³ DF 2629, 2766.

received a house in Stockholm valued to no less than 600 marks, with the condition that it would serve as entrance donation for a woman to enter the monastery and for Henrik to be buried there.⁷²⁴

For some reason, Nådendal chose to exchange the house with the burgher Ragvald Suurpää from Turku ten years later. In 1455 a man named Martin Lindorm, who was appointed by the abbess to represent Nådendal, appeared at the town hall in Stockholm together with Ragvald and made the exchange in front of the Town Council. The monastery then received the estate Puotila in Halikko and a house with a storage building in Turku. The details of the exchange were further described in a letter that was issued by Ragvald in Turku the following year. This is just one example of how Nådendal exchanged property in the towns and it seems that houses and other urban property that Nådendal owned in Turku and Stockholm did not stay permanently in its possession. In 1479, the Turku burgher and squire Bengt Jönsson made an exchange with Nådendal. The exchange concerned a house in Turku located on the Church Street (Swe. *Kyrkogatan*), at the eastern corner of the square, for which the monastery received the estate Poutunen in Nousiainen. The charter of the property transfer does unfortunately not give any details on the provenience of the exchanged property, but the description fits the Turku house that the monastery acquired from the exchange with Ragvald Suurpää, as that house also was located on Church Street and by the square. Nådendal had accordingly received a house in Stockholm as a testamentary bequest and swapped it to a Turku house about ten years later and then again exchanged that house two decades later into a rural estate.⁷²⁵ As Gabriela Bjarne-Larsson demonstrates regarding urban property in Stockholm belonging to the mendicants, individual brothers did as well often administer incomes in form of rents in houses that they had brought with them as life annuity when joining their convent. When the brothers died, this property did not stay in the possession of the convent as it usually was sold by the representatives.⁷²⁶ Even though the financing principles were different for the mendicants and the Birgittines, the examples from Nådendal and other monasteries show that urban property owned by religious orders generally was more mobile.

The inalienable property of Nådendal was accordingly regularly converted. In the abovementioned examples, the monastery made deals with inhabitants at the locations where the property was exchanged. Persons interacting with Nådendal regarding its landed property came from nearly all parts of the diocese, living both in its vicinity and at a further distance. In this manner, the Birgittine landscape and Nådendal's presence was dispersed all over the diocese: through the collection of the *Our Lady's pence* and through ownership of farmland and fishing waters all the way from Kemi in the North to Viipuri in the easternmost parts of the diocese.

When observing who were present at the exchanges of land, the procurator Jöns Hansson sometimes acted as sealing witness on behalf of the persons with

⁷²⁴ DF 2628.

⁷²⁵ DF 3005, 3783.

⁷²⁶ Bjarne-Larsson 2019, 197–239.

whom the land was exchanged, as they usually had no seals. In the 1440s, at the exchanges of land in Masku, the vicar of the parish, Thomas Henriksson, was usually present.⁷²⁷ Sometimes, brothers from the male convent in Nådendal also attended the exchanges and they had thus received permission to leave the enclosure to tend to these errands. The exchanges as well as other negotiations and agreements concerning landed property were occasions when Nådendal interacted with locals and met with them to make the arrangements in the administration of its property.⁷²⁸

Nådendal exchanged land primarily in the 1440s and 1450s since seventeen out of twenty-four exchanges are dated before 1456. During this period, the monastery did as well most frequently receive landed estates through donations. The primary motive for Nådendal to make these deals was assumably to centralize its own possessions. When a layperson was the initiator, the exchange usually concerned property that was located far from their home and Nådendal presented a suitable actor to approach with the request of exchange.

Nådendal purchasing landed estates

The main part of Nådendal's landed estates were acquired through donations, but from time to time the monastery also purchased meadows, farmland, islands, and estates. The purchases were assumably made to increase and improve the farmland and stockfarms in the monastery's demesne. All documented sales to the monastery (only thirty cases) are dated to the fifteenth century, covering the period 1442–97, that is, from the time when the monastery had received its final location and onwards. The explanation why Nådendal did not sell property in the early sixteenth century is probably due to its weakened position during the difficult times of war and repeated plague outbreaks.⁷²⁹

To protect the interest of the family and heirs, the selling of inherited property was regulated in the law code, which limited the possibility to sell of inalienable property. Selling this kind of property was nonetheless possible. When a person wished to sell inalienable property, the first step was to offer it for sale to the relatives on three subsequent district assemblies. If none of the relatives wished to buy the estate after a year had passed, then the estate was free to sell to any buyer. If the sold property was originally acquired through purchase, then the owner was free to sell it immediately without the consent of the family and kin. In accordance with the law, most sales to Nådendal were made at the district assemblies in front of the district judges and the jury of twelve men.⁷³⁰

The value of the sold property was given in Turku as well as in Swedish or Stockholm marks. The smallest sum was paid for meadows valued to only three marks while the largest sums were paid for entire estates valued up to as much as 190 marks. Even though the price was set in the monetary value of the estates, the sums were usually paid in kind. Some of the documents give information that

⁷²⁷ Salonen 2011, 75–92. DF 2452, 2453, 2454, 2458.

⁷²⁸ DF 2452, 2453, 2454, 2458.

⁷²⁹ Letters from Nådendal to Vadstena DF 4646, 4705, 5414; Klockars 1979, 143–154.

⁷³⁰ MEL JorPa balker §2–6, 11.

a part of the price was paid in ready money and the rest in kind, must commonly in grains or metals.⁷³¹ In some cases, pieces of clothing were part of the payment, as when the two men Simon Henriksson and Olof Lappalainen sold thirty bars of farmland in the village Tammisto in Raisio to Nådendal and received payment in four marks ready money and a pair of shoes, or when Jeppe Andersson sold his part of the estate Gumnäs in Pohja⁷³² and was paid ninety Swedish marks in ready money and a red kirtle valued to nine marks. At two instances, various kinds of kitchen utensils in copper or silver were given as payment.⁷³³

However, it has generally been considered that the agrarian crisis in the fourteenth century caused a growing inflation in the prices on landed property in Sweden. The prices stabilized during the first quarter of the fifteenth century, land, as the sales charters include mentions of whether the seller had received the payment in ready money or in kind. However, in those cases where valuables such as silver spoons, pitchers, bowls, or pieces of clothing were used as payment by Nådendal, one can suspect these items originally were testamentary bequests that the monastery reinvested into inalienable property by using the objects as payments.⁷³⁴

The farmland sold to Nådendal was mainly located in the neighbouring parishes to the monastery, why the purchases of land was a means to partly reinvest donated money and valuables, and partly to enlarge estates given to the monastery. As previously discussed by Kallioinen, the fact that persons on a relatively regular basis were involved in transactions of land, indicated that land was a commodity in medieval Finland to sell, exchange, and pledge.⁷³⁵ In the case of Nådendal it seems that the monastery, especially in the middle of the fifteenth century, used the land purchases as an addition to the land it received through donations. An argument for this hypothesis is that it primarily bought arable land and meadows. The first documented purchase by the monastery was actually a meadow in Montiskala in Raisio which in February 1442 that was sold by Birgitta Klasdotter, sister to Henrik Klasson (who also sealed the sale). This was the same year as Henrik and Lucia donated Ailos, and thus it seems that the monastery, in order to build up its infrastructure in land, which was to provide its inhabitants and finance the construction, approached persons within the same circles as the early donors. Worth mentioning is that those selling land to Nådendal in the 1440s were nobles and burghers and not farmers. (See map 5)⁷³⁶

Nådendal was also a possible buyer of estates that the owners otherwise had difficulties selling. In 1487, the widow Anna sold five ells of land in the village Viiala on the island Luonnonmaa for fifteen marks. She had then tried to sell it for over ten years but had not been able to find a buyer, which is why she then

⁷³¹ DF 2451, 3998, 4017, 4118, 4266, 4615.

⁷³² The same estate that Lucia divided with Rötger Olofsson and which subsequently was given to the monastery. This was probably another part of the estate that the monastery bought there. DF 3132.

⁷³³ DF 4017 & 4590.

⁷³⁴ DF 3132, 3235, 3269, 3909, 3998, 4017, 4122, 4419, 4590.

⁷³⁵ Kallioinen, 2018, 167.

⁷³⁶ DF 2443, 2451, 2654, 2696, 2757.

Map 5. Nådendal's purchased property



Map: © Panu Savolainen & Anna-Stina Hägglund

decided to sell it to the Birgittines because she now needed the money for her sustenance.⁷³⁷ In 1489, the Stockholm burgher Jöns Olofsson and his wife Adlisa sold five ells of land, also in Viiala, for fifteen Swedish marks in movables and ready money according to the standard of value.⁷³⁸ In the charter, he described that he had offered it for sale to his family at the district assembly for six years, but none of them had shown an interest in buying the land. Then he had, in the same year as the charter was written, travelled there and stayed in Naantali for a period of three months “at a great cost” trying to sell the property. He had offered the land to the inhabitants of the village, but they did not show an interest in buying it. Jöns further describes that his time to make the sale was running out because the shipper Anders Olofsson did not want to wait any longer for him, and he himself did not wish to stay any longer from his home and his wife. He solved the problem by selling the land to the Birgittines in Nådendal. When he returned home to Stockholm, he and his wife issued the charter of the sale.⁷³⁹

Selling the land to Nådendal was a suitable solution to a dire situation where no other buyer of the property was to be found. Sometimes persons turned to the Birgittines when they were in a precarious situation in need of money and had not managed to find another buyer.⁷⁴⁰ In 1464, a man named Jeppe Andersson sold all what he owned in Halikko, which was half of an estate called Kuttila. He was in pressing need of income as he had committed manslaughter and was now threatened by poverty, as he claims in the charter. The charter does, however, not give any details on what actually had transpired, but evidently, he had been condemned to compensate the family of the person he had killed and had to sell his estate.⁷⁴¹ Jeppe mentioned that his brother, the priest Olof Andreae, lived in Nådendal and thus he had connections to the monastery. In the sale, Jeppe received seventy Swedish marks for his estate in ready money and metals. The next year he issued another charter confirming the sale where he mentioned having received the sum of seventy marks, but also seven ells of land in a village named *Mærgio*, which the monastery had received as a testamentary bequest.⁷⁴² Jeppe’s social status is not mentioned in the charter, but he used his own seal depicting a heraldic weapon with a clenched fist in a shield crowned with a helmet, which reveals that he belonged to the nobility. According to the genealogist Jully Ramsay, he was of the Garp-family and, if Ramsay’s information is to be trusted, Jeppe’s daughter Anna was a nun in Nådendal.⁷⁴³ If the information is correct, he thus belonged to one of the noble families (Garp) that had a close bond to the monastery. Moreover, his sale was also sealed by Peder Karpelan and

⁷³⁷ DF 4118.

⁷³⁸ The standard of value was set in the law code, regulating valid materials of payment. MEL JorPa balker § 9.

⁷³⁹ DF 4266.

⁷⁴⁰ DF 3909, 3998, 4615, 4728.

⁷⁴¹ The crime of manslaughter was according to the law under a fine that was to be paid as compensation to the family of the person who had been killed and also a fine to be paid to the regent. MEL Drapamal §12-13.

⁷⁴² DF 3260.

⁷⁴³ Ramsay 1909, 142.

provost Magnus Nilsson, among others which suggests that he originated from this circle of nobles. Nonetheless, his case is another example of how persons turned to the Birgittines, when they needed ready money.

In contrast to Mariendal and especially Marienkrone, Nådendal seems not to have acted as creditor on a regular basis, even though persons turned to the monastery when they were not able to find another buyer for their property or needed cash. One reason to this difference between the monasteries was probably that the trade and society in southwestern Finland still in the fifteenth century was not generally based on cash flow as the society in the Hansa towns on the southern shores of the Baltic Sea. At only two instances in the documents from Nådendal did persons pawn their property to the Birgittines when in temporary need to liberate capital. One of the cases is when Bengt Krok and Margit Vibrudsdotter in 1446 loaned some money from Nådendal to buy three estates from her siblings and subsequently donated the estates to the monastery. The other example was when the widow Karin Persdotter and her son Niklis Finvidsson in 1451 pledged the island west Kaitas near Otava for twenty-one marks. The debt was to be paid with the annual produce of the island until the debt was cleared and then it could return to them or their heirs.⁷⁴⁴

Conclusions: Nådendal, an important religious, social, and economic institution in the diocese of Turku

When Nådendal was founded in 1438, it became the first nunnery in the diocese of Turku, and it remained the only monastery until the Reformation. This rendered a certain popularity among the nobility in southwestern Finland, especially in the province of Norrfinne. However, not only the noble neighbours endorsed the monastery through donations, since it also received popularity among the burghers in Turku, and eventually also among the inhabitants of Naantali, founded in the vicinity of the monastery. Nådendal's foundation was a joint project between the regents, the Swedish council of the realm, and the local nobility. The support from the rulers of the Kalmar Union and the Swedish realm is visible through their charters of protection and privileges, which Nådendal used as legal evidence to its ownership when its landed estates were disputed in courts.

The majority of the benefactors originated from the province of Norrfinne, while the benefactors from the province of Söderfinne are but a few. Considering that Nådendal was the only monastery in the diocese the reason why the nobility in Söderfinne did not show any greater interest in the monastery is difficult to explain. The local circumstances shaped the monastery that was anchored and interacting with those in the neighbouring parishes. The donations were primarily made within a certain group living near Nådendal and they were as well in contact with the Birgittines in other affairs. This group is traceable through their sealing practices since they often acted as witnesses of donations and at other transactions. The group was centred around the men holding legal offices in

⁷⁴⁴ DF 2657.

Norrfinne, while their wives were at least as important, or perhaps even more eager benefactors. Many widows endorsed Nådendal and donated for the sake of their daughters as well as themselves to join the monastic community. Moreover, the monastery filled an important social function in providing elderly care for those who did not have any children that could or were willing to care for them. Nådendal also presented an opportunity for women to take up a religious life and career, because the monastery was the only religious house for women in the diocese and it thus filled a vacuum in the sacral topography.

However, Nådendal interacted not only with its noble neighbours, but it also made deals with persons from the peasant population. The sales and the exchanges of landed property show that Nådendal was an actor that the laity turned to not only for intercession but also in worldly matters. For example, when they needed to find a buyer of landed property that otherwise was difficult sell, or when they had inherited an estate far from home or found themselves in a precarious situation and in need to transform their assets into ready money. Nådendal's interactions with the laity reveal that these bonds were multifaceted. Sometimes the interactions were not entirely positive as when Nådendal's property was disputed and negotiated in court. Usually, though the monastery was the stronger part in the legal disputes.

6 New perspectives on the Birgittine monasteries in the Baltic Sea region

The Birgittine Order was international and expanded over regions from the north to the south of Europe in the fifteenth century. At the end of the century, no less than twenty-seven new monasteries of the order were established. The broad appeal of the Birgittines was linked to the renown of its foundress Saint Birgitta and the establishment of her cult after her death. As I have shown, many persons of various sociopolitical backgrounds were involved in the foundation of the monasteries and what they all had in common was their endorsement of the cult of Saint Birgitta. The Birgittine liturgy focusing on the Virgin Mary and the Passion of Christ were as well themes appealing to the late medieval audience. The novelty of the Birgittine Order and its attempt to reform monastic life were important factors when the founders settled for a monastery of the Order of the Most Holy Saviour. By choosing a new order, that did not have century-long traditions, the founders could as well influence the practical and material organization of their new monastery. As shown in the three examples, the Birgittines were prosperous in both explicitly urban environments such as Stralsund, and on the countryside as in the example of Nådendal. The local contexts were determining factors for the future of the monasteries as is illustrated at the foundation process of Mariendal where the founders had to navigate between the reluctance of the Tallinn Town Council and the privileges granted the monastery by the Livonian Order.

The foundation processes that engaged various actors has been in focus of research on the monasteries, and in dialogue with the previous scholarship, I have discussed the regional expansion of the Birgittines from the perspective of the three monasteries Mariendal, Marienkrone, and Nådendal. The geographical focus of the study is the Baltic Sea region as an interconnected region in the fifteenth century with a vivid exchange of commodities, ideas, and persons. These are factors that make the study of the establishment of a new religious order in the region relevant. The expansion across the Baltic Sea region in the fifteenth century began already in the early days of the order while it was still seeking its forms and status within the Catholic church. The papal prohibition of double monasteries in 1422 brought a halt to the expansion of the Birgittine Order, but after the ban was lifted in 1435 a new wave of foundations occurred both in the Baltic Sea region, in the Low-Countries and in Southern Germany. The Birgittine foundations across the Baltic Sea region are important for the study of the establishment of the new monasteries of the order and how they interacted with their local environment.

The aim of my study has been to examine the interaction between the new Birgittine monasteries with their surrounding community of benefactors and other persons who were interacting with the monasteries. My main focus in the study is on how the locations of the monasteries came to affect the organization

of their economy and their position in the local communities. As the Birgittine Order was new, this also meant that the founders could have some impact on the practical organization of their new monasteries and the interactions of the Birgittine monasteries thus came to be characterized by the founding generation. The *Regula Salvatoris* set the frame for the communal life within the Birgittine community, but the interaction between the monasteries and the outside world was crucial to the prosperity of the new foundations.

The Birgittine ideals appealed to many and the generous indulgences in combination with Saint Birgitta's clever planning of her monasteries with a large female convent and a smaller convent of priests made the monasteries self-sufficient and attractive to the founders. The Birgittine houses were autonomous in the sense that the sisters were not depending on priests from other monasteries or convents to take care of their liturgical needs. Additionally, the priests at the Birgittine monasteries would preach to the laity and to pilgrims who visited the church on important feast days, especially on Laetare Sunday and the Feast of Saint Peter in chains when the indulgences were read.

These factors were all contributing to the many new foundations of the order. As seen in the case studies of the three monasteries Mariendal, Marienkrone, and Nådendal, the founders were representing different groups among the social and political elites. These foundations are excellent examples of how the local environment and context came to characterize the organization of the monasteries. One of my main results, in relation to the research question on who the founders were, is that the three monasteries were joint projects by several different actors: Mariendal was founded by some merchants in collaboration with the Livonian Order and the vassals in Northern Estonia and Nådendal was a joint project by the local nobility in the Turku diocese, the bishop of Turku, and the rulers of the Kalmar Union. In contrast to these two projects, Marienkrone comes across as a foundation led by a single group: the councillors of Stralsund. The regional authority in form of the dukes of Pomerania were though participating in the foundation by granting the monastery its landed privileges, but they did not have a more active role in the process. The dukes were, however, important supporters of the monastery in the sense that they granted it the right to possess, sell, and acquire landed property within their duchy. They did as well take the Birgittines into their protection and petitioned on behalf the monastery in times of conflict, as during the conflict with the bishop of Schwerin in 1514. In return, the dukes and their families were included in the Birgittine prayers, and they were consequently taking part of the community of benefactors. Thus, even though Marienkrone was the most urban of the Birgittine foundations, the monastery was nonetheless located on land pertaining under the ducal jurisdiction which placed the monastery within the sacral topography not only of the town, but the Pomeranian duchies as well.

The group of founders reflect the vast appeal the cult of Saint Birgitta had throughout the Baltic Sea region including kings, queens, dukes, burghers, and commoners who all showed an interest in the saint and her monasteries. The foundation of Mariendal was of importance as it opened up for further Birgittine

establishments in the hanseatic region during the following years. Brothers from Mariendal participated in the foundation of Marienwohlde in 1413, only about six years after its own foundation in 1407. Marienwohlde, in its turn, became the motherhouse of Marienkrone only eight years later in 1421. Mariendal was thus the motherhouse of the hanseatic foundations, not Vadstena. Among the founders sent to Marienwohlde was the brother Borchard Saudel who was one of the main actors behind the foundation of Mariendal. He was overseeing the foundation at Marienwohlde together with Johannes Rosenhagen, who became the first general confessor. Rosenhagen was again sent out to supervise the foundation of Marienkrone in 1421 together with the abbess Mechtild von Bremen and prioress Cecilia. The foundation of Birgittine monasteries in the hanseatic region was thus led by a rather limited group of Birgittines connected to the merchant elites in the towns.

The second research question concerned how the location of the monasteries and the local circumstances shaped their organization. My conclusion is that the Birgittine monasteries represent three different models of foundations: urban foundations (Marienkrone), foundations between town and country (Mariendal), and rural foundations (Nådendal). The first important issue that needed to be settled after a Birgittine foundation was announced, was to find a suitable location for the new monastery. My analysis shows that the location of the monasteries was reflecting their position in the social milieu as in the example of Mariendal where the monastery's location was a pressing political topic because the Town Council of Tallinn resisted the spot that the monastery was granted by the Livonian Order at the mouth of the Piritä River. The council was not against the foundation of a Birgittine monastery per se, but it feared that the location at the shore of the sea with an excellent harbour could pose a possible threat to the town. However, the council raised economic concerns as well to locating the monastery near the town and it feared that riches would flow out of the town and into the monastery through testamentary bequests and donations. The dispute concerning the location was finally settled sometime around 1417 by Mariendal remaining on the original location. My conclusion regarding Mariendal was that the monastery's location at some distance outside Tallinn, but still near the town, from a long perspective was advantageous. The monastery received visitors who stayed there while tending to their businesses with the town. For example, when the bailiffs from the other side of the Gulf of Finland from Raasepori and Viipuri came to visit Tallinn, they stayed at the Birgittines. The monastery served as meeting place on more than one occasion which underscores the monastery's position between town and country.

In contrast to Mariendal, Marienkrone became closely tied to the town of Stralsund. The Town Council placed the monastery just outside the town gates, which is why it can be viewed as an urban foundation. The close relations between the Town Council and the monastery can furthermore be observed in the foundation letters where the council claimed the right to have insight into the monastery's economy. That did not imply that they would not respect the Birgittine statutes placing the abbesses as heads over the economy, but the council

claimed the right to appoint foreseers over the practical administration over the monastery's estates. According to the Birgittine statutes, the abbess could appoint some trusted laymen to tend to the practical running of the monastery: collect the incomes, visit the farms, and assure that the pertaining estates were not mismanaged. However, the Town Council in Stralsund claimed a more active role in the economic management of the monastery as it stated that the monastery could not buy, sell, or exchange landed property without its approval. What this meant in practice is not all too clear as no account books are preserved from the monastery, nevertheless, the foreseers, usually two councillors, were present representing the monastery at transactions and settlements regarding its estates. My interpretation of the Town Council's actions is that it by appointing the foreseers of the monastery's landed property, it could keep some influence over the Marienkrone's economy and the monastery's bond to the Town Council remained strong.

In the case of Nådendal, the location of the monastery was also an important question to settle upon its foundation. The difficulty was to find a suitable location somewhere on the countryside outside Turku as none of the crown estates that were donated for the foundation of the monastery proved suitable for its construction. Eventually in 1442, the monastery was relocated to the estate Ailos in Raisio which was donated by the noble couple Henrik Klasson (Diekn) and Lady Lucia Olofsdotter (Skelge) who gave the estate to the Birgittines conditioned that their monastery would be built there. As I have shown, Nådendal kept the strong connections to the neighbouring parishes, especially Masku, wherefrom it received most of its donations. Unlike elsewhere, Nådendal was as well partly financed by the tithes from Masku parish, which was annexed to the monastery, and the Åsunda district in Uppland for a ten-year period after the foundation. The rulers of the Swedish realm were accordingly engaged in the foundation of the monastery and in securing financing.

The third research question was how the local circumstances affected the practical organization and sustenance of the monasteries. The Birgittine monasteries were sustained through the landed possessions that were either donated or purchased. My result was that, apart from the religious work conducted in the monasteries, the landed possessions and their administration were a central element in the interaction with persons and authorities outside the enclosure. The demesne formed a core of estates located within a certain region near the monasteries. However, the monasteries could as well own outlying estates, located at a great distance from them. The analysis showed that this was especially the case in Nådendal, which owned estates as far away as the Viipuri region in the east and fishing waters in the Bothnia region in the north. The landed possessions at Mariendal and Marienkrone were though more limited to the nearby regions, which is explained by the local circumstances. Marienkrone was by the dukes granted the privilege to purchase and administer landed estates within the Duchy of Pomerania. Thus, Marienkrone's landed property was concentrated to Pomerania and especially to the island of Rügen. Mariendal's possessions were again concentrated to the counties of Harjumaa and Virumaa in northern Estonia

that formerly belonged under Danish jurisdiction until 1346 when the counties were sold to the Livonian Order.

The regions where the Birgittines owned land can be viewed as Birgittine landscapes, which was defined by the parishes, farms, meadows, drover's roads, fishing waters, windmills, and woods that pertained to the monasteries. The Birgittine landscape was formed primarily through donations of landed property by the upper strata of society who made donations in exchange for the prayers of the Birgittine sisters and brothers, and maybe they also gave a daughter to join the Birgittine community together with their donation. Apart from the donations, a considerable part of the landed property was as well acquired through purchases. The Birgittine landscape was dynamic and transformed over time as the monasteries acquired more landed estates and sold or exchanged others in their possession. These transactions were a key element in the interactions between the monasteries and the laity.

How the monasteries acquired their landed possessions depended on their local context. Both Mariendal and Nådendal acquired estates through donations from the nobility, while most transactions from Marienkrone concerned rents in landed estates that were sold to the monastery, either permanently or with the condition that they were reclaimable. How the Birgittine landscape was formed, as shown in the study, depended on the local context. When Marienkrone invested in landed property, the monastery was assumably using assets that it had acquired through the pious gifts from the burghers in Stralsund. The monastery was regularly included in the wills of the citizens where they gave sums of money to the religious institutions in and around the town. Not many donations are documented at Marienkrone, but the monastery was assumably receiving gifts from its benefactors in form of valuables and money which it could reinvest to acquire rents of landed property. Consequently, the location outside the town of Stralsund had an impact on how Marienkrone organized its economy.

A central question is also what it implied when a farm or farmland was donated or sold to the Birgittines. For instance, when Marienkrone purchased landed property, the monastery acquired the right to collect the annual incomes from individual farms whose inhabitants were listed in the sale charters. Thus, the monastery was not directly administering the running of the farms, but merely the collection of incomes from them and the farms that pertained to the monastery. If the sale was reclaimable, it meant that the incomes could be transferred back to the former owners when they repurchased the land and farms in question from the monastery. In Marienkrone's case, approximately half of the sales to the monastery were made with the condition that they would be reclaimable. Thus, the sales are rather to be viewed as loans that the monastery granted the sellers. If the sellers could not repurchase the estates, they would remain in Marienkrone's possession. Such sales to the monastery are to be viewed as loans rather than purchases and Marienkrone's economic activities reflected its proximity to the town of Stralsund. In Pomerania, monasteries and other religious institutions were on a regular basis purchasing reclaimable rents in landed property and acted as creditors to laypersons, organizations, and authorities. The fact

that Marienkronen at quite an early stage became involved in such activities shows that the monastery quickly became solvent after its foundation and prosperous enough to reinvest its assets in landed rents. As a result, the investments by Marienkronen demonstrate how the gifts to the Birgittines became part of the monastery's spiritual economy. The gifts of money and valuables that were given to the monastery for intercession on behalf of the donors, were reinvested by Marienkronen in landed rents in estates, mainly on the island of Rügen.

The Birgittine landscape was formed as a part of the monasteries' spiritual economy. Even though the investments such as purchases were not directly religiously motivated, the property transactions were a result of the religious work conducted in the Birgittine monasteries, which motivated pious donations. Some of the landed estates donated or purchased by the monasteries, formed the core of the monasteries demesne for which they acquired landed privileges and were liberated from tax. In the case study of Mariendal, I discussed the negotiations between the monastery and its neighbours. The disputes concerned the borders between estates and the negotiations took place at Toompea, at the castle of the Livonian Commander in the upper town of Tallinn. The castle served as the space of interaction between the Birgittines and other actors concerning the monastery's landed estates. This course of action depended on the fact that the Livonian Order was the territorial overlord and had to give its approval of all affairs concerning the landed property. In practice it meant that Mariendal regularly granted some of its brothers permission to leave the enclosure and act as its representatives at Toompea castle when the monastery's property was negotiated. An example of such negotiations between the Birgittines and other landowners in Estonia were the border feuds where the boundaries between the land of the monastery and the land of the other owners were settled. The Birgittine landscape in Estonia was made concrete by the boundary stones with the Birgittine symbol, a circled cross, being placed out to distinguish the monastery's estates from the neighbouring land. In this way was the Birgittine estates also physically manifested in the landscape.

When comparing Mariendal, Marienkronen and Nådendal, a distinguishable difference is observable in the use of location in the documents. In Nådendal, the charters of donations, sales and exchange of pastures were primarily drawn up on site at the monastery, on one occasion the parlour of the male convent was given as the location for the making of the charter. At Marienkronen, these documents were drawn up either at the monastery or somewhere, often unspecified place, within the town of Stralsund. The use of space for drawing up official legal contracts was depending on the local circumstances and authorities.

My study regarding the forms of interaction at the Birgittine monasteries reveal both similarities and differences in the communication with the local society. To the Birgittine sisters and brothers the cloistered life was rather similar at the different locations, but the practical organisation of religious life and the livelihood of the inhabitants was secured and maintained according to the local circumstances. In order to keep their religious life adhering to the *Regula Salvatoris*,

the inhabitants of the monasteries were depending on persons in the surrounding society to secure their daily needs. According to the *Regula Salvatoris*, the economic base of the monastery was the prebends of the first generation of sisters and brothers. These would bring as much income with them that it would suffice for “bread and beer” in both good years and bad. The prebends were thereafter to be inherited by the following generations of sisters and brothers. In practice, however, the costs in the running of the monasteries were exceeding the bare minimum of food and clothing. The Birgittines attracted many visitors that needed accommodation and their needs were met through housing in the nearby town or town. Additionally, elderly (both women and men) people lived in the monasteries but outside enclosure. In return for their donations, they received lifelong sustenance in food and clothing from the Birgittines.

The monasteries were large households that housed over a hundred inhabitants. Thus, the incomes through donations were necessary to maintain the monasteries financially. The incomes were used for the sustenance of the inhabitants, but as well to finance the ongoing construction works and renovations of the churches and convent buildings. The sources witness of more or less constant ongoing construction and renovations at the monasteries throughout the fifteenth century. Some donations and testamentary bequests were also directly given for this purpose. The burghers in the towns of Tallinn and Stralsund were regularly giving bequests (“*zum Bau*”) to the building projects at the Birgittines and the majestic ruins of the church of Mariendal still witness its former grandeur.

The pious gifts were vital for the Birgittine economy and the Birgittines were generally successful in attracting donations and testamentary bequests on the locations where the monasteries were founded. The monasteries became part of the sacral topography of the Baltic Sea region as merchants engaged in long-distance trade started to endow Birgittine monasteries on multiple locations across the Baltic Sea region in their wills. The Order was thus quickly integrated into the wide network of churches and monasteries that were regularly included in the merchant wills.

The benefactor communities that were formed around the Birgittine monasteries both consisted of a core community of benefactors who especially endowed the Birgittines and participated in the foundation of the monasteries, and persons who were more distantly connected to the monasteries by endowing them among a wider range of institutions. The donations to Nådendal allow a more thorough analysis of the composition of the benefactor community that evolved around the monastery. When studying the donation charters to the monastery, a certain group of people, consisting of both men and women, who are more frequently mentioned in the documents. These persons were engaged in the monastery as donors, but also as sealing witnesses to donations. They were all nobles residing in the neighbouring parishes to the monastery and the men were holding legal offices as district judges and law-speakers in the province of Norrfinne. Remarkably, the nobility from the province of Söderfinne is only sporadically involved in the donations to Nådendal, even though the monastery

would possibly have appealed also to them since it represented the first and only female monastery in the diocese. On the basis of the donations, Nådendal seems to have been first and foremost a monastery supported by the local nobility in Norrfinne.

The Birgittines across the Baltic Sea region were one of a number of religious and social organizations that stretched over the entire region and beyond. After the foundation of the Birgittine Order in 1370, the establishment of new monasteries was rapid. The *Regula Salvatoris* and the other Birgittine statutes set the frames of life inside the monasteries. However, as I have shown, the connections to their surrounding societies and local authorities were determining factors for the role of the monasteries in their local environment. Not only the abbesses and general confessors were though interacting with the local community, individual sisters and brothers would as well keep their ties to family and relatives also after joining a the Birgittine community. Further research on the actions of Birgittine sisters and brothers and their family connections would give valuable insights in the role and communication between Birgittines and the local communities.

Sammanfattning på svenska

Birgittinorden som grundades med Vadstena kloster kring år 1370 var den enda klosterorden som grundades i Nordeuropa och som därefter spreds söder ut till andra delar av Europa under 1400-talet. Birgittinorden, eller Frälsareorden (efter dess latinska namn Ordo Sanctissimi Salvatoris), byggde på den Heliga Birgittas klosteridé bestående av två konvent: ett större för kvinnor och ett mindre för män, huvudsakligen bestående av prästbröder. De båda konventen var strikt åtskilda från varandra genom ordensregeln, Regula Salvatoris, där formen för livet i klostret beskrevs. I synnerhet kom Birgittinorden att snabbt etableras i Östersjöregionen: i de nordiska rikena och i närheten av hansastäder. Birgittinordens moderna utformning med en teologi som fokuserade på Kristusmystik och Jungfru Maria bidrog till dess popularitet både vid furstehoven och de urbana eliterna.

Fokus för denna studie är Birgittinklostren regionala och lokala etablering under 1400-talet kring Östersjön där avhandlingens utgångspunkt är klostrens grundläggningsprocess samt deras interaktion med lokalsamhället på orter där de grundades. Frågeställningen är tredelad: Vem understödde Birgittinerna och vilka aktörer tog initiativ till klostrens grundläggning? Hur påverkade de lokala omständigheterna birgittinklostrens praktiska organisation och uppehälle? Vilken var klostrens samhällliga roll och hur formades den genom interaktionen med allmänheten? Syftet med studien är därmed att undersöka Birgittinklostren i termer av stora jordägare och hur deras ekonomiska verksamhet kom att utvecklas i relation till lokalsamhället och vilka lokala samt regionala aktörer som understödde dem. Ett sådant regionalt och lokalt perspektiv på Birgittinklostren har inte gjorts tidigare och ger ny kunskap om ordens regionala etablering och betydelse.

Studien utgår från tre kloster: Mariendal (Pirita) grundat kring 1410 utanför Tallinn, Marienkrona grundat 1421 vid Stralsund och Nådendal grundat 1438 i Åbo Stift. Klostren har valts ut eftersom de låg inom olika politiska sfärer av Östersjöregionen, vilka också hade nära förbindelser med varandra. Av särskilt intresse är vilka aktörer som tog initiativ till och deltog i Birgittinklostrens grundläggning samt vilka som understödde klostren på längre sikt. Mariendal var beläget på mark tillhörande den Livländska Orden som var en gren av Tyska Orden. Klostret läge ca. 12 km öster om Tallinn kom att prägla dess grundläggning och dess vidare verksamhet. Grundläggningen var ett projekt som engagerade både köpmän och den Tyska Orden samtidigt som stadsrådet i Tallinn förhöll sig skeptiskt till klostrets läge vida kusten och nära staden. Mariendals verksamhet kom att präglas av dess läge mellan stad och landsbygd. Dess understödjare kom både från köpmannakretsarna i Tallinn och vasallerna, det vill säga aristokratin, i de nordestniska landskapen Harjumaa och Virumaa. Initiativet till Marienkronas grundläggning kom däremot från stadsrådet som behöll täta band till klostret under hela dess existens. Det faktum att Marienkrona var beläget intill staden, endast 200 meter utanför stadsmurarna, bidrog till att klostret fick en mycket

urban karaktär. Nådendal etablerades år 1438 och dess grundläggning på landsbygden utanför Åbo var ett projekt som engagerade såväl riksårdet och biskopen som det lokala frälset. Eftersom klostret småningom kom att förläggas till ett gods i Reso församling var det också nödvändigt att grundlägga en köpstad intill klostret för att understödja klostrets verksamhet och för att härbärgera de pilgrimer som besökte klostret.

Birigittinklosterns finansiella verksamhet kom därmed att präglas av deras läge i förhållande till städerna. Även om livet i klostret och deras verksamhet bestämdes av ordensregeln var klostren även tvungna att anpassa sitt uppehälle utgående från de lokala omständigheterna. I avhandlingens titel används begreppet "birgittinska landskap" vilket syftar på de omfattande jordegendomar som kom i klostrens ägo. Förutom den andliga verksamheten, bygde en stor del av klostrens växelverkan med sin omgivning på deras godsförvaltning och de jordegendomar som understödde klosterinvånarnas upphålle och de omfattande byggarbeten som pågick vid klostren. Frälsepersoner och köpmän var Birgittinernas huvudsakliga understödjare på samtliga orter där de grundlades, vilken grupp som var dominerande berodde på vilka som hade tagit initiativet till klostrens grundläggning. Beroende på om understödjarna huvudsakligen kom från urbana eller rurala miljöer kom också att prägla klostrens verksamhet beroende på om de fick finansiellt understöd i form av pengar eller lantegendomar. Ordens snabba etablering berodde därmed både på dess moderna andlighet som tilltalade de som planerade att grundlägga ett kloster, men också på klostrens organisation som tack vare att orden nyligen hade etablerats också var anpassningsbar till de lokala omständigheterna.

Archival Sources

Archivio apostolico vaticano (Vatican Apostolic Archives)

AAV, Reg. Suppl. 120, fol. 70v-71r, Gerard Wulff, Tribucensis, 14.1.1419.

Archiwum Państwowe w Szczecinie (Szczecin State Archives)

Nr zespołu 3: Herzoglich Wolgaster Archiv, Sign. 1772.

Eesti Rahvusarhiiv, ajalooarhiiv, Tartu (Estonian National Archives)

EAA.854 Eestima rüütelkond, kantselei, Pärgamentiürkud, Püha Brigitta klooster 1240–1923.

EAA.2069 Kukruse möisa ürikute ja pitserite kogu, ürikud, Pärgamentürikud, 1224–1885.

Stadtarchiv Stralsund (Stralsund City Archives) (StAS)

Testamente Teil 1: 15. Jahrhundert.

01.01.06. Kloster Marienkronen, Urkunden (Here as: UMarienkronen).

01.02.01 Hs. Handschriften.

01.02.01.01 Stadtbücher.

HS 0004: Stadtbuch von Stralsund 1419–1455.

HS 0005: Stadtbuch von Stralsund 1455–1492.

HS 0006: Stadtbuch von Stralsund 1493–1522.

01.02.01.04 Kopiare und Sammlungen von Urkundenabschriften.

HS 0332: Diplomatarium Coenobii Mariae Coronae ordinis St. Annen und Brigitten (Urkundensammlung zum Kloster St. Annen und Brigitten), gesammelt und abgeschrieben vom Bürgermeister Johann Albert Dinnies.

HS 0389: Diplomatarium Coenobii Mariae Coronae Ordinis S. Brigittae. Sammlung der bei dem Kloster St. Annen und Brigitten zu Stralsund befindlichen älteren Urkunden Siegeln, Namenslisten, Ordensregeln, Auszug der Matrikel des Klosters, Klostergesetze.

Kansalliskirjasto (Finnish National Library), Helsinki

Käsikirjoituskokoelma, Paul Scheelin kokoelma, MS A.I.47a–b.

Kungliga Biblioteket (The Royal Library), Stockholm

A 24: Vadstena klosterregel 1451.

A 934: Förteckning öfver Bref tillhöriga Nådendals Kloster.

Landesarchiv Greifswald (Greifswald Regional Archives)

038.04 Herrschaft Putbus: Signatur 753.

Landeshauptarchiv Schwerin (Schwerin Regional Archives)

LHAS, 2.12-3/2-34, Außermecklenburgische Klöster: Brigittenkloster Marienkronen bei Stralsund 1520/1521.

Stadtarchiv Lübeck (Lübeck City Archives)

01.1-03.01 – ASA Externa, Deutsche Territorien: Signatur 5983.

Sveriges Riksarkiv (National Archives), Stockholm

RA 0107.08 Ericssbergsarkivet.

Codices A 19: Vadstena klostets privilegiebook.

Codices A 20: Vadstena klostets stora kopiebook.

Tallinna Linnaarhiiv (Tallinn City Archives)

TLA 230.1. Tallinna Magistraat.

B.k. Katholische Kirche.

B.k.4-I 1413(?) – 1592, Brigitten- und Jungfrauen-Kloster in Reval.

BA Briefkonzepte.

BA 1- lb – Konzepte des Ratschreibers Johannes Blomendal 1406–26.

BA 1 – ld – Konzepte des Ratschreibers Joachim Muther 1429–1457.

BB 15: II – Schreiben über Privatsachen.

BB 24: I – Hochmeister des Deutschen Ordens, Eingangene Briefe 1379–1437.

BC 28 – Raseborgh (Schlossvögt, Hauptleute u. Richter ca. 1395–1595).

TLA.230.1-I, Ürikud, Urkunden.

Uppsala Universitetsbibliotek (Uppsala University Library), manuscript collections

Uppsala University Library medieval collections: the C-collection.

UUB C 6: Liber Epsitularii Vastenensis, Johannes Hildebrandi.

UUB C 31: Documents from Vadstena

UUB C 107–C111: Michael de Bononia, paper, 5 volumes, Marienkrone, Stralsund.

UUB: 29 May 1411, parchment document, Manuscript Collections.

UUB: 17 August 1412, Henricus Fabri, notary instrument, parchment document, Manuscript Collections.

Edited sources, databases, and printed references

- Ariadne*, Archivportal Mecklenburg-Vorpommern
<<https://ariadne-portal.uni-greifswald.de/>> (accessed on 20.10.2021).
- Bagmihl, Julius Theodor (ed.). *Pommersches Wappenbuch gezeichnet und mit Beschreibung der Wappen und historischen Nachweisen versehen*. Bd. 1–5. Stettin: H. G. Effenbarts Erbin, 1843–1855.
- Baier, Rudolf (ed.). *Zwei Stralsundische Chroniken des funfzehnten Jahrhunderts*. Stralsund: 1893.
- St Benedict of Nursia. *St. Benedict's rule for monasteries*. Translated by Leonard J. Doyle. Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1947.
- Bunge, Georg Friedrich von & Robert von Toll, (eds). *Est- und Livländische Brieflade. Eine Sammlung von Urkunden zur Adels- und Gütergeschichte Est- und Livlands (in Übersetzungen und Auszügen)*. Abt. 1: Dänische und Ordenszeit. Bd. 1. Reval: 1856.
- Diplomatarium Danicum*,
<<https://diplomatarium.dk/>> (accessed in 20.10.2021).
- Diplomatarium Fennicum*,
<<http://df.narc.fi/>> (accessed on 20.10.2021).
- Dähnert, Johann Carl (ed.). *Sammlung gemeiner und besonderer Pommerscher und Rügischer Landes-Urkunden, Gesetze, Privilegien, Verträge, Constitutionen und Ordnungen: Zur Kenntniß der alten und neueren Landes-Verfassung insonderheit des Königlich-Schwedischen Landes-Theils*. Stralsund: Strück 1767.
- Gejrot, Claes (ed.), *The Martiloge of Syon Abbey. The Texts Relevant to the History of the English Birgittines*. Stockholm: Runica et Mediævalia, 2015.
- . *Vadstenadiariet. Latinsk text med översättning och kommentar*. Stockholm: Kungl. Samfundet för utgivande av handskrifter rörande Skandinaviens historia, 1996.
- . *Diarium Vadstenense, 1466–1517. A critical edition with an introduction*. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1987.
- Gejrot, Claes, Sara Risberg & Kirsi Salonen (eds). *Auctoritate papae: the church province of Uppsala and the apostolic penitentiary 1410–1526*. Stockholm: Riksarkivet, 2008.
- Greiffenhagen, Otto & Gotthard von Hansen. *Katalog des Revaler Stadtarchivs*. Abt. 1, Codices und Bücher. Reval: 1924
- . *Katalog des Revaler Stadtarchivs*. Abt. 2, Akten. Reval: 1925.
- . *Katalog des Revaler Stadtarchivs*. Abt. 3, Urkunden-Regsten und Register. Reval: 1926.
- Hausen, Reinhold (ed.). *Finlands medeltidsurkunder. Samlade och i tryck utgifna af Finlands Statsarkiv genom Reinh. Hausen. Band I–VIII*. Helsingfors: Finlands Statsarkiv, 1910–35.
- . *Finlands Medeltidssigill. Les Sceaux Finlandais du Moyen Age. I Afbild utgifna af Finlands Statsarkiv*. Helsingfors: 1900.
- . *Registrum Ecclesiae Aboensis eller Åbo Domkyrkas Svartbok*. Helsingfors: Finlands Statsarkiv, 1890.
- Hedlund, Monica & Andersson-Schmitt, Margareta. *Mittelalterliche Handschriften der Universitätsbibliothek Uppsala: Katalog über die C-Sammlung: Bd 1, Handschriften C I–IV, 1–50*. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1988.
- . *Mittelalterliche Handschriften der Universitätsbibliothek Uppsala. Katalog über die C-sammlung. Bd. 2, Handschriften C 51–200*. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1989.

- Hildebrand, Emil, Gottfrid Carlsson & Johan Axel Almquist (eds). *Stockholms stadsböcker från äldre tid: tänkeböcker 1–5*. Stockholm: K. samfundet för utg. af handskrifter rörande Skandinaviens historia, 1910–1944.
- Johansen, Paul (ed.), *Tallinna Pirita kloostri kalendrikatkend mai ja juuni kuu kohta - Ett kalenderfragment från sankt Birgitta kloster vid Tallinn för maj och juni månader 1474–1544*. Pirita: Pirita kaunistamise selts, 1939.
- . *Die Estlandliste des Liber Census Daniae*. Kopenhagen & Reval: H. Hagerup & F. Wassermann, 1933.
- Kantzow, Thomas von. *Chronik von Pommern in Hochdeutscher Mundart. Erste Bearbeitung. Bd. I. – II.* Edited by Georg Gaebel. Stettin: Verlag von Paul Riekammer, 1897–1898.
- Larsson, Anna (ed.). *Vadstena klostrets två äldsta jordeböcker med inledning och språklig kommentar*. Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1971.
- Lindström, Carl Ferdinand (ed.). *Wadstena kloster-reglor*. Stockholm: P. A. Norstedts & Söner, 1845.
- Lisch, Georg C. F. (ed.). *Urkunden-Sammlung zur Geschichte des Geschlechtes von Maltzan bd. III 1432–1475*. Schwerin: 1851.
- Liv-, Esth- und Curländisches Urkundenbuch nebst Regesten I: I–VI*. Georg Friedrich von Bunge (ed.). Reval-Riga (Dorpat): 1851–1873.
- Liv-, Esth- und Curländisches Urkundenbuch nebst Regesten I: VII–XII*. Hermann Hildebrand, Philipp Schwartz, & August von Bulmerincq (eds). Riga, Moskau: 1881–1910.
- Liv-, Esth- und Curländisches Urkundenbuch nebst Regesten I: XIII–XIV*. Klaus Neitmann, Matthias Thumser, & Madlena Mahling (eds). Köln: 2018.
- Liv-, Esth- und Curländisches Urkundenbuch nebst Regesten II: I–III*. Leonid Arbusow d. Ä. (ed.). Riga: 1900–1914.
- Das Lübecker Urkundenbuch Bd. XI 1466–1470*. Paul Ewald Hasse (ed.). Lübeck: Vereine für Lübeckische Geschichte und Alterthumskunde, 1905.
- Magnus Erikssons landslag enligt Cod. Ups. B 23*. Wiktorsson, Per-Axel (ed.). Uppsala: Svenska Fornskriftsällskapet, 1989.
- Mohnike, Gottlieb C. F. & Zober, Ernst H. (eds), *Auszüge aus Stralsundische Chroniken vom Jahre 1230 bis 1521*. Stralsund: 1833.
- Plaesterer, Artur (ed.). *Das Revaler Pergament-Rentenbuch (1382–1518)*. Reval: 1930.
- Pärgamendid*
<<https://www.ra.ee/pargamendid/index.php>> (accessed on 20.10.2021).>.
- Regula Salvatoris*. Eklund, Sten (ed.). *Sancta Birgitta. Opera Minora I: Regvla Salvatoris*. Lund: Berlingska Boktryckeriet, 1975.
- Reuelaciones Extravagantes*. Hollman, Lennart (ed.). *Den Heliga Birgittas Reuelaciones Extravagantes*. Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1956.
- Risberg, Sara (ed.). *Liber Usuum fratrum monasterii Vadstenensis. The Customary of the Vadstena Brothers. A Critical Edition with an Introduction*. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 2003.
- Schiller, Karl, Lübben, August. *Mittelniederdeutsches Wörterbuch I–VI*. Bremen: Kühtman, 1875–1881.
- Schier, Volker, Corine Schleif & Anne Simon (eds). *Pepper for Prayer. The Correspondence of the Birgittine Nun Katerina Lemmel, 1516–1525. Edition and translation*. Stockholm: Runica et Mediævalia, 2019.
- Schirren, Carl. *Verzeichnis livländischer Geschichts-Quellen in schwedischen Archiven und Bibliotheken*. Dorpat: W. Gläasers Verlag, 1861–1868.

- Schröder, Horst-Diether (ed.). *Der Stralsunder Liber Memorialis: Teil 1 Fol. 1–60, 1320–1410*. Weimar: Herman Bölaus Nachfolger, 1964
- . *Der Stralsunder Liber Memorialis: Teil 2 Fol. 61–120, 1410–1422*. Weimar: Herman Bölaus Nachfolger, 1969.
- . *Der Stralsunder Liber Memorialis: Teil 3 Fol. 121–186, 1423–1440*. Weimar: Herman Bölaus Nachfolger, 1972.
- . *Der Stralsunder Liber Memorialis: Teil 4 Fol. 187–240, 1366–1426*. Rostock: Veb Hinstorff Verlag, 1966.
- . *Der Stralsunder Liber Memorialis: Teil 5 Fol. 241–300, 1426–1471*. Weimar: Herman Bölaus Nachfolger, 1982.
- . *Der Stralsunder Liber Memorialis: Teil 6 Fol. 301–344, 1471–1525*. Weimar: Herman Bölaus Nachfolger, 1988.
- Seeberg-Elverfeldt, Roland (ed.). *Revaler Regesten. 3. Testamente Revaler Bürger und Einwohner aus den Jahren 1369 bis 1851*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1975.
- Silfverstolpe, Carl (ed.). *Vadstena klostrets jordebok 1500 jemte tillägg ur klostrets äldre jordeböcker*. Stockholm: 1898.
- Stralsundische Zeitung*. nr. 94, 24.04.1900; nr. 123, 28.05.1903; nr. 44, 21.02.1929; nr. 49, 27.02.1929.
- Ståhl, Peter (ed.). *Liber Epistularis (Cod. Upsal. C6) I. Lettres nos 1 à 109 (fol. 1r à 16r). Édition critique avec des analyses et une introduction*. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1998.
- Svenskt Diplomatariums Huvudkartotek*, <<https://sok.riksarkivet.se/sdhk>> (accessed on 20.10.2021).
- Vogelsang, Reinhard (ed.). *Kämmereibuch der Stadt Reval 1432–1463*. Wien: Böhlau, Verlag, 1976.
- . *Kämmereibuch der Stadt Reval 1463–1507*. Wien: Böhlau Verlag 1983.

Literature

- Ahl-Waris, Eva. *Historiebruk kring Nådendal och den kommemorativa anatomin av klostrets minnesplats*. Helsingfors: Helsingfors Universitet, 2010.
- Andersen, Elisabeth, Henrike Lähnemann & Anne Simon. "Introduction. Mysticism and Devotion in Northern Germany." In *A Companion to Mysticism and Devotion in Northern Germany in the Late Middle Ages*, edited by Elisabeth Andersen et al. (eds), 1–20. Leiden: Brill 2014.
- Andersen, Elizabeth. "Birgitta of Sweden in Northern Germany: Translation, Transmission and Reception." In *A Companion to Mysticism and Devotion in Northern Germany in the Late Middle Ages*, edited by Elizabeth Andersen et al., 205–230. Leiden: Brill, 2014.
- Andersson, Catharina. "Gifts and Society in Fourteenth Century Sweden." In *Disputing Strategies in Medieval Scandinavia*, edited by Kim Esmark et al., 219–45. Leiden: Brill, 2013.
- Anthoni, Eric. *Finlands medeltida frälse och 1500-talsadel*. Helsingfors: Svenska Litteratursällskapet i Finland, 1970.
- Arnold, John H. *Belief and Unbelief in Medieval Europe*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2010.
- Axelsson, Roger. "Baltiska medeltidsbrev i Ericssbergsarkivet", *Biblis* nr. 3/4 (2000): 3-4.
- Auge, Oliver. *Handlungsspielräume fürstlicher Politik im Mittelalter. Der südliche Ostseeraum von der Mitte des 12. Jahrhunderts bis in die frühe Reformationszeit. Ostfilbern*: Thorbecke, 2009a.
- . "Gesitliche Gemeinschaften, Dynastie und Landesherrschaft im Ostseeraum." In *Glaube, Macht und Pracht: Geistliche Gemeinschaften des Ostseeraums im Zeitalter der Backsteingotik*. Edited by Oliver Auge & Katja Hillebrand, 305–321. Rahden/Westfahlen: Verlag Marie Leidorf, 2009b.
- Bainbridge, Virginia. "Syon Abbey and Nation Building: Patronage by Political Elites and their Regional Affinities in England and Wales, c. 1415–1558." In *Continuity and Change. Papers from the Birgitta Conference at Dartington 2015*, edited by Elin Andersson et al., 128–143. Stockholm: KVHAA, 2017.
- . "Women and the Transmission of Religious Culture. Benefactresses of three Bridgettine Convents c. 1400–1600." *Birgittiana* nr. 3 (1997): 55–76.
- Bartlett, Robert. *Why Can the Dead Do Such Great Things? Saints and Worshippers from the Martyrs to the Reformation*. Princeton & Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2013.
- Bedos-Rezak, Brigitte. "Women, Seals, and Power in Medieval France, 1150–1350." In *Women & Power in the Middle Ages*, edited by Mary Erler & Maryanne Kowaleski, 61–82. Athens & London: University of Georgia Press, 1988.
- Berglund, Louise. "Queen Philippa and Vadstena Abbey. Royal Communication on a Medieval Media Platform." In *Media and Monarchy in Sweden*, edited by Mats Jönsson & Patrik Lundell, 21–32. Stockholm: Nordicom, 2009.
- . *Guds stat och maktens villkor: politiska ideal i Vadstena kloster, ca 1370–1470*. Uppsala: Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, 2003.
- Berman, Constance A. "Later Monastic Economies." In *The New Cambridge History of Medieval Monasticism in the Latin West*, edited by Alison I. Beach & Isabelle Cochelin, 831–847. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020.

- Berntson, Martin. *Klostren och reformationen. Upplösningen av kloster och konvent i Sverige 1523–1596*. Skellefteå: Artos & Norma, 2003.
- Bijsterveld, Arnoud-Jan A. *Do ut Des. Gift-giving, Memoria, and Conflict Management in the Medieval Low Countries*. Hilversum: Verloren, 2007.
- Bjarne-Larsson, Gabriela. *Det öppna fönstret: arv och egendom i bostadsbristens Stockholm 1479–1530*. Stockholm: Jure, 2019.
- . *Laga Fång för medeltidens kvinnor och män. Skriftbruk, jordmarknader och monetarisering i Finnveden och Jämtland 1300–1500*. Stockholm: Institutet för Rätthistorisk forskning, 2010.
- Blom, Conny. "Att inte förgås i "vanrykt". Sytning, själågagn, vård och omsorg under senmedeltid och 1500-tal." *Scandia* 66 nr. 1 (2000): 5–55.
- Bollman, Anne. "The Influence of the Devotio Moderna in Northern Germany." In *A Companion to Mysticism and Devotion in Northern Germany in the Late Middle Ages*, edited by Elisabeth Andersen et al. (eds), 231–60. Leiden: Brill 2014.
- Burroughs, Charles. "Spaces of arbitration and the organization of space in late medieval Italian cities". In *Medieval Practices of Space*, edited by Barbara A. Hanawalt & Michal Kobialka, 64–100. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000.
- Büttner, Bengt. *Die Pfarreien der Insel Rügen. Von der Christianisierung bis zur Reformation*. Köln: Böhlau Verlag, 2007.
- Bärsch, Jürgen. "Liturgy and Reform: Northern German Convents in the Late Middle Ages." In *A Companion to Mysticism and Devotion in Northern Germany in the Late Middle Ages*, edited by Elisabeth Andersen et al. (eds), 21–48. Leiden: Brill 2014.
- Cammille, Michel. "Signs of the city. Place, power, and public fantasy in medieval Paris". In *Medieval Practices of Space*, edited by Barbara A. Hanawalt & Michal Kobialka, 1–36. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000.
- Carlsson, Gottfrid. "Bielke, släkt", *Svenskt Biografiskt Lexikon*. Stockholm: Riksarkivet, 1924. <<https://sok.riksarkivet.se/sbl/artikel/18157>> (accessed on 19.11.2021).
- Carlquist, Jonas. *Vadstenasystrarnas textvärld. Studier i systrarnas skriftbrukskompetens, lärdom och textförståelse*. Uppsala: Svenska Fornskriftsällskapet, 2007.
- Cederbom, Charlotte. "Hustrurna och Nådendal. Makt, auktoritet och ekonomiska bidrag 1442–1500." In *Nådendal – Vallis Gratiae. Finlands Birgittakloster*, edited by Charlotte Cederbom et al., 69–76. Stockholm: Runica et Mediaevalia, 2018.
- Chiffolleau, Jacques. *La comptabilité de l'au-delà. les hommes, la mort et la religion dans la région d'avignon à la fin du moyen age (vers 1320-vers 1480)*. Paris: École française de Rome, 1980.
- Clark, James G. "The Rule of Saint Benedict", In *A Companion to Medieval Rules and Customaries*, edited by Christopher M. Bellitto, 37–76. Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2020.
- . "Monastic Confraternity in Medieval England. The Evidence from the St. Albans Abbey Liber Benefactorum." In *Religious and Laity in Western Europe, 1000–1400: Interaction, Negotiation and Power*, edited by Janet Burton & Emilia Jamrozak, 315–31. Turnhout: Brepols, 2006.
- Cnattingius, Hans. *Studies in the Order of St. Bridget of Sweden I. The Crisis in the 1420's*. Göteborg & Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1963.
- Czaika, Otfried. "Magnus Nicolai (Stjärnkors)." *Svenskt Biografiskt Lexikon* 33 (2007–2011), <<https://sok.riksarkivet.se/sbl/artikel/34523>> (accessed on 5 September 2021).
- Davies, Wendy. "Monastic Landscapes and Society." In *The Oxford Handbook of Medieval Christianity*, edited by John H. Arnold, 132–47. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014.

- Deecke, Ernst. "Marienwohld", *Vaterländisches Archiv für das Herzogthum Lauenburg* 1 (1857): 341–98.
- Dinnies, Johann Albert. *Nachricht von dem vormahls vor der Stadt Stralsund belegenen Kloster Birgittinerordens, Mariakron genannt*. Greifswald: 1783.
- Dormeier, Heinrich. "Marienwohlde. Birgittinerinnen und Birgittiner." In *Klosterbuch Schleswig-Holstein und Hamburg*, edited by Oliver Auge & Katja Hillebrand, 215–252. Regensburg: Schnell + Steiner, 2019.
- . "Neue Ordensniederlassungen im Hanseraum: Lübecker Stiftungen zugunsten des Birgittenklosters Marienwohlde bei Mölln (1413–1534)". In *Klöster, Stifte und Konvente nördlich der Elbe. Zum gegenwärtigen Stand der Klosterforschung in Shcleswig-Holstein, Nordschleswig, sowie den Hansestädten Lübeck und Hamburg*, edited by Oliver Auge & Katja Hillebrand, 261–365. Kiel: Wachholtz, 2013.
- Eimer, Birgitta. *Gotland unter dem Deutschen Orden und die Komturei Schweden zu Årsta*. Innsbruck: Universitätsverlag Wagner, 1966.
- Emanuelsson, Anders. *Kyrkojorden och dess ursprung. Oslo biskopsdöme perioden ca 1000 – ca 1400*. Göteborg: 2005.
- Esch, Arnold. "Überlieferungs-Chance und Überlieferungs-Zufall als methodisches Problem des Historikers." *Historische Zeitschrift* 240 no. 3 (1985): 529–70.
- Esmark, Kim. "Disputing property in Zealand. The Records of the Sorø Donation Book." In *Disputing Strategies in Medieval Scandinavia*, edited by Kim Esmark et al., 181–218. Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2013.
- . *De hellige døde og den sociale orden. Relikviecult, ritualisering og symbolsk magt (Anjou 10.-12. århundrede)*. Roskilde: Roskilde Universitetsforlag, 2002.
- Etting, Vivian. "Margrete og Birgittinerordenen." In *Margrete 1. Nordens frue og husband*, edited by Poul Grønder-Hansen, 251–55. København: Danmarks Nationalmuseum, 1996.
- Ewe, Herbert. *Das Alte Stralsund. Kulturgeschichte einer Osteseestadt*. 2nd edition. Weimar: Verlag Hermann Böhlau Nachfolger, 1995.
- Falkeid, Unn. "The Political Discourse of Birgitta of Sweden." In *A Companion to St Birgitta of Sweden*, edited by Maria H. Oen, 80–102. Leiden: Brill, 2019.
- Ferm, Olle & Élisabeth Mornet (eds.). *Swedish Students at the University of Paris in the Middle Ages I*. Stockholm: Runica et Mædievalia, 2021.
- Fogelqvist, Ingvar. "Birgitta och de fyra kyrkolärarna." In *Birgitta av Vadstena. Pilgrim och profet 1303–1373*, edited by Per Beskow & Anette Landen, 105–16. Stockholm: Natur och Kultur, 2003.
- Fredriksson, Anna. "Challenging and Championing St Birgitta's Revelations at the Councils of Constance and Basel." In *A Companion to Birgitta of Sweden and her legacy in the Later Middle Ages*, edited by Maria H. Oen, 103–31. Leiden: Brill, 2019.
- Fritz, Birgitta. "The History and Spiritual Life of Vadstena Abbey." In *A Companion to Birgitta of Sweden and her legacy in the Later Middle Ages*, edited by Maria H. Oen, 132–58. Leiden: Brill, 2019.
- . "De svenska medeltidsbrevens trädning till 1800-talets början. En Arkivhistorisk översikt." *Meddelanden från det Svenska Riksarkivet 1976–1977* (1980). Reviderad och försedd med uppgifter om Senare litteratur (2009), < <https://riksarkivet.se/om-medeltidsbrev> > [accessed on 18 October 2021].
- . "Kung Magnus Erikssons planer för Vadstena klosterkyrka - och Birgittas." In *Kongsmenn og krossmenn. Festschrift till Grethe Authén Blom*, edited by Steinar Supphellen, 115–29. Trondheim: Tapir, 1992.
- . *Hus, land, län. Förvaltningen i Sverige 1250–1434*. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1972–1973.

- Fritze, Konrad. *Am Wendepunkt der Hanse. Untersuchungen zur Wirtschafts- und Sozialgeschichte der wendischen Hansestädte in der ersten Hälfte des 15. Jahrhunderts*. Berlin: VEB Deutscher Verlag der Wissenschaften, 1967.
- . "Stadt-Land Beziehungen im hansischen Bereich im Mittelalter." In *Gewerbliche Produktion und Stadt-Land-Beziehungen*, edited by Fritze et al., 109–17. Weimar: Hermann Böhlau Nachfolger, 1979.
- Fritze, Konrad, Eckhard Müller-Mertens & Johannes Schildhauer (eds). *Zins-Profit. Ursprüngliche Akkumulation*. Weimar: Hermann Böhlau Nachfolger, 1981.
- Gejrot, Claes. "The Emerging Birgittine Movement and the First Steps towards the Canonization of Birgitta of Sweden", In *Medieval Christianity in the North. New Studies edited by Kirsi Salonen et al., 155–80*. Turnhout: Brepols, 2013.
- . "Att sätta ljuset i ljusstaken. Birgittinsk lobbying i mitten av 1370-talet", In *Medeltidens mångfald. Studier i samhällsliv, kultur och kommunikation tillägnade Olle Ferm*, edited by Göran Dahlbäck et al., 91–108. Stockholm: Runica et mediævalia, 2008.
- . "Travelling Bridgettines", *Tongues and Texts Unlimited. Studies in Honour of Tore Janson on the Occasion of His Sixtieth Anniversary*, edited by Hans Aili & Peter af Trampe., 71–81. Stockholm: Stockholms Universitet, 2000.
- . "Dubia Regulae Salvatoris. Två 1400-talstexter om maktfördelningen mellan abbedissa och generalkonfessor i ett birgittinkloster. Textkritisk utgåva", In *I Heliga Birgittas trakter. Nitton Uppsatser om medeltida samhälle och kultur i Östergötland "västansång"*, edited by Göran Dahlbäck, 195–214. Uppsala: HFSR, 1990.
- Gejrot Claes, Mia Åkestam & Roger Andersson (eds.). *The Birgittine experience: papers from the Birgitta Conference in Stockholm 2011*. Stockholm: KVHAA, 2013.
- Gejrot, Claes, Sara Risberg & Mia Åkestam (eds.). *Saint Birgitta, Syon and Vadstena: papers from a symposium in Stockholm 4–6 October 2007*. Stockholm: KVHAA, 2010.
- Gleba, Gudrun. "Die Spätmittelalterlichen Situation der Klöster im heutigen Mecklenburg-Vorpommer - Wirtschaftstätigkeiten, gesellschaftliche Verflechtungen, Reformen: eine Skizze". In *Glaube, Macht und Pracht: Geistliche Gemeinschaften des Ostseeraums im Zeitalter der Backsteingotik*, edited by Oliver Auge et al., 367–74. Rahden/Westfalen: Verlag Marie Leidorf, 2009.
- Graßmann, Antjekatrin. "Kirchliches Leben in den hansischen Niederlassungen des Auslandes". *Der Kaufmann und der Liebe Gott*, edited by Antjekatrin Graßmann, 113–130. Trier: Porta Alba, 2009.
- Gunnes, Erik. "Munkeliv birgittinerklosters grunnleggelse og kamp for tilværelsen." In *Birgitta, hendes værck og hendes klostre i Norden*, edited by Tore Nyberg, 221–30. Odense: Odense Universitetsforlag, 1991.
- Gustavsson, Harald. "A State that Failed? On the Union of Kalmar, Especially its Dissolution." *Scandinavian Journal of History* 31 nr. 3/4 (2006): 205–20.
- Guyotjeannin, Olivier, Jacques Pyck & Benoît-Michel Tock. *Diplomatique Médiévale*. Turnhout. Brepols, 2006 (1993).
- Hahn, Kadri-Rutt. *Die revaler Testamente im 15. und 16. Jahrhundert*. Münster: LIT Verlag, 2015.
- Hanska, Jussi. "Reconstructing the Mental Calendar of Medieval Preaching. A method and Its Limits: An Analysis of Sunday Sermons." *Preacher, Sermon and Audience in the Middle Ages*, edited by Carolyn A. Muessig, 293–315. Leiden: Brill, 2002.
- Hardy, Duncan. *Associative Political Culture in the Holy Roman Empire. Upper Germany, 1346–1521*. Oxford: Oxford University Press 2009.
- Hauschild, Ursula. *Studien zu Löhnen und Preisen in Rostock im Spätmittelalter*. Wien: Böhlau Verlag, 1973.

- Hausen, Reinhold. *Nådendals kyrka och klosterruiner*. Helsinki: Amos Andersson, 1922.
- Hedlund, Monica. "Novisregler och munkaspeglar i Vadstenabiblioteket", In *Birgitta, hendes værk og hendes klostre i Norden*, edited by Tore Nyberg, 361–75. Odense: Odense Universitetsforlag, 1991.
- Hedström, Ingela. "One Customary to Rule Them All. On the Lucidarium and its Transmission", In *The Birgittine Experience. Papers from the Birgitta Conference in Stockholm 2011*, edited by Claes Gejrot et al., 351–69. Stockholm: KVHAA, 2013.
- . *Medeltidens svenska bönböcker. Kvinnligt skriftbruk i Vadstena kloster*. Oslo: Det humanistiske fakultet, 2009.
- Hergemöller, Bernd-Ulrich. "Der Revaler Kirchenstreit (1424–1428) [The ecclesiastical conflict in Reval]". *Hansische Geschichtsblätter* nr. 109 (1997): 13–42.
- Hermansson, Lars & Wojtek Jezierski (eds). *Imagined Communities on the Baltic Rim, from the eleventh to the fifteenth centuries*. Amsterdam: AUP 2016.
- Heß, Cordelia. *Heilige machen im spätmittelalterlichen Ostseeraum. Die Kanonisationsprozesse von Birgitta von Schweden, Nikolaus von Linköping und Dorothea von Montau*. Berlin: Akademie Verlag GmbH, 2008.
- Heyden, Hellmuth. *Kirchengeschichte Pommerns. I. Band, von den Anfängen des Christentums bis zur Reformationszeit*. Köln-Braunsfeld: Verlagsgesellschaft Rudolf Müller, 1957
- Hillebrand, Katja. "Städtische Führungseliten und ihre Grossbauprojekte. Zwischen Frömmigkeit, Repräsentation und Finanzieller Leistungsfähigkeit." *Przegład Zachodniopomorski XXXIII (LXII) no. 4 (2018)*: 53–83.
- Hoogeweg, Hermann. *Die Stifter und Klöster der Provinz Pommern. Bd. 2*. Stettin: Verlag Leon Sauniers Buchhandlung, 1925.
- . *Die Stifter und Klöster der Provinz Pommern. Bd. 1*. Stettin: Verlag Leon Sauniers Buchhandlung, 1924.
- Hutchison, Anne M. "Birgitta and Late Medieval English Spirituality." In *A Companion to St Birgitta of Sweden and her Legacy in the Later Middle Ages*, edited by Maria H. Oen, 268–88. Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2019.
- Höjer, Torvald. *Studier i Vadstena klostets och Birgittinordens historia intill midten av 1400-talet*. Uppsala: Almqvist och Wiksell, 1905.
- Immonen, Visa & Janne Harjula. "Something Distinct, or Business as Usual? Interpreting the Plan of the Late Medieval Bridgettine Monastery in Naantali, Finland." *Religions* 12 (2021): 85–98.
- Jakobsen, Johnny G. G. "A Brief History of Medieval Monasticism in Denmark (with Schleswig, Rügen and Estonia)." *Religions* 12, no. 7 (2021): 469, < <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel12070469>>.
- . "Social friendships between the Dominican Order and elite groups in thirteenth-century Scandinavia." In *Nordic Elites in Transformation, c. 1050–1250 (volume II): Social Networks*, edited by Kim Esmark et al., 192–212. New York & London: Routledge, 2020.
- . "Maribo kloster og by - Forholdet mellem kloster og by i Maribo med udblik til andre købstadsklostre på Lolland-Falster og Sydsjælland." In *Maribo Domkirke. Kloster-, by- og domkirke gennem 600 år*, edited by Henrik B. Frederickson, 22–33. Odense: University Press of Southern Denmark, 2016.
- Jakobsen, Johnny G. G. & Marika Räsänen. "Dominikaanien vaikutus koroisissa." In *Koroinen. Suomen ensimmäinen kirkollinen keskus*, edited by Janne Harjula et al., 132–9. Turku: Turun Historiallinen Yhdistys: 2018.
- Jahnke, Carsten. "Hansische Kaufleute und deren Religiosität ausserhalb ihrer Heimat". *Zapiski Historyczne* LXXXIV nr. 1 (2019): 7–41.

- Jamroziak, Emilia. "The Historiography of Medieval Monasticism: Perspectives from Northern Europe." *Religions* 12, nr. 7 (2021): 552, <<https://doi.org/10.3390/rel12070552>>.
- . *The Cistercian Order in Medieval Europe 1090–1500*. London & New York: Routledge, 2013.
- . *Survival and Success on Medieval Borders. Cistercian Houses in Medieval Poland and Pomerania from the Twelfth to the Late Fourteenth Century*. Turnhout: Brepols, 2011.
- . "Spaces of Lay-Religious Interaction in Cistercian Houses of Northern Europe." *Parergon* 27 nr. 2 (2010): 37–58.
- . "Making and Breaking the Bonds: Yorkshire Cistercians and their Neighbours" In *Perspectives for an Architecture of Solitude: Essays on Cistercians, Art and Architecture in Honour of Peter Fergusson*, edited by Terry Kinder, 63–70. Turnhout: Brepols, 2004.
- Jenks, Stuart. *Documents on the Papal Plenary Indulgences 1300–1517 Preached in the Regnum Teutonicum*. Leiden: Brill, 2018.
- Johansen, Paul & Heinz von zur Mühlen. *Deutsch und Undeutsch im Mittelalterlichen und Frühneuzeitlichen Reval*. Köln: Böhlau Verlag, 1973.
- Johns, Susan M. "Seals and lordship." In *Seals and Society. Medieval Wales, the Welsh Marches and their English Border Region*, edited by P. R. Schofield, 79–90. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2016.
- Jørgensen, Kaare Rübner. "Mariager klostere opprettelse og etablering (til ca. 1490)." In *Birgitta, hendes værk og hendes klostre i Norden*, edited by Tore Nyberg, 231–79. Odense: Odense Universitetsforlag, 1991.
- Jähnig, Bernhart. "Konrad von Jungingen", In *Die Hochmeister des Deutschen Ordens 1190–1994*, edited by Udo Arnold, 97–106. Marburg: N. G. Elwert Verlag, 1998.
- Kala, Tiina. "Die Kirche", In *Das Baltikum: Geschichte einer europäischen Region. Bd. 1. Von der Vor- und Frühgeschichte bis zum Ende des Mittelalters*, edited by Karsten Brüggeman et al., 224–58. Stuttgart: Anton Hiersemann KG, 2018.
- . "The Religious Practices of Minor Corporations in Late Medieval Tallinn: Institutional and Legal Frameworks", In *Guilds, Towns, and Cultural Transmission in the North, 1300–1500*, edited by Lars Bisgaard et al., 251–76. Odense: University Press of Southern Denmark, 2013.
- Kallio, Maria. *Lupaus lahjasta, toivo täyttymyksestä. Keskiaikaiset testamentit Turun hiipakunnassa*, Pro Gradu, Unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Turku. Turku: 2011.
- Kallio-Hirvonen, Maria. *Käsikirjoitustutkimus, kopiokirjat ja kopiokirjojen tehtävä Turun keskiaikaisessa tuomiokapitulissa*. Turku: Turun Yliopiston julkaisuja, 2021.
- Kallioinen, Miika. "The rise of the land market in medieval South-west Finland." *Continuity and Change* 33 (2018): 153–71.
- . *Kauppias, kaupunki, kruunu. Turun porvarihteisö ja talouden organisaatio varhaiskeskiajalta 1570-luvulle*. Helsinki: SKS, 2000.
- Kerr, Julie. "Cistercian Hospitality in the Later Middle Ages". In *Monasteries and Society in the British Isles in the Later Middle Ages*, edited by Janet E. Burton, Karen Stöber, 25–39. Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2008.
- . *Monastic Hospitality. The Benedictines in England, c. 1070– c. 1250*. Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2007.
- Kersken, Norbert. "Öffentliches Notariat und klösterliches Urkundenwesen." In *Glaube, Macht und Pracht: Geistliche Gemeinschaften des Ostseeraums im Zeitalter der*

- Backsteingotik*, edited by Felix Bierman et al., 339–50. Rahden/Westfahlen: Verlag Marie Leidorf, 2009.
- Klockars, Birgit. *I Nådens dal. Klosterfolk och andra ca. 1440–1590*. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell 1979.
- . "Klosterfolket i Nådendal." *Från medeltid till 1900-tal. Historiska Samfundets Årsbok IX*. (1977): 65–88.
- Korpiola, Mia. "High and Late Medieval Scandinavia: Codified Vernacular Law and Learned Legal Influences." In *Oxford Handbook of European Legal History*, edited by Heikki Pihlajamäki et al., 378–403. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018a.
- . "Testamentary Freedom in Law and Practice in Medieval Sweden: Conflicts and Coexistence." In *Succession Law, Practice and Society in Europe across the Centuries*, edited by Maria Gigliola di Renzo Villata, 149–65. Cham: Springer, 2018b.
- Korpiola, Mia & Elsa Trolle Önnerfors. "Inheritance Law, Wills, and Strategies of Heirship in Medieval Sweden." In *Planning for Death. Wills and Death-Related Property Arrangements in Europe, 1200–1600*, edited by Mia Korpiola & Anu Lahtinen. Leiden & Bso-ton: Brill, 2018.
- Koskinen, Ulla & Georg Haggren. "Yhteiskunta." In *Aatelin historia Suomessa*, edited by Janne Haikari et al., 77–113. Helsinki: Siltala, 2020.
- Kreem, Juhan. "Der Orden", In *Das Baltikum: Geschichte einer europäischen Region. Bd. 1. Von der Vor- und Frühgeschichte bis zum Ende des Mittelalters*, edited by Karsten Brüggeman et al., 259–77. Stuttgart: Anton Hiersemann KG, 2018.
- . "Der Weltliche Adel", In *Das Baltikum: Geschichte einer europäischen Region. Bd. 1. Von der Vor- und Frühgeschichte bis zum Ende des Mittelalters*, edited by Karsten Brüggeman et al., 278–295. Stuttgart: Anton Hiersemann KG, 2018.
- , "Die Reformationszeit", In *Das Baltikum: Geschichte einer europäischen Region. Bd. 1. Von der Vor- und Frühgeschichte bis zum Ende des Mittelalters*, edited by Karsten Brüggeman et al., 432–62. Stuttgart: Anton Hiersemann KG, 2018.
- . *The Town and its Lord. Reval and the Teutonic Order (in the Fifteenth Century)*. Tallinn: Tallinna Linnaarhiivi, 2002.
- Kreem, Juhan & Kersti Markus. "Kes asutas Pirita kloostri?", *Kunstiteaduslikke Uurimusi* 16 nr. 4 (2007), 60–71.
- Krötzl, Christian. "The Arrival of Religious Orders to the Northern Baltic Sea Region in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries." In *Dominicans in Finland and around the Baltic Sea During the Middle Ages*, 19–22. Turku: Turun Maakuntamuseo, 2003.
- Kühnert, Ernst. "Pirita klostery byggnadsskick jämte en karaktäristik av dess arkitektur", *Birgitta klostret i Tallinn 1436–1936/Pirita kaunistamise seltsi väljaanne* Nr. 12 (1936): 71–80.
- "Kyle. Släkt." In *Svenskt Biografiskt Lexikon*, <<https://sok.riksarkivet.se/sbl/artikel/11904>> (accessed on 4 September 2021).
- Lahtinen, Anu. "Gunilla Johansdotter (Bese)". *Svenskt Kvinnobiografiskt Lexikon*, edited by Maria Sjöberg. Göteborg: 2020. < <https://www.skbl.se/sv/artikel/GunillaJohansdotterBese>> (accessed on 19.11.2021).
- . "By Love and by Law: Choices of Female Donors in Fifteenth- and Sixteenth-century Sweden." In *Donations, Inheritance and Property in the Nordic and Western World from Late Antiquity until Today*, edited by Ole-Albert Rønning & Helle Møller Sigh, 146–64. London & New York: Routledge, 2017.
- . "Gender and Continuity. Women, Men and Landed Property in Medieval Finland." In *History & Change*, edited by Anu Lahtinen & Kirsi Vainio-Korhonen, 32–56. Helsinki: SKS, 2004.

- Lahtinen, Anu & Ijäs, Miia (eds). *Risti ja Lounatuuli. Rauman seurakunnan historia keskiajalta vuoteen 1640*. Helsinki: SKS, 2015.
- Lamberg, Marko. "Religiosity and Readiness for the Reformation among Late Medieval Burghers in Stockholm, c. 1420–1570." In *Lived Religion and the Long Reformation in Northern Europe c. 1300–1700*, edited by Sari Katajala-Peltomaa & Raisa Toivo, 176–203. Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2016.
- . "Birgittalaissääntökunta ylijarajaisena yhteisönä keskiajalla", In *Yhteisöllisyyden perintö. Tutkimuksia yhteisöstä eri vuosisadoilla*, HArk 139, edited by Jari Eilola & Laura-Kristiina Moilanen, 149–93. Helsinki: 2013.
- . "Munkkina ja nunnana luostarissa ja luostarinmuurien ulkopuolella", In *Naantalin luostarin rannassa- arkivpäivä Naantalin luostarissa ja sen liepeillä*, edited by Kari Uotila, 93–108. Kaarina: Muuritutkimus, 2011.
- . *Dannemännen i stadens råd. Rådsmanskretsen i nordisk köpstäder under senmedeltiden*. Stockholm: Stockholmia förlag, 2000.
- Lassen, Thomas W. "The Monastery and its Town. The Maribo Statutes 1488." In *Continuity and Change. Papers from the Birgitta Conference at Dartington 2015*, edited by Elin Andersson et al., 191–202. Stockholm: KVHAA, 2017.
- Łazarek, Anna, & Uwe Rodig, *Archiwum Książąt Włogoskich w zasobach Archiwum Państwowego w Szczecinie i Landesarchiv Greifswald (Herzoglich Wolgaster Archiv im Staatsarchiv Stettin und Landesarchiv Greifswald: konkordanz des Bestandes)*. Warszawa, Szczecin, Greifswald: Naczelna Dyrekcja Archiwów Państwowych / Landesarchiv Greifswald, 2005.
- Lehomaa, Tuula. "'Kuinka turvatonta on tulla ankan tuomarin eteen tyhjin käsin ja sammutetuin lampuin' Keskiaikainen testamentti passina taivaaseen", In *Ristin ja Olavin kansaa. Keskiajan usko ja kirkko Hämeessä ja Satakunnassa*, edited by Marja-Liisa Linder et al., 59–65. Tampere: Tampereen museot, 2000.
- Leinberg, Karl-Gabriel. *De finska klostrens historia*. Helsingfors: Svenska Litteratursällskapet, 1890.
- Lemaître, "Asylum, Right of." In *Encyclopedia of the Middle Ages*, edited by André Vauchez. <<https://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780227679319.001.0001/acref-9780227679319>> (accessed on 3.12.2021). Oxford: 2005.
- Liebergen, Léon van. "Vadstena, Alomünster, Uden, Rome." In *Birgitta Atlas. Saint Birgitta's monasteries: a transeuropean project/ Die Klöster der Heiligen Birgitta: Ein transeuropäisches projekt*, edited by Ulla Sander-Olsen et al., 16–17. Uden: Societas Birgitta Europa, 2013.
- Liiv, Otto. "Pirita klostros krönika", *Birgittaklostret [Pirita klooster] vid Tallinn [Reval]/ Pirita kaunistamise seltsi väljaanne 12 (1936)*: 26–39.
- Lilius, Henrik. *Birgittinerkyrkan i Nådendal*. Helsinki: Suomen muinaismuistoyhdistys, 1969.
- Liljedahl, Ragnar. *Svensk förvaltning i Livland 1617–1634*. Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1933.
- Lindberg, Markus. "The Addiciones Prioris Petri. Rules and Reality", In *Continuity and Change. Papers from the Birgitta Conference in Dartington 2015*, edited by Elin Andersson et al., 184–90. Stockholm: KVHAA, 2017.
- Lindkvist, Thomas. "Die Nordischen Monarchien und die politisch-wirtschaftliche Transformation des Ostseeraums 1250–1520" In *Geschichte, Politik, und Kultur im Ostseeraum. The Baltic Sea Region. Northern Dimensions*, edited by Jan Hecker-Stampehl & Bernd Henningsen, 45–58. Berlin: BWV, 2012.

- Little, Lester K. *Religious Poverty and the Profit Economy in Medieval Europe*. London: Paul Elek Ltd: 1978.
- Loit, Aleksander. *Kampen om feodalrönten. Reduktionen och domänpolitiken i Estland 1655–1710*. Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1975.
- Losman, Beata. *Norden och reformkoncilierna 1408–1449*. Göteborg: Akademiförlaget, 1970.
- Luongo, Thomas F. "God's Words, or St Birgitta's? Birgitta of Sweden as Author." In *A Companion to Birgitta of Sweden*, edited by Maria H. Oen, 25–52. Leiden: Brill, 2019.
- Lusiardi, Ralf. *Stiftung und städtische Gesellschaft: religiöse und soziale Aspekte des Stiftungsverhaltens im spätmittelalterlichen Stralsund*. Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2000.
- Lusset, Elisabeth & Bert Roest. "Late Medieval Monasticism: Historiography and Prospects." In *The New Cambridge History of Monasticism in the Medieval West*, edited by Alison I. Beach and Isabelle Cochelin, 923–940.
- Maliniemi, Aarno. "Birgittalaisuudesta sekä katkemia Naantalin luostarin historiasta." In *Muistojulkaisu Naantalin 500-vuotisjuhlaan*, edited by Aarno Maliniemi & Kaarlo Jäntere, 13–119. Helsinki: Oy Suomen Kirja, 1943.
- Markus, Kersti. "The Pirita Convent in Tallinn. A Powerful Symbol for the Self-Consciousness of the Birgittine Order." In *The Birgittine Experience. Papers from the Birgitta Conference in Stockholm 2011*, edited by Claes Gejrot et al., 93–108. Stockholm: KVHAA, 2013.
- . "Õpetatud Eesti Seltsi aastaraamat/ Annales Litterarum Societatis Esthonicae", *Tuna. Ajalookultuuri ajakiri* (2012:2): 13–18.
- McLaughlin, Meghan. *Consorting with Saints. Prayer for the Dead in Early Medieval France*. Ithaca & London: Cornell University Press, 1994.
- Melville, Gert, "The Institutionalization of Religious Orders (Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries)." In *The New Cambridge History of Medieval Monasticism in the Latin West*, edited by Alison I. Beach & Isabelle Cochelin, 783–802. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020.
- . *The World of Medieval Monasticism. Its history and forms of life*, translated by James D. Mixson. Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 2016.
- Milis, Ludo R. J. *Angelic Monks and Earthly Men. Monasticism and its Meaning to Medieval Society*. Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1992.
- More, Alison & Anneke B. Mulder-Bakker. "Striving for Religious Perfection in the Lay World of Northern Europe." In *The New Cambridge History of Medieval Monasticism in the Latin West*, edited by Alison I. Beach & Isabelle Cochelin, 1057–73. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020.
- Morris, Bridget. *St Birgitta of Sweden*. Woodbridge: Boydell, 1999.
- . "Från hustru till klostergrundare. Birgitta på 1340-talet." In *Birgitta. Hendes værk og hendes kloster i Norden*, edited by Tore Nyberg, 93–102. Odense: Odense universitetsforlag, 1991.
- Muessig, Carolyn. "Audience and Preacher. Ad Status Sermons and Social Classification." In *Preacher and Audience in the Middle Ages*, edited by Carolyn A. Muessig, 255–76. Leiden: Brill, 2002.
- Myrdal, Janken. "Beställare och skrivare". In *En biografi om en bok. Codex Upsaliensis B 68 från 1430*, edited by Jonas Nordin & Janken Myrdal, 59–76. Stockholm: KVHAA, 2020.
- Möller, Gunnar. "'...hat auch drey schone closter, viele capellen und hospital...' – Klöster, Zisterzienserhöfe und Beginen in der einstigen Hansestadt Stralsund". *Lübecker Kolloquien zur Stadtarchäologie im Hanseraum IX* (2014): 309–32.

- Mäkinen, Virpi. "Poverty." In *Encyclopedia of Medieval Philosophy*, edited by Henrik Lagerlund, 1066–72. Cham: Springer, 2019.
- Männikkö, Kyllikki. "Sinetit." In *Keskiajan Avain*, edited by Anu Lahtinen et al., 265–78. Helsinki: SKS 2009.
- Mäesalu, Mihkel. *Liivimaa ja Püha Rooma keisririik 1199–1486*. Tartu: Tartu Ülikool Kirjastus, 2017.
- . "Ühe keskaegse õigusteksti kasutamisest. Mõõgavendade ordu Saksa orduisse inkorporeerimise üriku (1237) omaaegsed tõlgendused Riia peapiiskopi ja Saksa ordu vahelise konflikti kontekstis (1290. aastatest kuni 1480. aastateni)", *Õpetatud Eesti Seltsi aastaraamat/ Annales Litterarum Societatis Esthonicae* (2015):28–55.
- Mänd, Anu. "The Cult and Visual Representation of Scandinavian Saints in Medieval Livonia". In *Saints and Sainthood around the Baltic Sea. Identity, Literacy, and Communication in the Middle Ages*, edited by Carsten Selch Jensen et al. 101–44. Kalamazoo, Michigan: Medieval Institute Publications, Western Michigan University, 2018.
- Nettelbla, Christian von. *Vorläufige und kurzgefasste Nachrichte von einigen Klöstern der H. Schwedischen Birgitta auserhalb Schweden besonders in Teutschland*. Frankfurt & Ulm: 1764.
- Norborg, Lars-Arne. *Storföretaget Vadstena kloster. Studier i Senmedeltida godspolitik och ekonomiförvaltning*. Lund: Gleerups, 1958.
- Nordisk Familjebok. *Konversationslexikon och realencyklopedi. Ugglesupplagan 10. Gossler-Harris*, edited by V. Leche et al. Stockholm: Nordisk Familjeboks förlags aktiebolag, 1909.
- Nyberg, Tore. "Der Birgittenorden." In *Monastische Raumkonzepte als Ausdrucksformen religiöser Leitideen im Mittelalter*, edited by Jörg Sonntag, 179–95. Münster: LIT Verlag, 2016.
- . "Stralsund, Marienkron, Corona Mariae 1415–1559." In *Birgitta Atlas. Saint Birgitta's Monasteries: a Transeuropean Project* edited by Ulla Sander-Olsen et al., 165–169. Uden: Societas Birgitta Europa, 2013.
- . "Birgitta politikern." In *Birgitta av Vadstena. Pilgrim och profet 1303–1373*, edited by Per Beskow & Anette Landen, 89–104. Stockholm: Natur och Kultur, 2003.
- . "Der Deutsche Orden und der Birgittenorden", In *Der Deutsche Orden in der Zeit der Kalmarer Union 1397–1521*, edited by Roman Czaja, 169–82. Torún: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, 1999.
- . *Birgittinsk festgåva. Studier om Heliga Birgitta och birgittinorden*. Uppsala: Teologiska Institutionen vid Uppsala Universitet, 1991a.
- . "Das Birgittenkloster in Danzig bis Ende 1402." *Zeitschrift für Ostforschung* 40, no. 2 (1991b): 161–225.
- . *Dokumente und Untersuchungen zur Inneren Geschichte der drei Birgittenklöster Bayerns 1420–1570. Bd 1–2*. München: C.H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1974.
- . "Das Birgittenkloster von Stralsund im Zuge ordensinterner Reformbewegungen." *Baltische Studien* NF bd. 59 (1973): 7–16.
- . "Vadstena klostrets biktprivilegier 1446." *Kyrkohistorisk årsskrift* 71 (1971): 1–44.
- . *Birgittinische Klostergründungen des Mittelalters*. Lund: Gleerups 1965.
- Odén, Birgitta. "Skyddet för de gamla i medeltidens lagstiftning." In *...och fram träder landsbygdens människor... Studier i nordisk och småländsk historia tillagnade Lars-Olof Larsson på 60-årsdagen den 15 november 1994*, edited by Peter Aronsson et al., 92–108. Växjö: Institutionen för humaniora, 1994.
- Oen, Maria H. (ed.). *A Companion to Birgitta of Sweden and her Legacy in the Later Middle Ages*. Leiden: Brill 2019.

- Oertel, Christian. *The Cult of Saint Erik in Medieval Sweden. Veneration of a Royal Saint, Twelfth–Sixteenth Centuries*. Turnhout: Brepols, 2016.
- Olearius, Adam. *Vermehrte Neue Beschreibung Der Muscowitischen und Persischen Reyse. So durch gelegenheit einer Holsteinsichen Gesandschafft an den Russischen Zaar und König in Persien geschehen. Worinnen die gelegenheit derer Orte und Länder durch welche die Reyse gangen als Liffland, Russland, Tartarien, Meden vnd Persien, sampt dere Einwohner Natur, Leben, Sitten, Hauss-, Welt- und Geistlichen Stand mit fleiß auffgezeichnet und mit vielen meist nach Leben gestellten Figuren gezieret, zu befinden*. Schleswig: Fürstlichen Druckerey durch Johan Holwein, 1656.
- Olesen, Jens E. "Danish Law and Government in Medieval Estonia", In *Denmark and Estonia 1219–2019. Selected Studies on Common Relations*, edited by Jens E. Olesen, 81–94. Greifswald: 2019.
- . *Erich von Pommern und Christopher von Bayern. Studien zur Kalmarer Union*. Greifswald: Publikationen des Lehrstuhls für Nordische Geschichte, 2016.
- . "Analyse und Charakteristik der Kalmarer Union", In *Der Deutsche Orden in der Zeit der Kalmarer Union 1397–1521*, edited by Roman Czaja, 9–32. Torún: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, 1999.
- . "Kongemagt, birgittinerne og Kalmarunion." In *Birgitta. Hendes værk og hendes klostre i Norden*, edited by Tore Nyberg, 169–219. Odense: Odense Universitetsforlag, 1991.
- . *Rigsråd, Kongemagt, Union. Studier over det danske rigsråd og den nordiske kongemagts politik 1434–1449*. Aarhus: Universitetsforlaget i Aarhus, 1980.
- Oxford Dictionary of English*, 3rd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015.
<DOI: 10.1093/acref/9780199571123.001.0001>.
- Palmer, James. *The Virtues of Economy. Governance, Power, and Piety in Late Medieval Rome*. Ithaca & London: Cornell University Press, 2019.
- Pansters, Krijn. "Medieval Rules and Customaries Reconsidered", In *A Companion to Medieval Rules and Customaries*, edited by Christopher M. Bellitto, 1–36. Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2020.
- Piltz, Anders. "Birgitta profeten och uppenbarelsens dynamik." In *Birgitta av Vadstena. Pilgrim och profet 1303–1373*, edited by Per Beskow & Anette Landen, 29–44. Stockholm: Natur och Kultur, 2003.
- Pirita klooster ja selle 500-aastase pühitsemispäeva juubel 15. ja 16. Augustil 1936. a ühes mõningate ajalooliste andmetega: Birgittakloostret vid Tallinn och firandet av dess 500-årsjubileum den 15 och 16 Augusti 1936 jämte några historiska upplysningar* (1940).
- Pöltsam-Jürjo, Inna. "Die autochthone Bevölkerung". In *Das Baltikum: Geschichte einer europäischen Region. Bd. 1. Von der Vor- und Frühgeschichte bis zum Ende des Mittelalters*, edited by Karsten Brüggeman et al., 341–77. Stuttgart: Anton Hiersemann KG, 2018.
- Raam, Villem. *Pirita klooster*. Tallinn: Eesti Raamat, 1984.
- Raam, Villem, & Jaan Tamm. *Pirita Convent. The History of the Construction and Research*. Tallinn: Eesti Entsüklopeediakirjastus, 2006.
- Rajamaa, Ruth. *Katkenud laul. Pirita klooster 1407–1607*. Tallinn: Argo 2018.
- . "Pirita kloostri asutamine ja ülesehitamine 1407–1436 Rootsi allikate valguses", *Kunstiteaduslikke Uurimusi* 16, no. 4 (2007): 75–87.
- . *Systrarnas verksamhet, undervisning och uppfostran i Vadstena kloster 1384–1595*. Stockholm: Pedagogiska institutionen, Stockholms universitet: 1992.
- Ramsay, Jully. *Frälsesläkter i Finland intill stora ofreden*. Helsingfors: Söderström, 1909–1916.

- Rantala, Tuula. "Monastic Donations by Widows. Morning Gifts as Assets in Planning for Old Age and Death in Fifteenth-Century Sweden", In *Planning for Death. Wills and Death-Related Property arrangements in Europe, 1200–1600*, edited by Mia Korpiola & Anu Lahtinen. 66–87. Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2018.
- Rauer, Norbert. *Entstehungs- und Frühgeschichte des Stralsunder Klosters Marienkrone*. unpubl. Master's thesis. Greifswald: 1974.
- Rebas, Hain. "The Post-Scriptum of Danish Estonia – The End of Danish Aspirations in Estonia/Livonia in the 15th Century." In *Denmark and Estonia 1219–2019. Selected Studies on Common Relations*, edited by Jens E. Olesen, 123–38. Greifswald. Publikationen des Lehrstuhls für Nordische Geschichte, 2019.
- . *Infiltration och Handel. Studier i senmedeltida nordisk baltikumpolitik i tiden omkring 1440–1479*. Göteborg: Erik Lönnroth & Åke Holmberg, 1976.
- Reitemeier, Arnd. „... to den buwe gheve ik...": Bedeutung und Attraktivität der Pfarrkirchen im späten Mittelalter“. In *Der Kaufmann und der Liebe Gott*, edited by Antjekathrin Graßmann, 59–88. Trier: Porta Albe, 2009.
- Rogatschewski, Alexander. "Deutsche mittelalterliche Handschriften in den St. Ptersburger Handschriftensammlungen (bis zur mitte des 16 Jh.s). Erschließungsprobleme und Forschungsperspektiven." In *Manuscripta Germanica. Deutschsprachige Handschriften des Mittelalters in Bibliotheken und Archiven Osteuropas*, edited by Astrid Breith et al., 107–22. Stuttgart: S. Hirzel Verlag, 2012.
- Rosenthal, Joel T. *The Purchase of Paradise. The Social Function of Aristocratic Benevolence, 1307–1485*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972.
- Rosenwein, Barbara. "Afterword: Imagined Emotions for Imagined Communities." In *Imagined Communities on the Baltic Rim, from the Eleventh to the Fifteenth Centuries*, edited by Lars Hermansson & Wojtek Jezierski, 379–86. Amsterdam: AUP, 2016.
- . *To be the Neighbor of saint Peter: The Social Meaning of Cluny's Property, 909–1049*. Ithaka: Cornell University Press, 1989.
- Russow, Balthasar. *Chronica Der Prouvintz Lyfflandt*. Rostock: Augustin Herder, 1578.
- Räsänen, Elina. *Ruumiillinen esine, materiaalinen suku: tutkimus Pyhä Anna itse kolmantena -aiheisista keskiajan puuveistoksista Suomessa*. Helsinki: Suomen Muinaismuistoyhdistys, 2009.
- Rychterová, Pavlína. "The Revelations of St Birgitta in the Holy Roman Empire." "Birgitta and Late Medieval English Spirituality." In *A Companion to St Birgitta of Sweden and her Legacy in the Later Middle Ages*, edited by Maria H. Oen, 247–268. Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2019.
- Räsänen, Elina. "Agency of two ladies: Wellborne qvinna Lucia Olofsdotter and Veneration of Saint Anne in the Turku diocese." In *Les élites nordiques et l'Europe occidentale : (XIIIe-XVe siècle) : actes de la rencontre franco-nordique organisée à Paris, 9–10 juin 2005*, edited by Tuomas M. S Lehtonen & Élisabet Mornet, 245–61. Paris: Éditions de la Sorbonne, 2007.
- Röckelein, Hedwig. "Monastic Landscapes." In *The New Cambridge History of Medieval Monasticism in the Latin West*, edited by Alison I. Beach & Isabelle Cochelin, 816–830. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020.
- Röhrkasten, Jens. "Die Wirtschaftsformen des Zisterzienserordens im Spannungsfeld zwischen eigener Gestaltungsmacht und externer Intervention." In *Die Wirkmacht klösterlichen Lebens. Modelle. Ordnungen. Kompetenzen. Konzepte*, edited by Mirko Breitenstein & Gert Melville, 121–42. Regensburg: Verlag Schnell & Steiner GmbH, 2020.
- Saarenpää, Taina. *Turun Tuomiokirkon Musta kirja ja lähteiden julkaisemisen jatkuo Suomessa varhaismodernista digitaaliseen aikaan*. Turku: Turun Yliopisto, 2019.

- Sander-Olsen, Ulla. "Rosmalen, Marienwater, Maria ad Aquas Frigidas, c. 1437–1713." In *Birgitta Atlas. Saint Birgitta's monasteries: a transeuropean project/ Die Klöster der Heiligen Birgitta: Ein transeuropäisches project*, edited by Ulla Sander-Olsen et al., 212–8. Uden: Societas Birgitta Europa, 2013.
- Salmesvuori, Päivi. *Power and Sainthood. The Case of Birgitta of Sweden*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2014.
- . "Birgitta – Från adelsjungfru till kosmopolit", in *Heliga Birgitta. Europas skyddshelgon: Birgitta och Finland*, edited by Päivi Setälä & Eva Ahl-Waris, 7–42. Stockholm: Societas Sanctae Birgittae 2012.
- . *Power and Authority. Birgitta of Sweden and her Revelations*. Helsinki, 2009.
- Salminen, Tapio. *Obscure Hands - Trusted Men. Textualization, the Office of the City Scribe and the Written Management of Information and communication of the Council of Reval (Tallinn) before 1460*. Tampere: 2016.
- Salminen, Tapio. "Rosendal, Wulfard (K noin 1411)". *Kansallisbiografia*. Helsinki: SKS, 12.01.2001.
< <http://urn.fi/urn:nbn:fi:sks-kbg-008269>> (accessed on 19.11.2021).
- Salminen, Tapio. "Tidigare okända medeltida brev från Finland i Revals stadsarkiv", *Historisk Tidskrift för Finland* 3 (1998): 451–70.
- Salonen, Kirsi. "Magnus Nicolain (Särkilähti) epäonninen virkojenmetsästysmatka Roomaan 1465–1466", *Mirator* 20:1 (2020): 2–13.
- Salonen, Kirsi. "Luostarin ja Maskun alueen yhteinen historia 1400-luvulla." In *Naantalin Luostarin rannassa / Vid stranden av Nådendals kloster*, edited by Kari Uotila, 75–92. Naantali: Kåkenhus 2011.
- Schaffern, Robert W. "The Medieval Theology of Indulgences", In *Promissory Notes on the Treasury of Merits. Indulgences in Late Medieval Europe*, edited by Robert N. Swanson, 11–36. Leiden: Brill, 2006.
- Schich, Winfried. "Zisterzienserklöster in der Germania Slavica und ihr Beitrag zur Gestaltung der Kulturlandschaft und zur Entwicklung der Wirtschaft im 12. und 13. Jahrhundert." In *Monastische Kultur als transkonfessionelles Phänomen: Beiträge einer deutsch- russischen interdisziplinären Tagung in Vladimir und Suzdal*, edited by Ludwig Steindorff and Oliver Auge. Berlin: De Gruyter, 353–65.
- Schildhauer, Johannes. *Hansestädtischer Alltag: Untersuchungen auf der Grundlage der Stralsunder Bürgertestamente vom Anfang des 14. bis zum Ausgang des 16. Jahrhunderts*. Weimar: Vlg Hermann Böhlhaus Nachfolger, 1992.
- Schier, Volker & Corine Schleif. *Katerina's windows. Donations and Devotion, Art and Music as Heard and Seen through the Writings of a Birgittine Nun*. University Park: The Pennsylvania State University press, 2009.
- Silber, Ilana F. "Gift-giving in the great traditions: the case of donations to monasteries in the medieval West." *European Journal of Sociology / Archives Européennes de Sociologie* 36 no. 2 (1996): 209–43.
- Silfverstolpe, Carl. *Klosterfolket i Vadstena: personhistoriska anteckningar*. Stockholm: Norstedts 1898.
- Smail, Daniel Lord. "The Linguistic Cartography of Property and Power in Late Medieval Marseille". In *Medieval Practices of Space*, edited by Barbara A. Hanawalt & Michal Kobialka, 37–63. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000.
- Soom, Arnold. *Der herrenhof in Estland im 17. Jahrhundert*. Lund: 1954.
- Sprandel, Rolf. *Das Mittelalterliche Zahlungssystem nach Hansisch-Nordischen Quellen des 15.–16. Jahrhunderts*. Stuttgart: Anton Hierseman, 1975.

- Strang, Elke. "Godesberg, Marienforst, Maria ad Forestem, 1450–1802." In *Birgitta Atlas. Saint Birgitta's monasteries: a transeuropean project/ Die Klöster der Heiligen Birgitta: Ein transeuropäisches project*, edited by Ulla Sander-Olsen et al., 185–189. Uden: Societas Birgitta Europa, 2013.
- Strenga, Gustavs. "Cistercian Networks of Memory: Commemoration as a form of institutional bonding in Livonia and beyond during the Late Middle Ages." In *Making Livonia. Actors and Networks in the Medieval and Early Modern Baltic Sea Region* edited by Anu Mänd & Marek Tamm, 212–31. London & New York: Routledge, 2020.
- . "Distance, presence, absence and memoria. Commemoration of deceased Livonian merchants outside their native cities during the Late Middle Ages", *Hansische Geschichtsblätter* 136 (2018): 65–94.
- . "'Bidden vor myner sele" The Dominicans as intercessors between townspeople and god in late medieval Tallinn", *Annual of Medieval Studies at CEU* 13 (2007): 111–32.
- Suvanto, Seppo. *Naantalin historia: 1. osa, keskiaika ja 1500-luku*. Naantali: 1976.
- Swanson, Robert N. "Praying for Pardon: Devotional Indulgences in Late Medieval England" In *Promissory Notes on the Treasury of Merits. Indulgences in Late Medieval Europe*, edited by Robert N. Swanson, 215–240. Leiden: Brill, 2006
- Söderberg, Johan. "Jordpris och jordränta i den senmedeltida krisen." *Scandia* 85 nr. 2 (2019): 10–29.
- Tarvel, Enn. *Der Haken: die Grundlagen der Landnutzung und der Besteuerung in Estland im 13.-19. Jahrhundert*. Tallinn: 1983.
- Thumser, Matthias. "Die Quellen", In *Das Baltikum. Geschichte einer europäischen Region. Band 1. Von der Vor- und Frühgeschichte bis zum Ende des Mittelalters*, edited by Krasten Brüggeman et al (eds), 145–58. Stuttgart: Anton Hierseman KG, 2018.
- Tjällén, Biörn. *Church and Nation: the Discourse on Authority in Ericus Olai's Chronica Regni Gothorum (c. 1471)*. Stockholm: Stockholms Universitet, 2007.
- Transehe-Roseneck, Astaf von. *Genealogisches Handbuch der baltischen Ritterschaften. Teil 1, 1: Livland. Görlitz: Verlag für Sippenforschung vnd Wappenkunde C. U. Starcke, 1929.*
- Vanderputten, Steven. *Medieval Monasticisms. Forms and Experiences of the Monastic Life in the Latin West*. Berlin & Boston: Walter de Gruyter GmbH, 2020 a.
- . "Monastic Reform from the tenth to the Early Twelfth Century." In *The New Cambridge History of Medieval Monasticism in the Latin West*, edited by Alison I. Beach & Isabelle Cochelin, 599–617. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020 b.
- Vilkuna, Anna-Maria. "Armon laakson suurtalous", In *Naantalin luostarin rannassa-arkivpäivä Naantalin luostarissa ja sen liepeillä*, edited by Kari Outila, 123–30. Kaarina: Muuritutkimus, 2011.
- Vitalis, Henrik. "Addiciones Prioris Petri - on Birgittine Rules and Regulations", In *A Catalogue and Its Users. A Symposium on the Uppsala C Collection of Medieval Manuscripts*, edited by Monica Hedlund, 47–56. Uppsala: 1995.
- Vognsen, Frederik Lyng. "Velbyrdige og beskedne mænd. Stand og status i dansk senmiddelalder." *Dansk Historisk Tidsskrift* 118 (2018): 51–76.
- Vogt, Helle. "Protecting the individual, the kin, and the soul. Donation regulations in Danish and Norwegian medieval legislation." In *Donations, Inheritance and Property in the Nordic and Western World from Late Antiquity until Today*, edited by Ole-Albert Rønning & Helle Møller-Sigh, 130–45. London & New York: Routledge, 2017.
- . "Legal Encounters in Estonia under Danish Rule, 1219–1347", In *Cultural Encounters during the Crusades*, edited by Kurt Villads Jensen et al., 237–44. Odense: University Press of Southern Denmark, 2013.

- Vähäkangas, Tapio. "Sinettien käyttö keskiajalla." *Genos* 77 (2006): 99–114.
- Wallin, Curt. "Vadstenanunnornas sociala proveniens." In *Birgitta. Hendes værk og hendes klostre i Norden*, edited by Tore Nyberg, 291–322. Odense: Odense Universitetsforlag, 1991.
- Walta, Ville. *Libraries, Manuscripts and Book Culture in Vadstena Abbey*, Helsinki: 2014.
- . "Writing Charters and Building Archives in Medieval Sweden. The Example of the Birgittine Monastery of Naantali." *Archiv für Diplomatik, Schriftgeschichte, Siegel- und Wappenkunde* 58 (2013): 283–342.
- . "Writing Charters and Building Archives in Medieval Sweden. The Example of the Birgittine Monastery of Naantali." *Archiv für Diplomatik, Schriftgeschichte, Siegel- und Wappenkunde* 58 (2013): 283–342.
- Warren, Nancy. *Spiritual Economies. Female Monasticism in Later Medieval England*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001.
- Webb, Diana. "Pardons and Pilgrims", In *Promissory Notes on the Treasury of Merits. Indulgences in Late Medieval Europe*, edited by Robert N. Swanson. 241–76. Leiden: Brill 2006.
- Werner, Yvonne Maria. "Maria Elisabeth Hesselblad (Moder Elisabeth)." *Svenskt kvinno-biografiskt Lexikon*. Published 8 March 2018. < <https://skbl.se/en/article/ElisabethHesselblad> > (accessed on 10 September 2021).
- Winberg, Christer. *Grenverket. studier rörande jord, släktskapssystem och ståndsprivilegier*. Lund: 1985.
- White, Stephen D. *Custom, Kinship and Gifts to Saints: The Laudatio Parentum in Western France, 1050–1150*. Chapel Hill & London: University of North Carolina Press, 1988.
- Wollenberg, Klaus. "Die Erwerbspolitik und Wirtschaftsweise des Oberbayerischen Zisterzienserklosters Fürstenfeld 1263–1550." In *Erwerbpolitik und Wirtschaftsweise mittelalterlicher Orden und Klöster*, edited by Kaspar Elm, 51–66. Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1992.
- Åkestam, Mia. "Creating Space – Queen Philippa and Art in Vadstena Abbey." In *Continuity and Change. Papers from the Birgitta Conference at Dartington 2015*, edited by Elin Andersson et al., 41–64. Stockholm: KVHAA, 2017.
- Zetterberg, Seppo. *Viron Historia*. Helsinki: SKS, 2018.

Abbreviations

EAA = Eesti Rahvusarhiiv

ELB = Est- und Livländische Brieflade

DD = Diplomatarium Danicum

DF = Diplomatarium Fennicum

DV = Diarium Vadstenense

FMU = Finlands medeltidsurkunder

FMS = Finlands medeltidssigill

KB = Kungliga Biblioteket

KLNM = Kulturhistoriskt Lexikon för Nordisk Medeltid

LECUB = Liv- Esth- und Curländisches Urkundenbuch

LM = Liber Memorialis

LUB = Das Lübecker Urkundenbuch

MEL = Magnus Erikssons Landslag

REA = Registrum Ecclesiae Aboensis

RR = Revaler Regesten

SBL = Svenskt biografiskt lexikon

SDHK = Svenskt Diplomatariums Huvudkartotek för medeltidsbrev

StAS = Stadtarchiv Stralsund

TLA = Tallinna Linnaarhiiv

UUB = Uppsala Universitetsbibliotek

ISBN 978-952-389-023-7