

A Fall of Two Towns

Factors Behind Skanör-Falsterbo's Decline as Market Towns in Comparison to Other Mediaeval Coastal Towns in Scania

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Abstract

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In this thesis, the aim is to gain an understanding of Skanör-Falsterbo's decline by studying economy, demography, politics, environment, and the medieval categorization of the towns and comparing them to Malmö and Åhus. I have done so by using urban theory together with social practice theory where I have adapted a social-ecological-system. I have conducted this study by using historical sources, such as maps and written sources, as well as archaeological reports. I have also visited all locations myself to gain an understanding of the space and environment. By studying the material, a few factors have been more prominent in Skanör-Falsterbo and Åhus than in Malmö, these are demography, environmental factors and legal status of towns. However, the other factors must also be considered when determining why Skanör-Falsterbo, or other towns, declined. It is therefore only by putting the different factors in context to one another that an answer can be reached. Furthermore, the terms urbanity, town and urbanization must be redefined in further studies. The term decline should also be reconsidered as it appears to not be a decline but a reversion which starts when the urbanization process stops. A town is only a town while the urbanization process - which is dependent on the other factors discussed - is ongoing.

Keywords: Urbanity, Skanör, Falsterbo, Malmö, Åhus, Archaeology, Medieval, Scania, Decline, Scanian Fair, Skånemarknaden

Cover photo: Panorama photo over Skanör castle ruins and Skanör's church. Photographer: Freja Hellmuth. 2021.

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1.0 Introduction

“Skanör is a small town, which was said to previously have been considerable and large.” (Linné. 1977. p. 258, my translation).

“Falsterbo is an even smaller town, [...] and looks like an open farming village; but throughout it, here are white willows planted everywhere on streets and roads, it looks like a beautiful grove. The aeolian sand has thrown itself over the streets and roads.” (Linné. 1977. p. 261, my translation).

These are the opening words used to describe Skanör and Falsterbo in Carl von Linné’s *Scanian Journey*. When he arrived in the towns, midsummer 1749, they were still legally considered towns. However, as understood from the description, at this point very little is left of the medieval towns and the market that kept merchants returning to the peninsula for hundreds of years.

Skanör and Falsterbo are today one locality, traditionally seen as two, within Vellinge municipality and located on the Falsterbo peninsula in southwest Scania. Today, they are known for their beaches and horse competitions but in the Middle Ages, these two towns hosted one of the biggest markets in Denmark.

Over the years, the towns were subjected to several archaeological excavations. Urban archaeology has long been a subject of interest amongst historical archaeologists, a subject which during the last 20-30 years has gone through a transformation which has changed how towns are viewed. While previously institutions, feudal- and ecclesiastical presence, and the Hanseatic league’s presence have been the area of focus to determine a town, the focus is now often put on the people and the marks they leave in the stratigraphy and the structure of the towns. The process of change throughout time and the development of an urban lifestyle and identity is also something that is prioritized.

Skanör-Falsterbo has traditionally been studied using the older ways. While the decline has been studied, the role of the towns’ residents in the process has not clearly been brought up in the discussion, neither has the environment nor the changing legal status of the towns. It is therefore of importance to view Skanör and Falsterbo and their declines from a new perspective, which is something I will attempt to do in this study. By viewing Skanör-Falsterbo from a perspective that can only be considered a mixture between the old and the

new view on urbanity, and comparing it to other towns in its proximity, it is my hope to further expand our knowledge of these two, often forgotten towns, and reasons behind their decline.

1.1 Aims and Research questions

The aim of this study is to gain an understanding as to why the medieval towns of Skanör and Falsterbo stopped developing as towns, through the analysis of demographic, environmental, political, legal, and economical factors. The aim is therefore also to further see if any factors included here had an outweighing impact on the arrested urban development and if there are factors that are not accounted for in current research on medieval urbanization that should be included.

Although important during the Middle Ages and subject to many excavations, Skanör and Falsterbo have generated relatively limited amount of academic research in comparison to other medieval Scanian towns, such as Malmö. The aim is therefore also to shed a light on the insight that studying Skanör-Falsterbo can give to the discourse about urbanity and urbanization.

Furthermore, the aim is to gain an insight into how towns can be studied when it comes to their decline. Although the focus here is on Skanör-Falsterbo, the method can still be applied to other towns around northern Europe, as well as other parts of Europe.

Following the aims, the research questions will be as follows:

- In which way can the written and archaeological material inform us about why Skanör-Falsterbo declined as towns?
- Which factors have played a part in why Skanör-Falsterbo stopped developing as towns?
- How do the material and factors differ from other Scanian medieval coastal towns?

To answer these questions, others must also be put forward.

- What institutions connected to urbanity can be seen in Skanör-Falsterbo compared to other Scanian medieval coastal towns and when did they decline?
- How did the different towns emerge and develop?
- What factors have historically been important for the emergence, and thereby indirectly the decline of towns?

1.2 Theory

To explain the development and decline of Skanör-Falsterbo, and assess the different factors implicated in the process, I will use the theory of urbanization as laid forward by Peter Carelli (2001) and Stefan Larsson (2006), as well as social practice theory, in which I will implement social-ecological-systems (SES). The theory of urbanization that Carelli and Larsson argue for has a strong focus on the people and their impact on what urbanity is. The theory of urbanization also incorporates other theories such as agency. The main focus is not on institutions as a material aspect but instead on how people living in the towns create and use these spaces. It thereby becomes a bottom-up perspective.

Before the 2000's, traditional urban archaeology focused mainly on institutions and operated with a top-down perspective. In the 1920-30's, urban archaeology was an active field of study before being put on ice until the 1960's (Larsson 2006. p. 36). Due to the boom in exploitation and construction work, archaeology in urban settings also increased giving impetus to large scale projects, including *Medeltidsstaden* (1976-84) as well as theorizing urbanization and towns as a specific type of settlement and structure. Archaeologists involved and influenced by the project, such as Anders Andrén (1980) and Hans Andersson (1984), have both had significant influence over the Scandinavian discourse within medieval urban archaeology.

Both Andrén and Andersson put forward a theory of urbanization where the active institutions are of importance. Andrén (1980) puts forward certain criteria for what a town is. In this he references the importance of the Church and royal power for the foundations of towns, and in a society in general. Churches, convents and castles were important aspects, but so was the presence of the Hanseatic league and a marketplace. Thereby, a square or a market street also became a significant element forming urban landscapes. It is specifically for towns that emerge and are active after the Hansa's expansion where the Hansa is an aspect. In this, the focus was put on what institutions and physical components defined the towns and not the people who lived in towns and their actions.

Andersson (1984) played a decisive part in the project *Medeltidsstaden* which has defined the urban archaeology of the late 20th century in Sweden. In this project the towns are once again mainly defined by the institutions and infrastructure in the towns as well as their legal status. Both Andrén and Andersson therefore put forward a top-down perspective. However, agency and the agency of the local population was also brought forward by studying the activities and

functions connected to the locals that differed from the countryside. Thereby, human activity became a criterion for urbanization. While this will not be the main way in which I will use urban theory, it should not be denied that, while a bottom-up perspective is needed, certain institutions and criteria should still be considered important to understand a town and how the population has interacted with it.

In his dissertation, Carelli (2001) takes a different perspective on urbanization and urbanity. He explores the importance of identity and how this is first created when a new interaction between society and people happens, which creates a different identity than previously (Carelli 2001. p. 103). He further discusses a collective consciousness about an urban way of life. Urban identity and urbanization are therefore dependent on the urban way of life and how people embracing and leading such a lifestyle create a collective self-perception which can be studied in the changes of the material culture and organization of physical space in the towns (Carelli 2001. p. 105). Something Carelli pushes forward is the idea that the town only existed because the people considered themselves townspeople (Carelli 2001. pp. 206). Following this idea, the agency is what is important in studying a town. However, he does not deny the need for studying institutions as these show the degree of urbanization. The ideas that Carelli lays forward within the theory of urbanization are a combined study of spatiality, agency, and structures, to thereby be able to understand what urbanity is and what defines urbanization.

Stefan Larsson (2006) theorizes urbanity in a similar way, where he discusses the importance of using urbanism as sources of knowledge. He argues that defining towns only by their institutions and rigid topographic and administrative criteria diminishes the importance of the landscape and excludes the inhabitants from the discussion (Larsson 2006. p. 48). He means that the citizens of urban areas have been close to being ignored in earlier urban archaeological research and that we therefore have not been able to fully understand urban settings and urbanity. In his opinion, although difficult, we must adopt a bottom-up approach as opposed to the top-down approach we have traditionally used. He also discusses the importance of environments in a spatial context, such as the environments created by spatial dividedness such as blocks, rooms or the town's extent. Here, I will also further stretch the definition of environment to the actual natural environment that is not necessarily man-made. Such as topography, natural resources and natural phenomena. Larsson makes sure that in a discussion about urbanization and urbanity the identity and actions of the local population are put forward to fully understand the existence and functions of an urban setting.

Carelli (2001) and Larsson (2006) proposed this new way of thinking about towns and urbanity in a time when Swedish and Scandinavian archaeology was influenced by theories of structuration and practice. Social practice theory dwells on agency and how society and culture is a result of interplay between individual agency and social structures. Andreas Reckwitz (2002) defines social practice theory as defining human's position in a social world, which in turn also implies the political and ethical landscape. He also explains how social theories define a cultural tradition in which we understand ourselves and how we can break these traditions to thereby also change the society in which we live. Social practice theory is by nature also a heuristic device (Reckwitz 2002. p. 257).

Within my use of social practice theory, I will adopt a social-ecological-system (SES) approach. Chrisna du Plessis (2008) lays forward a theory where the ecosystem is no longer simply bound to a linear evolutionary process as it disregards the actions of humans. Her idea of an SES is instead that humans are a part of the ecosystem where social behavior, culture and nature are entangled with each other, imbedded into urban settings and an ecosystem is therefore dynamic and ever-changing. She further explains that the system is dependent on two separate domains, biosphere and noosphere (Plessis 2008. p. 15). Axel Christophersen (2021) explains that the biosphere within archaeology would be the "biological preconditions for living and environmental adaption" (Christophersen 2021. p. 13). The noosphere is then the social, cultural and mental processes of dependency. Christophersen also further defines SES as an integrated system that covers both objects, life, and the human mentality and phenomena of social life and culture. It also covers the relationships between different elements and is an adaptive and complex system which uses self-organization and emergence (Christophersen 2021. p. 13). It differs from other systems due to its use of abstract thoughts and symbolic constructions. Here, this will be adapted to understand how the different factors, including the environment, have come to affect how the towns have developed and how people have responded to it.

Agency will be of importance here, where towns and urban landscapes are directly affected by the people interacting with the towns. For example, a crafts quarter is a quarter actively created by people to gather one specific craft in one place, or a *practice bundle* as described by Christophersen (2015). These are usually placed near markets, where those passing by would see them. They have also been created so that those with similar needs and activities acted in the same area (Christophersen 2015. p. 121). The same goes for all institutions as

well. Churches, castles and markets have all been created by people due to different needs and identities. While some have been on behalf of specific groups of people, others have been made by the locals. Political actions and disputes are also due to actions and interactions between different groups of actors, such as locals, merchants, the crown, or the church. The last two being made up of people representing an institution.

1.3 Methods and Sources

I have used archival studies to gain an understanding of the towns that will be discussed in this thesis. Archaeological reports have been used to approach the remains and artefacts that are present in the towns. This is to grasp the spread of the activities held at the sites, as well as to see the emergences and declines of the urban areas. As Skanör-Falsterbo are expanding, there have been many archaeological excavations in connection to these. However, there have also been research excavations in the last few years to find medieval Falsterbo. I have therefore utilized the two bigger excavations done by Skånearkeologi (Sarnäs 2022; 2024), as well as the two excavations done by Lars Ersgård in 1976 and 1978 which were presented in an *Ale* article (1978). Another, recent excavation by Skånearkeologi has been utilized as well, however in that specific case, there is no report by the time of writing and instead I have held a personal communication with archaeologist Per Sarnäs. Other archaeological reports about Falsterbo have been analyzed, such as Ersgård 2004, Knarrström & Lindberg 2017, Balic 2018, and Sarnäs 2025. These have been used to both further understand the expansion of medieval Falsterbo, but also to understand the building environment on the *fjits*, the daily activities and how the natural environment has come to affect these aspects.

For Skanör, I have used multiple smaller archaeological investigations, but also a few bigger ones. The bigger excavations include Frejd 2024, Bolander 2021, and Grehn & Svensson 2024. For the smaller ones I have used Ekstrand 2013, and Sarnäs 2023a&b. These have been utilized similarly to the ones from Falsterbo; however, here, I have focused on finding information about clay-lined pits to gain a further understanding of the market activities outside of the market area.

For historical primary sources, I have consulted historical letters and documents, collected from the corpus of *Svenskt Diplomatarium* (SDHK). These have been used to gain further understanding of the activities which have taken place in the towns, major events, the legal definitions of the towns, as well as which actors have been influential, and how, in the towns'

economic and political lives. I have also used *Carl Linnaeus Scanian Journey* from 1749, and historical maps of the towns. These sources are all used to understand the historical landscape, both literal and political, but also to grasp the terminology used to describe the different towns and their landscapes, as well as notable events. The maps are beneficial for comprehending the medieval or early modern urban landscapes.

One of the most important sets of primary sources is, however, the buildings and ruins/remains which are still visible in the landscapes. These include churches, castle ruins, pits after fish stalls etc. The archaeological remains and evidence are some of the most telling sources. These can be used both to understand the urban landscapes, the political climate, the economy of the towns and the impact of the environment, but they also tell us how different actors have controlled the landscape and how they have interacted with it. The archaeological remains and remaining buildings therefore become an invaluable asset.

I have used secondary literature about the towns' histories to gain knowledge about what has happened in the towns in cases where the primary sources do not mention something. This has been used to approach the knowledge potential that the different towns hold. There are also certain secondary sources which can tell of happenings and excavations which might otherwise be difficult to reach. Much of my primary knowledge and understanding of the towns therefore come from sources such as Ersgård 1984 and 1988.

This is therefore an empiric collection of data used for this thesis to be able to understand the landscape and history of urbanity, as well as the urban development and decline of Skanör-Falsterbo, which have led to a hermeneutic method. Within this method, all answers lead to new questions which, in turn, means that one will not get stuck in one perspective but instead be able to reach different perspectives and understandings. The method, therefore, is a way to approach the social structures and thereby reach a bottom-up perspective where people and their actions can be seen. Thereby, the entirety is put into scrutinization and relation. My application of these methods has been completed by collecting data from my different sources, categorizing it and then putting it into graphs to organize and get an overview of the different factors and their aspects.

The graphs have been used to organize information on the different factors that I have been studying and that are connected to the development of towns. These are: circumstances of emergence, elements of urban landscape, power actors including churchly presence, local population, economic factors, and natural environment. The graphs I have made consist of

summaries regarding certain factors. Doing this has given me an overview of the factors which have impacted the development and decline of the towns. Graphs have been made regarding the churches in the towns, in these, all churchly institutions of relevance, except for town churches have been included. One has been made for each town. Other graphs were made regarding the data connected to political power actors, such as the church, crown, Hansa, and local population. These graphs show the actions and presence of the different actors. One graph was related to economics where data about taxes and commerce was collected. A graph about the environment was also made. This graph was a collection of data related to topography, natural resources and natural phenomena and appeared similar to the one regarding economy. Lastly, graphs related to the street networks were made for Malmö and Skanör. Doing this gave me an overview of the factors and the differences and similarities between them which in turn helped me answer my research questions, as well as understanding the SES.

A phenomenological method was used to understand the towns in a spatial and environmental aspect. Christopher Tilley (1994) explains phenomenology as the understanding of an environment created by humans by using the experiences that already exist in a society. To use this method, I have visited the towns to gain a first-hand understanding of where in the landscape different buildings and happenings have been located or taken place, and their relation to each other and thereby also been able to gain a greater understanding of them which further will help my discussion. It should however not be ignored that phenomenology is a subjective method and that my experiences of a town and its distances and locations do not necessarily need to mirror those of the medieval inhabitants. Still, I have tried to use this together with the knowledge of how a medieval town could look like, and who and what would have been there and interacted with the sites to thereby gain an idea that is somewhat similar to how a medieval person would have experienced it.

1.3.1 Historical sources

I have used *Svenskt Diplomatarium* (SDHK) to access historical written sources, such as letters and declarations. For this, a large number of sources have been used. The search words I have used have been *Skanör*, *Falsterbo*, *Malmö* and *Åhus*. I have utilized the material by analyzing them through the six different factors I have identified. The material is therefore chosen through an analysis of the content based on whether it mentions politics, economy,

environment, local population, institutions, street names or through its' terminology when referring to the four separate towns.

Carl von Linné's *Scanian Journey 1749* is adopted for its description of the landscape and environment, as well as for its proximity in time to the period being discussed. As there are no clear medieval sources which describe Skanör-Falsterbo in its appearance or environment, Linné's account becomes one of the earliest sources to describe the locations. It is therefore relevant as Linné mentions features which might be medieval, and references to environmental disadvantages on the peninsula. As this is also while Skanör and Falsterbo are two separate towns, with their town privileges, the description of life in the towns become relevant to understanding the way of life on the peninsula.

I have used historical maps to gain an overview of the landscape before modern times. The three main maps have been made by Johannes Mejer (fig. 9; 21; 24) and portray Malmö, Skanör and Åhus. These maps were made in the mid-17th century. Due to this, the maps are not medieval, however, as the one of Skanör is the oldest depiction of the town they are still considered relevant to understand the past landscape. It should however be noted that Mejer has not always been fully correct in his maps, and they should therefore be met with a critical eye. For example, he has marked out a city wall surrounding Skanör which would not have existed. Multiple churches marked out on the map of Skanör have no other evidence of their existence and therefore it cannot be said for certain that they have existed.

1.3.2 Limitations

As the towns that will be discussed are quite big, it is not possible to discuss them all fully. I will therefore have to restrict them to certain parts. For Skanör and Falsterbo, the discussion will be more in-depth with no specific block or area of the peninsula being focused more on. In Malmö, I will focus on the block Liljan, the area around the main square, and city church, as well as the waterline. These are the parts of the medieval town that I believe are the most relevant for the essay as they are connected to the different factors that will be discussed.

For Åhus, the castle Aoshus, and the area around the main square will be discussed. Around the main square is where the town hall, church and convent have all been located. Therefore, I deem that area, together with the castle, to be those of interest. The city wall, of which the remains are a few minutes' walk from the square, will also be discussed.

Although I have specific blocks and locations in each town that I will focus more on, this does not mean that other parts of the towns will be ignored. If relevant for the subject discussed, other locations will also be brought up. This will most likely be the clearest in the discussion about street networks.

There are other medieval coastal towns in Scania, such as Trelleborg, Helsingborg, Ystad and Simrishamn that could also have been relevant. However, I have through thorough investigation decided on specifically Malmö and Åhus to compare with Skanör-Falsterbo. Malmö is a big and important town in Scania, as it was the second largest town in medieval Denmark and Scania's largest. It is also located on the western side of Scania with close connections to important towns and locations in Denmark with Malmö being across the sound from Copenhagen. Skanör and Falsterbo may not be as close to any Danish towns but should still be considered relatively close to Copenhagen. Åhus is not close to any Danish towns, nor is it located in western Scania; however, it does share similarities with Skanör-Falsterbo. Both places have aeolian sand, which is something that will be discussed with the environmental factors, as well as both having lost their town privileges. Therefore, these are the towns that will be discussed.

1.4 Previous research

Lars Ersgård has worked with Skanör-Falsterbo on multiple occasions. Most notably in 1984 for the *Medeltidsstadsprojektet* and for his dissertation in 1988, *Vår marknad i Skanör: bebyggelse, handel och urbanisering i Skanör och Falsterbo under medeltiden*. His research has been wide and inclusive, while mainly using the theory of urbanization as laid forward by Andrén and Andersson. He has also published multiple articles regarding the peninsula, for example his article in *Ale* 1978.

For Skanör, he wants to date the urbanization to the late 1300's (Ersgård 1984, p. 79). His statement is based upon urban development and more specifically the church which gets a more final position as town church during this period. For Falsterbo, he bases his dating on the town church as well, he therefore dates the town to the late 14th century (Ersgård 1988, pp. 138).

Due to Skanör-Falsterbo's unique urban landscape where different towns were given jurisdiction over certain areas known as *fits*, Ersgård has also made an attempt at localizing these. There are towns where we know the location of the *fits*. Kampen is said to have a fit in

Skanör located between the castle and Höllviken. Most likely this is on the point known as *Knösen*. Rostock's *fit* has in turn bordered Kampen's in the northeast. Rostock's *fit* has also been located between the church and *Ättebacken* (a mound in Skanör). *Ättebacken* is also believed to have been a border between Danish land and Lübeck's *fit* in Skanör. It would then have been Danish land in the west where the seawall would have acted as a border as well (Ersgård 1984. pp. 76).

Otto Rydbeck participated in the excavations of Skanör castle in the early 20th century, after which he wrote his book *Den medeltida borgen i Skanör, historik, undersökningar och fynd* (1935). In this, he made an effort to explain the history of Skanör and Falsterbo, with extra focus shown to the churches. However, the majority of the book was dedicated to the castle and surrounding excavation. It is through his research that we have an idea of the nature of the castle's appearance, as well as a dating of the abandonment in the early 15th century. This is something he bases on a written document from the beginning of the same century, which is the last mention of the castle as an administrative building.

The main excavations of Falsterbohus castle were undertaken in the late 19th- and early 20th century. These are discussed in Ragnar Blomqvist's article "Falsterbohus" in *Kulturens årsbok – 1950*. This is the most in-depth article regarding the castle in Falsterbo. Blomqvist attempts to explain the nature of the castle's appearance, as well as present an idea of the construction and abandonment of the castle. Blomqvist also drew up a reconstruction map of medieval Falsterbo where he included the different known institutions and *fits*. Although the town Falsterbo is located by its current location and not by the – now thought – medieval location, the other institutions and *fits* appear to be located at the locations that they are still thought to have been placed at.

In 1976, Lars Redin wrote his dissertation *Lagmanshejdan: ett gravfält som spegling av sociala strukturer i Skanör*. The dissertation was regarding the gravesite at Lagmanshejdan in Skanör. The gravesite has been located within Rostock's *fit* and it is likely that Rostock's church has been located nearby. The main focus of the dissertation was the arm positions of the buried, something that made it possible to chronologically date the burials. Redin's work has since largely impacted the study of Christian graves within Sweden.

Claes Hommerberg (1952) wrote an article in *Sjöhistorisk årsbok* regarding the boat known as *Falsterbobåten*. Falsterbobåten is a medieval boat which ran aground outside Falsterbo's

coast. The article, by the name *Falsterbobåtens miljö*, describes Skanör-Falsterbo's history and medieval landscape.

I have previously worked with Skanör and Falsterbo while writing my bachelor thesis (Hellmuth 2021). Although it encompassed the same towns, I did not do a comparative study, nor did I focus on the different factors as I will here. In my previous studies, I tried to see in which way the importance of the towns could be seen in their medieval urban landscape and what is left of it today. I used phenomenological theory, together with social structuralism and spatial theory to achieve this. This current study will therefore offer an understanding of Skanör and Falsterbo in relation to other contemporary towns while also trying to achieve an understanding of why Skanör-Falsterbo declined as towns. My current study will therefore delve deeper into the historical material and the modern excavations in the towns to understand the political, environmental, social, and economic aspects of urbanity as compared to my bachelor thesis.

1.5 Topography



Figure 1. Map over Scania with Skanör-Falsterbo, Malmö and Åhus marked out.

Skanör-Falsterbo is located in south-western Scania in southern Sweden, on a peninsula known as the Falsterbo peninsula. They are both part of Vellinge municipality and are reached through crossing an isthmus. Once on the peninsula, Skanör is located in the north, and Falsterbo in the south. Today, the two localities are only separated by a seaweed wall, however, historically they would have had a distance between them. When Carl von Linné visited the localities in 1749, he described them as being a quarter of a Swedish mile apart from each other (Linné 1977. p. 261). The peninsula is surrounded by the sea with shallow waters. Multiple sand reefs also surround the towns which have historically made ships prone to run aground. The road to the peninsula goes through Skanör's Ljung Nature Reserve and before that, the Falsterbo canal needs to be crossed. This road is the only land road leading to the two localities. Previously, there would have been a road that diverted from the modern one, leading to Falsterbo so that the town would have been entered from the south (Ersgård 1978, pp. 14). The main entrance to Skanör and the peninsula today does seem to be the original entrance road to Skanör.

Skanör is located 1-4 meters above sea level (Ersgård 1984, pp. 21). The dominant soil is post-glacial fine sand with elements peat (SGU n.d.). The reef Hovbacken is located in the north-western part of Skanör and is where the market would have been held. The reef is narrow and separated from the mainland by a bay known as Bakdjupet. Bakdjupet is today dried out but was still sailable in the early 19th century (Wallgren 2007, pp. 10). Today, Bakdjupet is covered by meadows and is popular amongst nesting birds.

Medieval Falsterbo was located 1-5 meters above sea level and would have been centered around the church, before being moved further west (Fornsök 2019a). As in Skanör, the dominant soil is postglacial fine sand, however both peat and aeolian sand occurs. The sand caused large sand dunes in the town and ultimately led to its' move. However, as noted by Linné in 1749, the sand kept being an issue after the move (Linné 1884, p.173). The issues caused by the aeolian sand can be seen clearly around the church today. The reef and nature reserve Måkläppen is located in Falsterbo and has periodically been inhabited during the Middle Ages (Hommerberg 1952, p. 113).

Malmö is located in southwestern Scania and is the third biggest city in Sweden. The dominant soils are postglacial fine clay and moraine. It is also possible to see a theme of filling throughout Malmö. Malmö is located by Öresund, and the medieval town would have

its harbor in the Sound. The medieval town has been situated 1-10 meters above sea level (Fornsök 2025).

Åhus is located in northeastern Scania, by the Baltic Sea. Helge River flows through the town and is how Åhus has gotten a natural harbor, something unusual in Scania. The soil consists of postglacial fine sand and filling (SGU n.d.). However, the other side of the river also consists of aeolian sand, something which the sources about Aoshus also talk of. It should therefore likely be assumed that it has existed on the side of the river that medieval Åhus is located on as well. The town is situated about five meters above sea level (Fornsök 2019b).

1.6 Historical background

The Scanian fair, which took place in Skanör and Falsterbo was active for three months of the year and lasted for about three hundred years. It would have lasted from St. Laurentius on August 11 until St. Dionysius on October 9th (Hommerberg 1952, pp. 111). However, for a period, during the early 14th century, it would have lasted from St. Jacob on July 25th to St. Martin on November 11th (Sarnäs 2025. p. 6). Although it was of significant importance and influence during the 13th-15th century, by the end of the Middle Ages it had almost declined completely (Skansjö 2000. pp. 114). By the beginning of the market's history, the merchants would have slept in tents, and the market's landscape would have been seasonal, however this was later replaced by permanent stalls and buildings (Rydbeck 1935. p. 25).

During the months that the Scanian fair was active, it would have attracted up to 40 000 visitors (Carelli 2007. p. 164). This was during a time period where Danish towns would not have more than a few thousand inhabitants. Although not all visitors would have arrived at - or stayed for - the same time, it should still be assumed that it would have been very crowded on the peninsula considering the small area they would have stayed on. The visitors and merchants are known to have come from the Hanseatic towns in Germany, but also from England, Scotland, Normandie, and Flanders. However, the non-Hanseatic merchants are mainly known to have been there during the 14th century (Johannesson 1971. p. 97).

The main reason for Skanör-Falsterbo to become the hosts of the Scanian fair has been due to the large amount of herring in the water, as well as the international sail routes which met by the peninsula (Skansjö 2000. p. 114). The herring has been the main product throughout the market's history, even though, during the first two hundred years of the market, it was an international commodity market.

The first mention of Skanör is from somewhere between 1201-1223, when the archbishop in Lund institutes two new prebends at the cathedral due to donations from Skanör's square and church (SDHK-nr: 40827). Falsterbo's first mention is together with Skanör in a letter from 1202-1241 about the privileges given to Lübeck by king Valdemar Sejr of Denmark at the markets of Skanör and Falsterbo (SDHK-nr: 298). From these mentions it should be assumed that the market would have started in the late 1100's, something which is further supported by the clay-lined pits and Baltic ware which have been found in Skanör. The market should also be directly connected to the emergence of the two towns. As Christianity called for fasting for a total of almost 6 months every year, that meant that fish, which was allowed to be eaten, became an important part of the medieval diet, thereby contributing to the rise and importance of the Scanian fair.

According to Anders Andrén, most urban development happens by the coast at this period. The Hansas presence is also of importance, which is why the early letter from the king to the Hansa should be seen as a sign of this (SDHK-nr: 298). Furthermore, an ecclesiastical organization, feudal society and trade are all important aspects of what makes a town (Andrén 1985. p. 94, 98).

Although we can assume the emergence of the towns from soon before the letters were written there are still other factors to consider. The first is the fact that before the towns, Skanör has been a fishing location. The graveyard at Lagmanshejdan has had graves which date from the early Middle Ages. This is the area which later came to belong to Rostock and became their graveyard (Redin 1976. p. 179). However, at the same time there was a town church located at the location of the previous church. Remains of a previous stone church which resembles the bailey of Absalon's castle in Copenhagen when observing the building techniques were found by the northern nave of the current church (Rosborn 2004. p. 188). This is based on the smaller blocks of carved lime stone and the technique in which they have been constructed. These are the oldest building remains in Skanör and are dated to the 12th century. As Absalon's castle is from 1160, it is likely that this church should be dated to the second half of the 12th century. Furthermore, during excavations in 2004 and 2005 there was a grave dated to the 11th-12th century (Salminen & Gustin 2012. p. 6). There is therefore a possibility that this grave belongs to an even earlier, most likely wooden church.

The area between the church and Lagmanshejdan might also have been used as a market location before the start of the Scanian fair. Shards of Pingsdorf ware have been found at the

site and have been dated to the 12th century (Ersgård 1984. p. 76). There have also been archaeological traces of seasonal construction in Skanör from the early 13th century. The earliest trace of the market is from the block Möllehejdan in southern Skanör. Here a coin from King Niels time (1103-1134) and Wendish black ware which has been dated to the late 11th century were found (Ersgård 1984. p. 76).

Skanör is, in 1231, mentioned as a Danish *kungalev*, in other words a crown estate (Ersgård 1984, p. 8). The castles in both towns are also directly connected to the monarchy. Something that should also be taken into consideration is that King Olof Håkansson passed away at Falsterbohus castle in 1387 and that his mother Queen Margrethe later held court at the same castle (Hommerberg 1952. p. 108; Johannesson 1971. p. 130). This is something that differentiates, specifically, Falsterbo from the other towns that will be discussed.

1.7 Definitions

There are certain words and terms that are being used in this essay that might be in need of further explanations.

One of these is *Skanör-Falsterbo*. Skanör and Falsterbo are today fully merged and the only certain way to tell where the border goes between the two is a seaweed wall that separates them. Therefore, even though during the Middle Ages, they were two different towns with distance between them, they are today often referred to as Skanör-Falsterbo. While I will specify which of the two towns that I am referring to for the most part, if the information being put forward is relevant for both of them, I will refer to them by the modern term. It is still important to note that, just because they are referred to as the same place, that does not mean that they are.

Another word that will appear is *Fit/Fits*. A Fit was, during the Middle Ages, a part of a town that was given to foreign towns, specifically to Hanseatic ones. These then acted as their own jurisdictions. The term is usually used for Skanör and Falsterbo.

Certain terms also do not have a direct translation into English, in these cases the Swedish (or the most normalized word for it) will be used, examples of this would be *Fogde/Fogdar* and *Lenmann*, both of which are similar to bailiffs.

Kungalev is another word that appears in the study, this refers to the Danish crown's properties and privileges.

1.7.1 Town, urban and urbanization

The terms *Town*, *Urban* and *Urbanization* have been used frequently throughout this thesis; therefore, I will also give an explanation as to what my interpretation of these words are.

Town is here used to describe a settlement in which the locals have adapted an urban identity and consider themselves to be townspeople. Furthermore, they should include certain institutions, a market and have a clear royal and/or ecclesiastical presence. It must also hold town privileges, awarded by the monarch.

Urban is used to describe a settlement which either fulfills all of the criteria needed for a *town* or in the landscape appears different from an agrarian settlement. There must therefore be people specialized in specific professions and different social classes present in the settlement.

Urbanization is here used similarly to how it is defined in Larsson 2006, as a creation of locality in a new spatial and social context (Larsson 2006. p. 48). This in turn is therefore a way to explain the process of how an urban setting is created following the mentioned contexts.

2.0 Skanör-Falsterbo

2.1 Emergence

Based on the evidence laid forward in *1.4 Earlier research* and in *1.6 Historical background*, I believe there is a chance that we should move the founding of Skanör to the mid-12th century. We know there have been clay-lined pits, Baltic ware and a herring fishery by then. However, a smaller fishing location would not have two active graveyards during the early Middle Ages and furthermore it would not have a graveyard separate from the church. Therefore, there is a possibility of an earlier market, which would also push the dating of the town to an earlier period.

What can be said for certain is that during the 13th century the current church, castle and the Hansa becomes present in Skanör. Still, I would argue that the emergence of the town should be seen together with the emergence of the market. Therefore, I will discuss Skanör as a town from the early 13th century or even possibly, late 12th century. Falsterbo's urban development

happened later, and I will therefore discuss that as of late 13th-, possibly early 14th century chronology.

I would like to clarify that the emergence of a town and the actual town are different. While certain criteria for what a town is cannot be seen until later in both Skanör and Falsterbo, the emergence must start earlier. The emergence is when we start seeing signs of a town under development. The town is when the development is at the point where it is no longer emerging but has already formed. My dating of the towns here is therefore not necessarily mirroring the formed towns but instead the emergence of them. While Ersgård (1988) discusses an earlier settlement and market as well, he does not connect it directly to an urban setting, rather they are regarded as fishing locations with markets. The final dating of the towns are instead more connected to the urban landscape. He does, however, discuss a possibility of moving the emergences of the towns to an earlier period.

2.2 Legal terminology and definitions

The legal terminology and definitions, together with the political actions in the towns are of importance to discuss due to their effect on the development and decline. The political actions, undertaken by a variety of different actors, including merchants and locals, are all signs of the agency. The terminology used is able to explain how the towns have been viewed by different institutions and actors.

In the historical sources regarding the royal presence in Skanör and Falsterbo, the towns are rarely mentioned without the market (*appendix C*). When they are, they tend to be mentioned by their castles instead. However, when the people of Skanör and Falsterbo are mentioned, they are mentioned as *borgare* or town citizens (SDHK-nr: 17463). The word *nundinas* or *nundinis* is often used in Latin texts, while in the German letters the word *market* is commonly used (SDHK-nr: 298, 661, 8019). It should also be mentioned that the royal letters about Falsterbo continue longer than those about Skanör.

In the letters from religious institutions or actors, there is a difference from those related to the royal presence in terminology. These tend to refer to them simply by their names (SDHK-nr: 3788; 10161). This shows that the church may not have considered them as only market towns but as towns in their own right. This in turn strengthens the idea that the church and hospital of the Holy Ghost was not connected to the market, although it did belong to Stralsund for a period, but instead to the town of Falsterbo (*appendix A*).

While there are mentions of the towns by their names, the Hanseatic league has often considered them inseparable from their market. In Latin letters, the term *nundinis* is often used. The German texts often use *market* or *jarmarkede*. In some cases, they are referred to as Skanör's/Falsterbo's market or the market in Skanör/Falsterbo (SDHK-nr: 298; 655; 833; 1280; 1602; 41143; 7059; 8019). This shows that the towns likely have not held any greater symbolism or importance to the Hanseatic towns outside of the market.

When referring to the local population, there is one thing that is different from how the towns are referred to. While neither the Hansa nor the church refers to the population by any title referring to their urban identity, the crown does, something which likely has to do with taxes. Both the crown and the local population seem to refer to the people of Skanör-Falsterbo as *borgare* or *bymän* (SDHK-nr: 11293; 15233; 17463; 27294; Dipl. Dan. IV:2, nr 258).

This shows that although the towns themselves might not always have been seen as separate from their markets, the people have still been considered to have as strong connection to an urban identity as those of Malmö. What does, however, appear is that while many locals in Malmö and Åhus have had surnames related to their trade or been referred to by their trades, this does not appear in Skanör-Falsterbo, unless they are priests, *fogde*, *hövitsmän* or related to the town council, such as mayor or council men. The tailors in Falsterbo are also mentioned in a document from 1377 (SDHK-nr: 41375).

The Hanseatic league made multiple political acts in Skanör-Falsterbo. Amongst others, they made a law that people were not allowed to salt their herring anywhere in Scania, but Skanör-Falsterbo (SDHK-nr: 9473). Other laws and regulations also point towards the presence of the Hansa. One such law was that cooperers were not allowed to make barrels in Skanör-Falsterbo, nor prepare the wood for it (SDHK-nr: 41184). They also put up a ban against carrying or selling herring in baskets at their *fits* (SDHK-nr: 44325). Wismar forbade more than three citizens from owning one stall together in Skanör (SDHK-nr: 7019).

The King still also held power over the towns and certain laws and regulations were created by him. The king gave everyone at the Scanian fair in Skanör-Falsterbo the right to transport their goods on certain times during holidays (SDHK-nr: 662). He also forbade anyone from receiving a fine before James the Great's Day (SDHK-nr: 41211; 41218). Lastly, the tailors in Falsterbo made a ban against selling cloth, whether bleached or not, using ell-measures (SDHK-nr: 41375). This indicates a tailors' guild, which in turn is a clear sign of urbanity and also of the population's authority in the towns. It is therefore one of the clearest signs of

agency regarding the local population in Skanör-Falsterbo, together with the St Knut guilds (see 2.3.1 Market and fishing).

After the Hanseatic league took control of the castles in Skanör-Falsterbo, and a considerable amount of the tolls, they created a monopoly over the market. With this, they made the market a strict herring market and therefore ended the international commodity market that had existed. Furthermore, they also removed other towns by doing this which led to them losing their competition and thereby making Skanör-Falsterbo similar to an extension of their own domestic markets. During this period, markets seized to be dependent on royal privileges and multiple fishing locations emerged around the Scanian coast (Roslund 2025. p. 204). This is also where we can see the market begin to decline.

One important law to mention is the *Schaner logh* (the Skanör law). This law began as applying specifically to Skanör. However, it seems to have expanded to include all Scanian markets (Eriksson 1980. pp. 41). The law included the proper fines and punishments for those committing crimes in Skanör, as well as what measures should be taken to ensure peace. The punishments here often appeared to be harsher than normally. For instance, if one were to hit another, that would usually result in a fine, but during the market it would result in the loss of a hand, besides the fine. It could also result in the perpetrator being hanged. This law would have been read at the beginning of the market each year and have existed in both Danish and German to make sure as many as possible understood it.

Other aspects regarding the legality in Skanör-Falsterbo should be the privileges, tolls, pawning, and injustices. Such as when, in 1328, King Valdemar forbade everyone from dealing with tolls or fines in Skanör-Falsterbo as the market had been pawned (SDHK-nr: 41116). The market or its income being pawned also happened in 1339, then to help pay for King Magnus' sister's dowry (SDHK-nr: 4546). In 1357, King Erik promises 200 *lödiga* mark per year as a show of gratitude to Count Adolf of Holstein, these were taken from Skanör's market's income (SDHK-nr: 7184). In 1376, one-sixth of the market's income was pawned to pay a debt to Duke Erik of Sachsen-Lauenberg (SDHK-nr: 70743). In 1371, the Hanseatic league took over the castles in Skanör-Falsterbo, Malmö and Helsingborg together with two-thirds of the tolls (SDHK-nr: 9563). These were then returned to Denmark in 1385.

Privileges were given to the Hanseatic towns as *fitts*. These have taken up such a large area of the peninsula that the Hanseatic league and other foreign merchants would likely have controlled more land than the Danes. This in turn would result in the local population holding

less power in their own towns than the foreign merchants would have. The *fits* would also have resulted in their own jurisdictions. This further points towards the political impact the privileges and *fits* have had over the peninsula. However, it was not only Hanseatic towns that obtained certain privileges on the peninsula, Danish towns such as Åhus and Copenhagen have also enjoyed such privileges (SDHK-nr: 40743).

However, privileges on paper do not mean that they are always followed through on. One clear example is soon before the Danish war against Sweden, Norway, and the Hansa, when multiple Hanseatic towns wrote complaints about the injustices being committed against the foreign merchants in Skanör and Falsterbo (SDHK-nr: 1964; 1965; 1966; 1967).

Furthermore, there have also been complaints about other injustices. One of these were the complaints by Lübeck, directly after the Hansa had returned the castles in Scania to Denmark when the stalls and goods belonging to, amongst others, Lübeck's *fogde* in Falsterbo had been moved from their place by Skanör's castle (SDHK-nr: 41658). However, there are also other complaints made by the Hansa which have either not only related to the Hansa or have not been committed by Denmark. One of these is when Greifswald complained about Lübeck's *fogde* and his rampage in Skanör (SDHK-nr: 41173).

2.3 Urban landscape

In this chapter, the different aspects of an urban landscape that are visible in Skanör and Falsterbo will be laid out to understand the development and decline of the towns. This will include those that can somehow also be connected to the factors that are laid forward as important for the emergence of a town and the social aspects of urbanity as laid forward in the SES model.

2.3.1 Market and fishing

In 1256, eighteen elders from St. Knut guilds gathered in Skanör for a synod (SDHK-nr: 739). Skanör appears to have become a central place for the St. Knut guilds in Denmark and have had a general synod (Weibull 1956. p. 30). Aside from that, it also appears as if the guild in Skanör might be the oldest in Scania. This should indicate towards the importance of Skanör as a market town, especially as the St. Knut guilds were protected by the king, as well as an important factor for their emergence. Falsterbo's St Knut guild is from the 14th century, which corresponds to the development of Falsterbo. With the introduction of the guild, Falsterbo has made a clear statement as a market town. In Falsterbo, the tailors seemed to have had some power, meaning that they would likely also have their own guild. Guilds should furthermore



Figure 2. Hovbacken with pits after fish stalls

be seen as a response by merchants and craftsmen to the privileges given to them by the crown, and their need to defend these (Roslund 2018. p. 28).

2.3.1.1 Skanör

Previous archaeological and historical research has established that the medieval market was located at Hovbacken in Skanör. The reef on which the market was situated was separated from the mainland by a bay, known as Bakdjupet (Wallgren 2007. pp. 10). Today, Bakdjupet is mainly dried out and instead acts as a meadow or pastures, but it was still sailable during the 19th century. Traces of the market are still visible at Hovbacken through pits in the

ground where the fish stalls would have stood (fig. 2). It should however be noted that, although visible, they are difficult to spot and only noticeable if you know what you are looking for. They are more easily viewed from a bird's eye perspective.

The large excavations conducted before 1984 concluded that the fish stalls in Skanör have been around 4-8 meters long and 2-5 meters wide. They have been located in at least three rows (Ersgård 1988. pp. 95). In 1412, a fire broke out which destroyed the market area

(Jahnke 2016. p. 101). It is, in my opinion, likely that the market is moved almost entirely to Falsterbo because of this. However, the area was rebuilt as proven by the coin from the rule of King Hans that has been found in a pit, as well as a customs account from 1494 which mentions 168 merchants paying for stalls at Hovbacken (Ersgård 1988. pp. 95).

Clay-lined pits have been found by the marketplace during several older and more recent excavations. While these are found in both towns, they are not unique for the site but often appear near markets. The pits, usually found near the coastal lines, are lined with clay and vary in both size and shape (Wallgren 2007. pp. 12; fig. 3). The usage of the pits has started around 1150 and lasted until 1300 (Ersgård 1988. p. 44). The clay-lined pits therefore also become a sign of the local population as actors in the fishery and market due to them possibly having used the pits before the start of the market.

According to Ersgård, the clay-lined pits found in Skanör have acted as a symbolic sign of the rights granted to the merchants by the king (Ersgård 1988. pp. 43). He also argues for them as being a type of built construction. Rydbeck, instead, puts forward the possibility of having been used as floor for tents (Rydbeck 1935. p. 75). This, however, is something I find unlikely as they are often too small to have acted as such. Instead, I would argue for their use for gutting and storing the fish. Leifh Stenholm (1981. p. 28) connects the pits to the gutting of the fish. Sten Tech (2014. p. 37) argues that they are for putting the fish in brine and osteologist Anna Cardell (2005. p. 103) finds it possible that they have been used for sorting the fish by first placing them in the larger pits and then sorting them into the smaller ones. I believe a combination of the three to be likely. Although, based on the locations of the pits often being close to fishing camps and the coast, as well as their size and the tendency to find fish remains in them, I still put most faith in the idea of them being used for gutting the fish.

The clay has been imported to the peninsula, and they have therefore been of some sort of importance, nor have all clay-lined pits had fish bones in them (Ersgård 1988. p. 43).

Therefore, it is a possibility that not all have been used for handling fish. However, as the oldest clay-lined pits in Skanör are from around 1150, 50 years before the start of the market, and 100 years before the Hanseatic towns started to receive privileges in Skanör, I find it highly unlikely that they should have acted as a symbolic manifestation of such. Instead, I too would agree with the more common idea of them being the most efficient way of handling fish. Instead, they likely indicate the activity of the local population on the peninsula from before the start of the market.

Clay lined pits have been found at different locations throughout Skanör. In 2013, four clay-lined pits were found at the western part of *Knösen* (Ekstrand 2013. p. 7). No evidence of their usage was left. Clay-lined pits have also been found in the neighborhood Storevång. There, three pits were encountered, charcoal was found in one of them and dated to 1037-1208 AD (Grehn & Svensson 2024. p. 28). More centrally in Skanör, by the border to Hovbacken, five clay-lined pits were encountered in 2022. One of these also contained fish bones, which further proves the idea of them being used for handling fish (Sarnäs 2023b. p. 6). A stone-throw away from this site, nine clay-lined pits were discovered in 2021, out of these a couple contained fish bones (Sarnäs 2023a). Two soil samples were taken and osteologist Annica Cardell examined the bones present in the samples. In the first sample 30% of the bones were cod, the remaining 70%, as well as all bones in the second sample, were herring bones.



Figure 3. Clay-lined pits from Skanör.

Another excavation in Skanör happened upon eleven clay-lined pits (Bolander 2021. pp. 15). Three of these were thoroughly excavated. Two of the three had no fish bones in them, although they were carefully sieved using two millimeters' nets. These did, however, have charcoal in them. The clay also appeared to possibly be local and natural. The third consisted of clay that had been placed there by humans, likely imported, an abundant occurrence of fish bone was also noted in this pit (Bolander 2021. p. 21).

A larger excavation took place in 2019-2020 along the three main streets in Skanör: Östergatan, Mellangatan and Västergatan, as well as along Norregatan (Frejd 2024). During the excavation 210 clay-lined pits were found (fig. 3). 35 clay-lined pits were encountered on Östergatan, 17 on Mellangatan and one on Norregatan (Frejd 2024. pp. 29-31, 34, 40). The remaining 157 were all found on Västergatan (Frejd 2024. p. 37). Västergatan is the street closest to Hovbacken which likely has played a part as it has been closer to the beach and the marketplace. No fishbones were mentioned to have been found in the pits; however, ceramics were encountered in a few of them. The ceramic has been dated to 1150-1200 and 1175-1300 (Frejd 2024. pp. 42). Torbjörn Brorsson argues that the pits should not be younger than 1250 which in turn puts a usage period at around 50-75 years.

2.3.1.2 Falsterbo

The markets center was ultimately moved from Skanör's Hovbacken to Falsterbo's Flommen around the beginning of the 15th century, something that coincided with the Hansa asserting full monopoly over it (Ersgård 1988. p. 98). The monopoly of the market was, however, a process that started in the 14th century which resulted in the market becoming a traditional herring market, without international product exchange. The monopolization of the market has likely also led to a split amongst market activity in Scania and caused smaller fishing locations to emerge, separate from the markets, removing the crown's influence and strengthening that of the population's (Roslund 2025. p. 204).

Although the main location was out at Flommen, the market still took place in other parts of Falsterbo as well. Most of the market construction consisted of temporary sheds which were taken down by the end of each season and then rebuilt again the year after (Hommerberg 1952. p. 112). Lübeck has had a more permanent construction. However, this cannot explain why there were still company houses made in half-timber standing within in, amongst others, both in the *fits* of Stettin and Danzig by the 17th century as that would indicate a permanent construction at those *fits* as well (Ersgård 1984. p. 14).

A recent excavation led by archaeologist Per Sarnäs, about 100 meters west of Falsterbohus castle, within Rostock's fit, has unearthed 142 silver coins, a house foundation, and various products such as finger rings and buckles (Sarnäs 2025, e-mail). At the time of writing there is no clear dating on the finds, but Sarnäs estimates them to be from the 14th-16th century. This both contradicts the temporary sheds, as well as speaks for the market being present outside of

Flommen's market area. This is because of the nature of the finds, such as goods to be sold and a large amount of coins which should indicate a trade.

The marketplace in Falsterbo is less known than the one in Skanör. This should most likely be credited to the fact that Skanör was in use longer, it was bigger and Falsterbo's market started to take place during the decline of the towns. Furthermore, the golf course built in 1935 has led to many traces and much of the evidence being destroyed.

Besides the fish stalls, clay-lined pits have also been present in Falsterbo. As opposed to his idea of the pits in Skanör, Ersgård connects these to the fishing and handling of the fish (Ersgård 1988. p. 87) Clay-lined pits have been found at different locations in Falsterbo, besides at Flommen. These locations include Rostock's fit, near Kolabacken where three clay-lined pits were found at an excavation in 1994 (Ersgård 2004. p. 9). These would have been at a location which later became a gravesite. Another four were found within an area that either belonged to Danzig or was located between Danzig's fit and the beach (Sarnäs 2025. pp. 8-10, 15). No finds were found within either pit.

The distribution of the clay-lined pits, in both Skanör and Falsterbo should be seen as separate entities of practice bundles, where we can see fishermen and merchants having created their own quarters for fishery. However, due to the distribution, it is possible to see that although the different entities have likely identified with one another and have created a community, they still see themselves as separate from the other entities. The locals and merchants have therefore shaped the landscape as separate from one another while still portraying an urban identity of belonging.

2.3.2 Churches

2.3.2.1 *St Olof*

The town church of Skanör is dedicated to Saint Olaf and located in the northern outskirts of the town (fig. 4). From its location it looks over the marketplace Hovbacken and is directly south of Skanör's castle. Directly across from the church is the town square and town hall. The church is today the only medieval building in Skanör. The first mention of the church is from somewhere between 1201-1223 (SDHK 40837). Therefore, the church should have been built somewhere around then. However, it should be noted that it might have been an earlier church that is referenced.

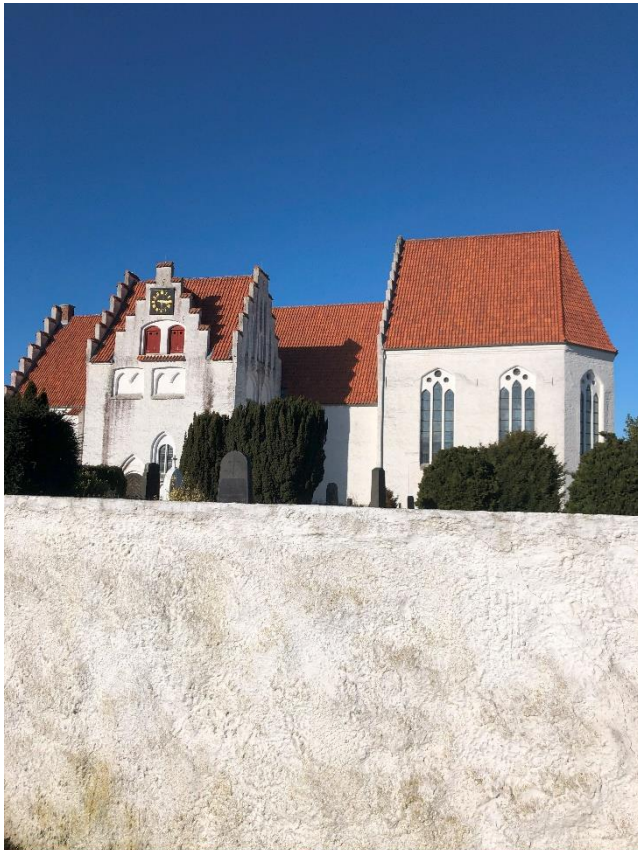


Figure 4. St Olof in Skanör, taken from southeast.

The oldest part of the church is the eastern part of the nave which was built in the 13th century (Carelli 2007, s. 167). The extension of the nave, as well as the tower-like church porch in the south, has been built during the 14th century, something Ersgård credits to an increased population. The choir was rebuilt at a later point, Rydbeck dates this to sometime before 1439 (Rydbeck 1935, s. 18). The church is built of brick and limestone.

The church should be seen as a need for a place to practice the religion of the population. As mentioned in *1.6 Historical background*, there is a possibility of an earlier church. This should in turn indicate when the

population rose to the point of needing a larger church. The church is therefore an indicator of the emergence of the town, as well as the urbanization of the town.

Something that should be taken into consideration is that the current choir is unproportionally bigger than the rest of the church, indicating an unfinished expansion. When viewed from the outside, one can see that the brickwork continues as if it should have continued to be built upon (fig. 5). From the nave's loft, it is still possible to see a pointed arch which is likely a part of the former choir and can therefore tell us of the original size (fig. 6). The stop of the expansion happened around the time of the market's decline. Ersgård proposes that the stop is due to the foundation being weakened during the construction of the crypt, Sten Skansjö and Carelli believes it to be due to the economic and demographic decline that the relocation of the market caused (Ersgård 1988. p. 122; Skansjö 2000. p. 115; Carelli 2007. p. 168). Based on the research, I would argue that it is due to both. As neither the people nor the market was there, the need for a bigger church would not have existed any longer. The lack of the market

would also have resulted in a decline in the economy which would have caused them to not being able to afford the expansion of or re-strengthen the foundation.

In St. Olof's crypt, it is possible to see some of the old gravestones. Amongst them are the oldest gravestones in Skanör, which is something that I noted during my visit to the church. These had originally been located in the graveyard but were later moved to the crypt. The gravestones belong to German merchants, showing that not only the local population would have used the church. This in turn becomes something of consideration as there are other churches in Skanör (see *appendix A*).



Figure 5. (Left) Continuation in the brickwork from the unfinished extension.

Figure 6. (Right) Arch of the former choir, seen from the nave's loft.

2.3.2.2 S:ta Gertrud

S:ta Gertrud, dedicated to Saint Gertrude, is the only remaining medieval building in Falsterbo and has also acted as a town church (fig. 7). Today it is located east of the locality but during the Middle Ages it was thought to have been situated in the center of the town, right across from the town square and hall. It is not known when the church was built, and the theories differ. Otto Rydbeck and Göran von Essen argues that the nave is from the 13th century, although during excavations of the church, the oldest coin found has been dated to 1325-1375 (Ersgård 1988. pp. 138). Ersgård argues that the church should be from the middle of the 14th century due to the possibility of the layer with the coin possibly being disturbed and the coin therefore being older than the church.

While I will not deny the plausibility of an older church, it is in my opinion likely that the church is from the late 13th- or early 14th century. This is based on the fact that urban development started during the mid-13th century and therefore the need for a church would have risen.

Furthermore, the development of Falsterbo seems to have occurred similarly to that of Skanör, albeit roughly 50-100 years later. This should result in the church being built around the same time as the castle (more about this in 2.3.3.2

Falsterbohus castle) which in turn would have been around the late 13th century or the early 14th century,

depending on whether it is the first or the later castle it would be contemporary with. The one thing which can be said with certainty is that it must have been built before 1385, when it is mentioned for the first time in the historical records (Ersgård 1988. p. 136).

Sometime during the 15th century, a new choir was added and at the beginning of the 16th century the west tower was built (Carelli 2007. p. 168; Ersgård 1988. p. 136). By the choir's southern side there has been a sacristy built in limestone. During my visit to the church, I also noted a bricked-up portal on the nave's southern wall (Hellmuth 2021. p. 28; fig. 8). This should likely be assigned to the porch in brick which would have been the main entry to the church. A door is also located on the northern wall, straight across from the former portal, although this one is still open. Both sacristy and porch were torn down in the 19th century (Ersgård 1988. p. 136). Another aspect that was noted was the set of stairs which led down to the church. The stairs consist of seven steps, and I estimated them to go down roughly 1.5 meters. The stairs should act as a sign of the issues the town has had with the aeolian sand.



Figure 7. S:ta Gertrud as seen from northwest.



Figure 8. Bricked-up southern portal on S:ta Gertrud

Lastly, the scales and dimensions of the church's different parts should be considered. It can be seen that the measurements of the choir and nave are close to identical with that of St Olof. It is also possible that the porch has been of similar size as the one in St Olof (Ersgård 1988, p. 139). The expansion of the churches has also happened around the same time in both churches, however, the expansion in St Olof has been during the decline of the market in the town and S:ta Gertrud has been expanded during the rise of the market in the town. Likely, this was due to the merchants now spending more time in Falsterbo and therefore a bigger church would have been needed. It is therefore the local population, together with the merchants that through interaction with the church has created a need to a church to be built. It is also in direct connection to the urbanization of Falsterbo.

2.3.2.3 Other churches

When looking at the different available sources (Blomqvist 1950; Ersgård 1984; 1988; fig. 9; 11), there appears to have been eleven different churches on the peninsula, with a possibility of more. Two of these have been the previously discussed town churches. Here a few of the possible churches will be discussed, for further information see *appendix A*. As the church as an institution was of importance during the Middle Ages, and their presence also indicate the importance and size of a town, the presence of churches become important in understanding

the emergence of a town. It also shows the decline in when the institution starts to disappear from the towns.

2.3.2.3.1 Skanör

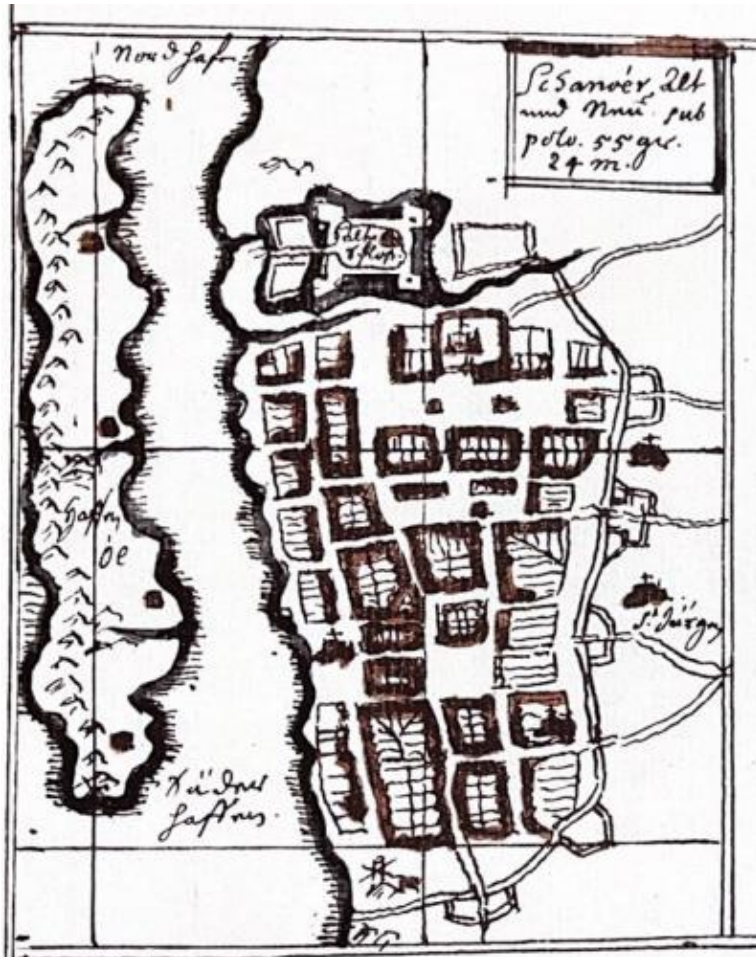


Figure 9. Map over Skanör from the 1650's

Johannes Mejer's map from 1650 includes five churches, one of which is St Olof. The other churches include a St George, Flynborn's church and two German ones (fig. 9). A church dedicated to St George was a common feature in medieval towns, and it is likely that one would have existed on the peninsula as well. However, as there is no proof, other than Mejer's map it is still of importance to remain critical of the information provided. No traces have been found of the German churches. I would however like to put forward the possibility of the church east of the

town being either Rostock's church or the possibly separate German church which is mentioned in historical letters. If that is the case, it was placed incorrectly on Mejer's map. This could indicate either that the church was no longer standing, or that Mejer's map is not accurate, as seen on the city wall he added, which did not exist. Flynborn's church is placed in the south-eastern part of Skanör (fig. 10).

Rostock's church is first mentioned in 1353, although it is mentioned as a cemetery and not a church (Ersgård 1984. p. 14). However, a German church is mentioned to have been located at roughly the same location. Lars Redin, Ersgård and Carelli argue that Rostock's church and the German church are separate from each other whereas Jahnke considers them to be the same. (Redin 1976. pp. 24; Ersgård 1984. p. 14; Carelli 2007. p. 168; Jahnke 2016. p. 100).

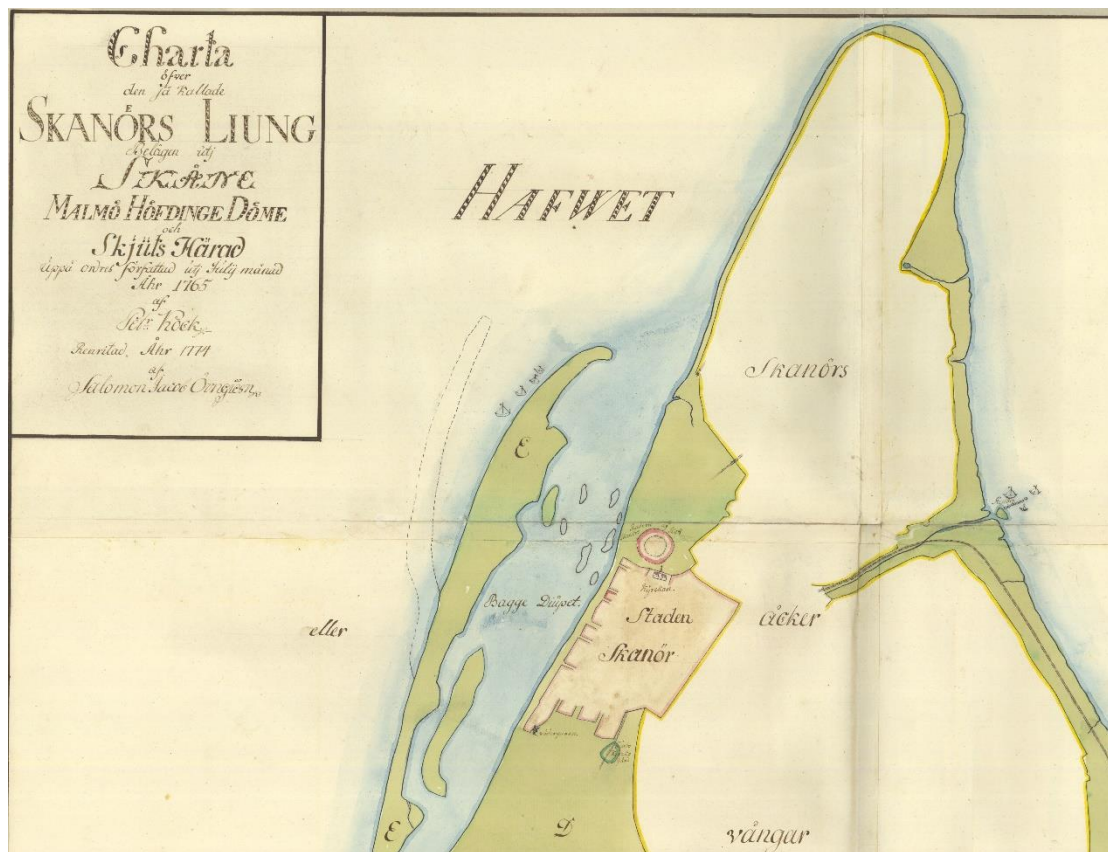


Figure 10. Section of a map over Skanör-Falsterbo from 1765.

The graveyard found at Lagmanshejdan, where Rostock's church is believed to have been located, was taken out of use around 1400, which would imply that the German church, attacked by the archbishop in 1482, cannot have been the same (Jahnke 2016. pp. 100). This would in turn mean that there were two separate churches. No church or chapel has been encountered at the site.

2.3.2.3.2 Falsterbo

It is not certain exactly how many churches or chapels have been present in Falsterbo. Looking at the different sources (Blomqvist 1950; Ersgård 1984; 1988; fig. 11) it might have been between five to ten separate churches, one of which being S:ta Gertrud. Although, it is only the five that we have evidence of.

A church is mentioned in 1352 as *ecclesia Danica* (Church of the Danes). An excavation within Rostock's *fit* in 1994 encountered sixty-one graves (Ersgård 2004. p. 9). They have been dated by using dendrochronology on wood from some of the coffins (Ersgård 2004. p.

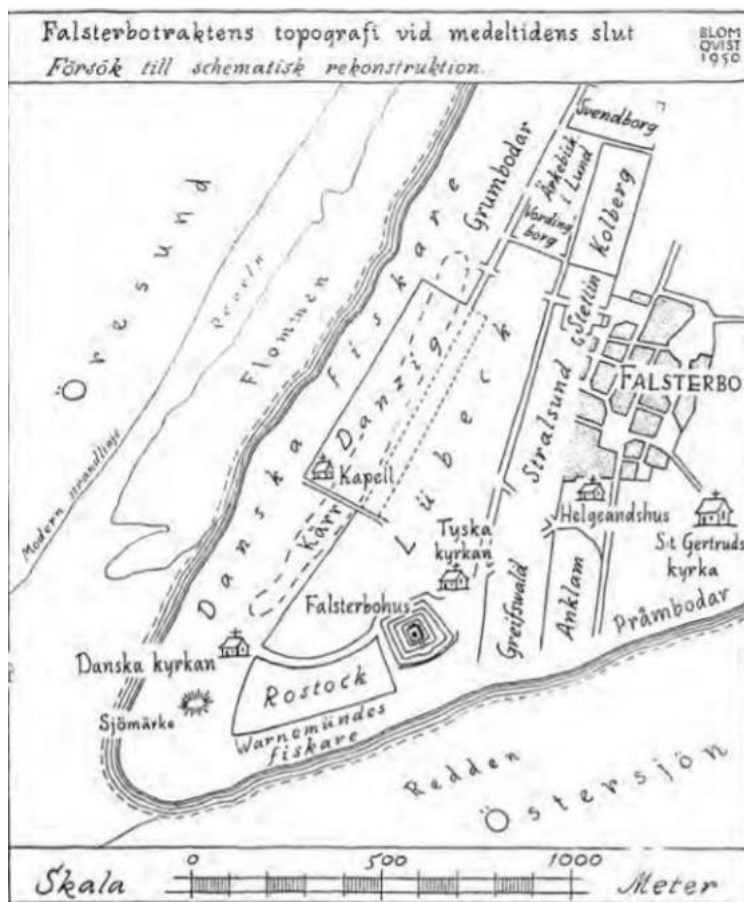


Figure 11. Reconstruction map over medieval Falsterbo.

10). The earliest of these was dated to sometime after 1228. Another one was dated 1305. This means that the graveyard is likely from the second half of the 13th century. As Rostock did not receive their *fit* until the 15th century, and no other Hanseatic town can be tied to the area before this, the graveyard must have belonged to another churchly institution instead (Ersgård 2004. p. 11). The only one which can geographically and chronologically be tied to this would be the Danish church. It would mean that the church was located further south than what is believed today.

The last known church is a German church known as S:ta Maria. Ersgård estimates this church to be the oldest in Falsterbo (Ersgård 1984. pp. 15). In 1648, when the church was damaged in a war, Lübeck sent a building master to restore it (Jahnke 2016. p. 98). The documentation gathered at the time indicates that it was partly made out of wood and stood at 20x16 meters in size and two pillars high. The graveyard acted as a common burial ground for all German churches in Falsterbo (Ersgård 1984. p. 15).

Lastly, Ersgård suggests that other German towns, such as Danzig, Rostock, Stettin and Stralsund had their own churches in Falsterbo. These would then have been located within their own fits (Ersgård 1984. p. 16). However, the lack of proof of their existence makes it likely that S:ta Maria was the only German church in Falsterbo.

2.3.3 Castles

2.3.3.1 Skanör castle



Figure 12. Skanör castle, seen from the south.

Skanör castle was built in 1230 and was the main administrative building on the peninsula in the 13th and 14th centuries (Ersgård 1984. p. 63). According to Otto Rydbeck, its abandonment should be dated to around 1425 when Falsterbohus took over (Rydbeck 1935. pp. 57). The last written source about the castle is from the early 15th century. This corresponds to the unfinished extension of St Olof, as well as the decline of Skanör and should therefore be seen as a clear indicator of the town's emergence during its construction, as well as its decline. The castle was used by the king's *fogde* during Skanör's time as a Danish *kungalev* from which he supervised the royal privileges and the income from the market, as well as performed his administrative duties (Skansjö 2000. pp. 88).

The castle, of which today only a few ruins remain, is located on a natural hill, directly northwest of the town church (fig. 12). From its location, it would have had a view over Hovbacken and Bakdjupet. Although the hill is natural, additions have been made to accommodate the castle (Rydbeck 1935. pp. 68, 74). Poles have been found in the hill which should be seen as a foundation for the construction (Rydbeck 1935. p. 81). On the outside of these, a stonewall has likely acted as a reinforcement of the foundation or as an extension.

Traces of multiple buildings have been found within the facility (Ersgård 1984. p. 63). The main building, however, would have been 16x8 meters, likely been a few stories high and made of brick and limestone (Ersgård 1984. p. 63). The castle and its hill would have been surrounded by two moats; one of which is today dried out. Today, only a few traces of the castle remain on the hill. Its history as a quarry for the stone paving of streets and the town square in the 1770's has resulted in most being gone from the site (Rydbeck 1935. pp. 14).



Figure 13. Falsterbohus castle, seen from northwest.

2.3.3.2 Falsterbohus castle

Falsterbohus castle is located about five kilometers south of Skanör's castle and next to both Rostock's and Lübeck's *fits*. There have been two castles at the location, the first one being built during the 13th century and destroyed in 1311 during disputes between the Hansa and Denmark (Ersgård 1984. p. 65). The castle, of which the ruins are still visible today, was built shortly thereafter (fig. 13). There are certain similarities between the castle in Skanör and the castle in Falsterbo, such as the double moats.

Based on my research and observations, this is a similarity I would credit with the proximity of the two castles, them being almost contemporary or the fact that they should be seen as of equal importance. The inner moat at Falsterbohus is still visible today whereas the outer moat has almost dried out completely. During rainy periods it is still possible to see both moats.

Due to the later use of the castle as a quarry, it is difficult to say too much about the castle and how it would have looked. A bailey of unknown height has surrounded the castle. Within the bailey there has been a hall going in a north-south direction, its eastern wall would have been shared with a keep. The keep was 9x9 meters on the sides and is thought to have been three floors high (Blomqvist 1950, pp. 163, 167). According to Blomqvist, the upper floors of the keep would have been made of bricks, no evidence of this is left at the site (Blomqvist 1950. pp. 168). It is, however, clear that the lower parts of the keep, still visible today, are constructed using granite or gneiss. The stone is mentioned as *gråsten* which is a collective term for crystalline rocks. The other remaining ruins seem to have been made of the same

material. A brick building has been found north of the bailey, with its southern wall being shared with the bailey, this might have been used as a stair tower (Blomqvist 1950. pp. 168).

The castle was abandoned in 1530, after Falsterbo ceased to be its own county. The reason behind both castles on the peninsula being used as quarries was likely due to stone not occurring naturally on the peninsula. The castle ruins were roughly restored during the 1930's. It was then that the current appearance of the ruins came about (Ersgård 1984. p. 65). The construction of the first castle in Falsterbo should be seen as connected to the emergence of the town. The abandonment appears to be happening together with the decline instead, indicating the peninsula's loss of importance to the crown.

2.3.4 Street network, squares and town hall

There are a few streets known from the Middle Ages in Skanör and Falsterbo. First it should be mentioned that as Falsterbo town has been moved, the street network from there is close to gone. Furthermore, both towns have had a town square, however only the one in Skanör

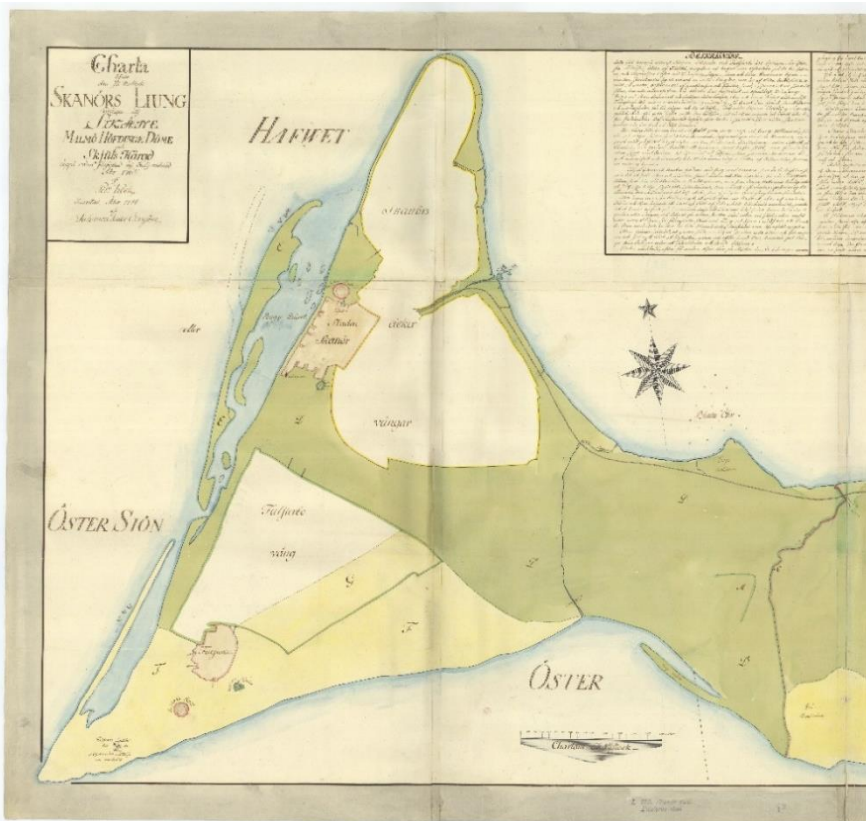


Figure 14. Map from 1756, showing Ammerrännan

remains.

Before entering the towns from the isthmus, the travelers would have needed to cross a small river, known as Ammerrännan (fig. 14). This river would also have had a bridge known as Ammerbron, over which people would have needed to pay tax to enter the towns (Hommerberg 1952, s. 112).

The street networks of the towns are indicators of the population's urbanity. The various streets mentioned, often together with a profession, act as signs of how the local population has contributed to the

structure of the towns. They also indicate practice bundles which are clear indicators of how the citizens have taken active part in activating and structuring the towns and thereby also showcasing their urban identities.

2.3.4.1 Skanör

The current town square is located right by the town hall and is known as *Rådhusstorget* or the *Town Hall square*. The square is possibly the site for the medieval one. During excavations conducted in the 1980's a harshly stomped layer of soil was uncovered underneath a stone pavement and interpreted as the earliest town square (Ersgård 1984. p. 80). Excavations have also documented craft activity around the square, mainly consisting of bone- and metal crafts. Due to its' proximity to the church and the castle, as well as the activities that have taken place around the square, I agree with the thesis of this being the location of the medieval town square.

While the modern name of the square refers to a town hall, there is no archaeological or written proof of a town hall, prior to the 18th century one that is still standing today. However, as the written evidence do mention both council men and a mayor, I find it unlikely that this should not have existed (SDHK-nr: 11293). While there is a possibility that the church has acted as a place for council meetings, it is still likely that the town square and town hall have appeared in a similar manner to Falsterbo. I would therefore argue that the site of the current town hall would also be the location of a medieval one.

There are a few known medieval streets in Skanör (*appendix B*). While the location is only known for a few of them, they still tell of the urban character, trade and activity that has taken place in the town. According to Andrén a street by the name *Travnestræde* is mentioned in 1317 (Andrén 1985. p. 176). Due to the many mentions of the street as well as the variety of properties on it, I would argue that this might have been one of the main streets in Skanör. A street known as *Skomagerstræde* is mentioned during the latter half of the 14th century and has been located within Rostock's *fit* (Ersgård 1988. p. 70). The name suggests that shoemakers have worked on the street.

Besides the streets, a square known as *Vagnstorget* appears once in a document dated to 1372 (SDHK-nr: 10161). In the source it is said to have had stalls around it. Another square is also said to have been located in the block Hjorten, known as *Lilla torg* (Ersgård 1984. p. 15). What is referred to as *Krukmakarnas tomter* (the potters' properties) also appear when

discussing a stall nearby (SDHK-nr: 9633). This source should therefore tell us that the potters would have been located in the same area in the 1370's. No recent excavations have uncovered any streets in Skanör.

2.3.4.2 Falsterbo

While both town hall and town square are mentioned in the written sources and we therefore know these have existed, it is not known where they have been located. The most agreed upon idea is that they have been located across from the church, similarly to their location in Skanör. However, the height of sand dunes in that area makes the excavations unfeasible, and we can therefore only theorize their location. There is, however, a reference from 1532 when a square is mentioned to be located north of the town hall in Falsterbo (Ersgård 1984. p. 16). There are also said to be two houses located there.

By studying older maps, it is visible that an older road has existed as an entry to the town (fig. 15). This road would have meant that one would enter the town from the south, instead of the north. The street would in turn have gone along the coastal line which would correlate to the idea that medieval Falsterbo has been located along the southern coast. Multiple excavations have taken place around this area and traces of medieval buildings have been found. The first excavation in search of medieval Falsterbo took place in the 1970's and was presented in *Ale* in 1978 (Ersgård 1978).

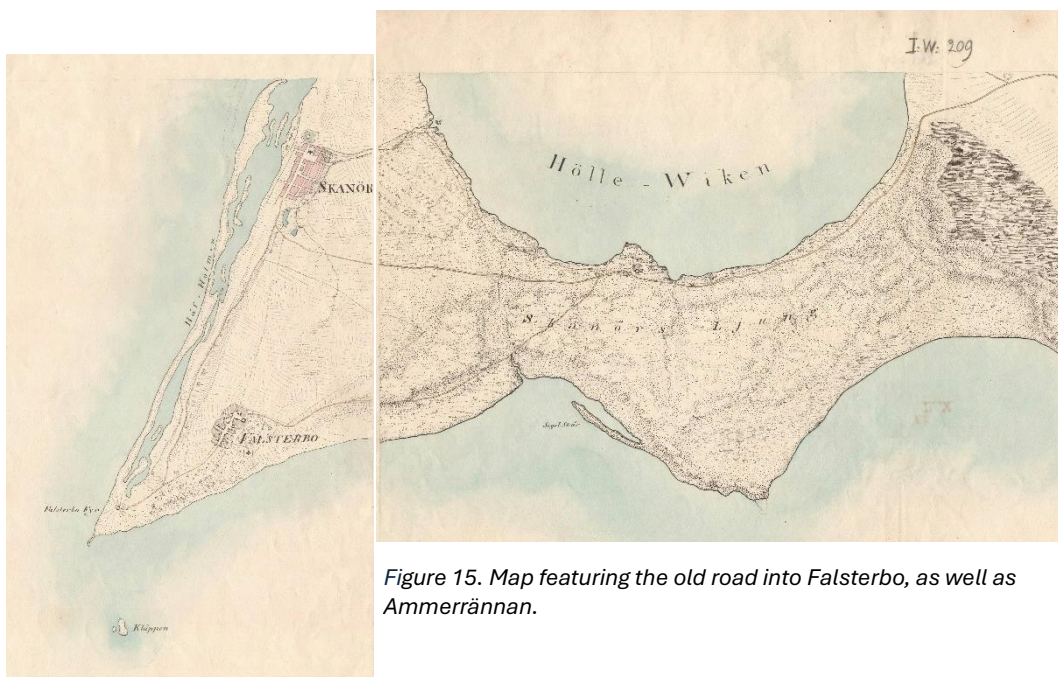


Figure 15. Map featuring the old road into Falsterbo, as well as Ammerrännan.

The oldest phase of a settlement found during the two excavations, which took place in 1976 and 1978, was from the late 13th century (Ersgård 1978. p. 12, 14). This is based on ceramics found in the oldest layer. There is then a building phase from the 15th century, however, there seems to have been a gap in the settlement from after 1350 to the latter half of the 15th (Ersgård 1978. p. 12). Another building phase has been dated to the early 16th century based on a coin minted in Copenhagen from King Christian II's rule (Ersgård 1978. p. 9). The last phase is from the mid-16th century. In this, layer a coin from 1536, minted in Malmö, was found (Ersgård 1978. p. 6, 9). After this the activity seems to have stopped. The different phases of buildings do, according to Ersgård, point towards a regulated urban development, however with a break in activity in the late medieval period (Ersgård 1978. p. 9). The property has been located in northwest to southeast which means it has run parallel with the southern beach (Ersgård 1978. p. 14).

In 2016, an excavation took place, not too far from the location of the 1976-78 excavations, which further proves Ersgård's hypothesis. While looking at the profile of one of the trenches, there are three different layers which might correspond to a building; layer 4, 5 and 8 (Balic 2018. p. 14). While no dating is discussed in the report, we still see three separate phases with a break in the middle.

In 2021, an excavation behind Falsterbo museum, southwest of the church, unearthed two phases of a building, phase 2 and 5-6 (Sarnäs 2022. p. 10, 12). The oldest building dated to the latter half of the 15th century (Sarnäs 2022. pp. 10). A coin from King Hans' time was found in this layer. The younger building phase is dated to sometime before the mid-16th century (Sarnäs 2022. p. 12). There was a coin minted in 1536 found in this layer. Based on the finds, Sarnäs finds it likely that the building would have been moved in the late 16th- to early 17th century (Sarnäs 2022. p. 13). However, the year after, in 2022, another excavation took place, about forty meters west of the church. Here, two stone fundaments were found. Sarnäs interprets these to be a part of two foundations, one for a house and the other for a courtyard or square (Sarnäs 2024. p. 9). They are placed at the same height as S:ta Gertrud. It is therefore possible that this should correspond to the same period as the church. According to my dating of the church, this would put them at the late 13th- to early 14th century, however that differs depending on who's dating is being used (see 2.3.2.2 *S:ta Gertrud*).

As opposed to Skanör, hardly any streets have been mentioned in the written material about Falsterbo. There were only two streets mentioned in the historical sources available at SDHK,

these being *Skomakargatan* and *Slaktargatan* (SDHK-nr: 44404). They are mentioned in a document from 1379. Other sources also mention shoemaker stalls, but no street. All of these should indicate practice bundles.

In three different sources from 1370, twenty-two stalls are mentioned to be located around the church yard in Falsterbo (SDHK-nr: 9814; 9815; 9832). If this refers to the German churchyard or the one belonging to the town church is not made clear. It is however my opinion that it should be the town church's graveyard that is being referred to as in most other cases it is specified if it is the German one. This would further prove that the market was spread out around Falsterbo, as opposed to how it was in Skanör. The exact same number of stalls in all three sources from the same year, as well as one name appearing in two of the documents, indicate that they refer to the same twenty-two stalls.

In a few different sources, from the late 14th century (ex. SDHK-nr: 10498; 44404; 11726; 41672) there are mentions of cloth stalls and the cloth merchants. In two of the sources the stalls mentioned are said to be located as the second and the sixth stalls from the castle (SDHK-nr: 11726; 41672). Although we have no name on the street, it is clear that they would have been located by the castle in Falsterbo, possibly within or by Lübeck's *fit*.

The only other factor that can tell us of the street network in Falsterbo is the modern-day street names. Many of these share the names with the town whose *fit* they would have been located within. There is also one street known as *Bodarna* (the stalls) which stretches along the southwestern beach, around where the Danish fishing camps would have been located. Another street known as *Kompanisträtet*, around the area of Anklam's *fit*, likely tells us of the type of buildings which have stood there as well. A recent excavation uncovered a street within Lübeck's *fit*, near the old train station in Falsterbo. The street has had smaller, likely temporary buildings lining it. Some of these buildings appear to have been tavernas (Knarrström & Lindberg 2017).

2.3.5 Other

2.3.5.1 Harbor

There is no natural harbor in Skanör or Falsterbo. Instead, there are a few ideas of how the merchants would have gotten their goods into land or where a possible harbor could have been located (Blomqvist 1950; Hommerberg 1952; Ersgård 1984). However, the importance of waterways during the Middle Ages should not be written off as international trade was of

importance for medieval towns. Instead, we should assume that the merchants would have figured out a way to get to land with their goods quickly.

Hommerberg argues for a possible harbor a few hundred meters out in the sea, south of Falsterbo's church (Hommerberg 1952, p. 110). He bases these claims on a collection of stones which could have acted as a harbor. However, I find this unlikely based on how shallow the water is. For the water to even reach the hips on a full-grown man by the Falsterbo shore, he would have to wander more than a few hundred meters out into the water. It is therefore unlikely that a larger boat would have been able to anchor there.

Ersgård lays forward a hypothesis that the ships would have anchored in Höllviken instead (Ersgård 1984, p. 15). Höllviken has a natural harbor and is close to Skanör geographically. From Höllviken, the merchants would have been able to quickly go by carriage to Skanör. This is also something that is confirmed in a source from 1389, when, to avoid taxes, a citizen of Stralsund has had to dock at the harbor known as Höl, close to Skanör. Höl should here be considered the same as Höllviken (SDHK-nr: 13574).

Blomqvist presents two ideas, one of which he debunks immediately (Blomqvist 1950, p. 173). That hypothesis is based on the six flatboats found during the excavation of Falsterbohus in 1911. These flatboats, which are between 14-18 meters long, have been seen as a basis for a dock that would have been the castle's private dock. However, Blomqvist states that the sand is too moveable and there is not enough of a rise in the land height. Instead, he argues that the merchants would have anchored their ships out at sea and gotten to land by smaller boats (Blomqvist 1950, pp. 174). This is also something that Linné seems to suggest in his *Scanian Journey* (Linné 1977, p. 255). According to Linné, he saw locals drive their goods on high carriages out in the water to smaller boats, these boats were then rowed to bigger ships which they were brought onto. Because of this, Blomqvist's hypothesis, which is reinforced by Linné, as well as Ersgård's idea seem to be the most plausible.

2.3.5.2 Fits

The exact number of fits in Skanör-Falsterbo is debatable, however we know that both the different Hanseatic towns and Danish towns, such as Falster and Åhus, have held fits on the peninsula. In some cases, such as with Rostock, the towns would have fits in both Skanör and Falsterbo. Rostock's fit in Skanör has been located around the area of Lagmanshejdan and in Falsterbo it has been west of Lübeck's fit.

Rostock was also one of the first towns to receive their fit. The fit in question was located east of St Olof, by the previously mentioned Lagmanshejdan. This fit was given to them together with certain privileges in 1250 (Ersgård 1988. p. 64). However, Rostock and Lübeck were not the only towns to receive a fit. It is known that at least twenty-four different foreign towns would have had their own fits in the two towns (Weibull 1966. p. 86). Besides that, some Danish towns would also have their own fits. Because of this we know that there must have been over twenty-four fits in Skanör-Falsterbo, however we do not know the exact number. The fits acted as their own jurisdictions where the towns owning the areas would be able to have their own *fogde*, there are also records of the fits having their own detention centers (Weibull 1966. p. 11; Ersgård 1978. p. 16). Furthermore, they would build stalls, churches, and company houses on the fits.

Lübeck received their fit in Falsterbo instead of Skanör in the mid-13th century and is credited as having started the permanent construction in Falsterbo (Weibull 1966. p. 79; Carelli 2007. p. 165). Lübeck's company houses were still standing in 1661, together with the ones from Danzig and Stettin (Ersgård 1984. p. 16). We also know that the company houses from Danzig and Stettin were half-timbered houses, and that Linné saw the ruins of the German houses in 1749 (Linné 1977. p. 262).

Stralsund's fit in Falsterbo has been located by the church and hospital of the Holy Ghost. We also have knowledge of Greifswald's fit being located between the *old enclosure* and the German church yard, as well as between the beach and Stralsund's *fit* (SDHK-nr: 1143). Although it is not clear where the *old enclosure* has been located, it still gives an idea of where both Stralsund's and Greifswald's fits have been located.

Besides that, the southern beach has been a place for transshipment, while the beach reefs have been Danish (Ersgård 1984. p. 82). Between the beaches, the most influential Hanseatic towns have had their fits. This would include the area in which Lübeck, Rostock, Danzig, Anklam, Stralsund, and Greifswald seem to have had their fits.

Fits have been used in different ways. The excavation led by Per Sarnäs within Rostock's fit (Sarnäs 2025, e-mail) shows a trade taking place. The 142 coins found, together with the products, such as finger rings, pins, and buckles showcase a location for a market and handling of money. Furthermore, the remains of the burned down house is, by Sarnäs, interpreted as a stall or a warehouse. Therefore, this becomes a sign of some of the activity taking place at the fits.

In 2015, an excavation within Lübeck's fit, near the old train station in Falsterbo, found a location of different activities. Trenches stretching parallel to each other, with an even patch of land in between them have been considered drainage with a street in between (Knarrström & Lindberg 2017. p. 66). Multiple postholes were found which were interpreted as smaller constructions, such as stalls or tents (Knarrström & Lindberg 2017. p. 66). Twenty-eight traces of barrels were encountered and interpreted as water collectors. These were dated to 1360-1370 using dendrochronology, one was dated to after 1269 (Knarrström & Lindberg 2017. pp. 66). A possible forge was also found; it was interpreted as such due to the traces of metal work found around it. This was likely from the late 15th- to early 16th century (Knarrström & Lindberg 2017 p. 66).

Other finds from the site include multiple ceramics. Due to the type of ceramics, such as beakers and jugs, it has been interpreted to belong to taverns and are dated to the 14th century (Knarrström & Lindberg 2017. p. 67). However, ceramics spanning from the 11th century were found within the excavation area (Knarrström & Lindberg 2017. p. 67). While fish bones were found at the site, it was not herring bones but instead cod and tuna (Knarrström & Lindberg 2017. p. 67). Herring was likely only a product to be sold and purchased at the market and not consumed. The area might have been within the so called *Lyktekärret* which would have bordered Danzig's fit (Knarrström & Lindberg 2017. p. 68).

2.3.5.3 Beacon

The beacon in Falsterbo, known as Kolabacken, is located about 500 meters from the castle on the southernmost point of the peninsula. First mentioned in a letter from King Valdemar Sejr, the beacon was built on request from the Dominican brothers and on behalf of the merchants from Lübeck (SDHK-nr: 297). Because it is addressed to Lübeck, it is likely that it is the Dominicans from there who have requested the building of a beacon. In the letter, King Valdemar Sejr gives permission to build the beacon, using timber from his woods and clarifies that no one is to damage it. The letter, which is dated to around 1229-1241 also mentions that the reason behind wanting to build a beacon is due to the dangerous sea outside the peninsula's shore. Due to the numerous reefs, the water outside the Falsterbo peninsula is some of the most dangerous waters in modern-day Sweden to navigate through. It is also something that has led to many ships running around, and possibly thereby also losing parts of its cargo and risking the lives of the sailors and merchants.

When visiting the town in 1749, Carl von Linné also sees and describes the then still standing beacon (Linné 1977. p. 262). Linné describes it as a tilting beacon with an iron basket hanging on a pole. The pole should with all likelihood have been a wooden arm with the possibility of being lowered and raised for the beacon to have been able to be lit and put out. Charcoal is also described as having been burnt in the iron basket. He also mentions what is said in the letter; that the beacon stands there to prevent sailors from running ships aground.



Figure 16. Kolabacken with darker soil and a dent for the beacon's location.

In 1796, the beacon was replaced by a new more modern lighthouse, which still stands today (Ersgård 1984. p. 66). The new lighthouse is situated a few hundred meters away from Kolabacken. Kolabacken, which also is the name of the hill the beacon stood upon, is still

visible in the landscape. While the beacon is long gone the name of the hill comes from charcoal which has made the soil black (Carelli 2007. p. 39). When visiting the site, it was still possible to see how the charcoal has changed the color of the soil, a dent where the beacon would have stood, is also still visible (fig. 16). These are, however, the only signs of what used to be the first beacon in the Nordics. It should, however, indicate the importance of the market in the towns, as well as the presence of foreign merchants.

2.4 Power actors

2.4.1 Royal presence

Previous research, including the studies of Ersgård (1984;1988), pointed out the importance of royal power in Skanör and Falsterbo with aspects such as *kungalev* and castles. Other factors that lean towards the royal presence on the peninsula are connected to how other

monarchs and people in power have tried to overtake the castles. Here, Falsterbo is still the most prominent with Albrekt of Mecklenburg, king of Sweden, when he, during his stay at the castle in 1369, declared himself Lord of Scania (Skansjö 2000, p.133). This shows the peninsula's importance in holding power over the province. Especially as this was during troublesome times between Sweden and Denmark. However, the written material also shows a clear presence of the crown (*appendix C*).

Albrekt of Mecklenburg was later imprisoned by Queen Margrethe I, after the castles had returned to Denmark (see 2.4.3 *Hanseatic presence*). During his imprisonment, Queen Margrethe I held the negotiations of his release at Falsterbohus (Skansjö 2000. pp. 135). After this, the Hanseatic league and Queen Margrethe held a meeting in Skanör and Falsterbo to negotiate (SDHK-nr: 44296; 44390). The conflict became so dire that the Hanseatic league almost completely stopped their Scanian trips in 1393 (Skansjö 2000. p. 136). The actions of the representatives of the crown therefore become clear in Skanör-Falsterbo, although besides the castle ruins they are not as clear in the archaeological material.

2.4.2 Churchly presence

A churchly presence can be seen in different ways in the two towns. The clearest signs would be the different churches and religious institutions in the two towns (*appendix A*). These are the town churches and the German churches, especially Rostock's church and Lübeck's church, as well as the presence of convents and the Hospital of the Holy Ghost. It is therefore clear that the church as an institution has actively taken part in shaping the urban landscape of the peninsula.

However, the written sources also tell of the presence in the towns (*appendix D*). The letters mention specific representatives of the Church acting as active members of the urban lifestyle and the market. They are seen selling, pawning, and buying properties, as well as writing testaments relating to Skanör-Falsterbo. Other actions include giving pardons or instituting prebends at the church. The presence of the church as an active actor in both market, urbanity and political acts therefore becomes present through material remains and written sources.

2.4.3 Hanseatic presence

The history of Skanör and Falsterbo is closely connected with economic interest of the Hansa. The material traces of Hanseatic merchants, their material culture and economic activities have been uncovered during the excavations. This presence is also visible in historical

records. The first references to the Hanseatic trade and merchants are made in 1202 (SDHK-nr: 298).

In 1311, Rostock rebelled against Erik Menved who then ruled over the Hanseatic town. This rebellion is likely what resulted in Falsterbohus castle being burnt down the same year. Furthermore, during this war Danish citizens were being held prisoners at Skanör's castle (SDHK-nr: 41043). This shows that the Hanseatic league took control over the peninsula during this year which has likely affected the market. Neither Malmö nor Åhus is present in the war.

There is a war mentioned in 1361 (SDHK-nr: 8019; 8300; 8315). It is here written that the kings Magnus of Sweden and Håkan of Norway has joined forces with Hamburg, Wismar, Rostock, Stralsund, Greifswald, Anklam, Stettin, Kolberg, Bremen, and Kiel in a war against king Valdemar of Denmark. It is stated that if they win, multiple Scanian castles, including those in Skanör and Falsterbo are to belong to the Hansa. The reason behind the war is that Valdemar Atterdag, king of Denmark invaded Visby, Gotland and made the island Danish. This sparked an anger amongst the Hanseatic league as he now tried to control the seafaring in the Baltic Sea (Skansjö 2000. pp. 132).

It is seven years later that another letter mentions the Hansa returning to Scania (SDHK-nr: 9280). They mention that the first day of salting the fish should take place on 1 August and that it is only allowed on the Falsterbo peninsula. They are also to return to the peninsula with full war equipment but are not to deny any unarmed Danes who wish to travel there to fish. After this follows a series of letters, including one from 1369 where Prussian towns declare that they will return the castles in Scania after 16 years, during which they are also to receive two thirds of the taxes from the market in Skanör-Falsterbo (SDHK-nr: 9563). Many more letters also discuss the Hanseatic presence in Skanör and Falsterbo, typically specifying which Hanseatic towns were active there (*appendix E*).

The Hansa is also present in the archaeological material. For example, the 142 coins, finger rings, pins, and buckles found within Rostock's *fit* point towards the presence of the Hansa (Sarnäs 2025 – email). Furthermore, the street, postholes and tavernas, as well as ceramics that has been found within Lübeck's *fit* indicate how they have impacted the area (Knarrström & Lindberg 2017). When excavating within the different *fits* it is possible to see how clay-lined pits, stoneware and other signs of the market are present. This points both towards the merchants' presence in the towns but also towards how they have impacted the spatial

organization of the town. The Hansa is therefore seen as actors within the towns. Both regarding political actions, but also at the market and in structuring the towns.

2.4.4 Local population

Little is known about the local population in Skanör and Falsterbo during the medieval period from the historical sources. Archaeological excavations mentioned earlier indicate that some settlement and fishing activity was taking place here already in the 12th century and the earliest church and graveyard might have stemmed from the 11th century. It should also be noted that the local population has only inhabited a smaller part of the peninsula, in comparison to the foreign merchants. Therefore, the towns would have been largely uninhabited during the majority of the year.

By the year 1570, the population in Skanör was at 321 people, and in Falsterbo it was at 219 (Nilsson 1996. pp. 30) Putting the total population at 540 inhabitants. Forty years later, Falsterbo is down to 153 inhabitants, and Skanör at 295. This means that during those 40 years, during which the market continued its decline, the population sank by 92 people. Another 40 years later and Skanör is at 250 people, and Falsterbo at no more than 56 (Nilsson 1996. pp. 30). At this point, the population is at its lowest, with the two towns having a total of 306 inhabitants. This means that the population of Skanör-Falsterbo shrank by 234 people, or 44% in total over the course of 80 years. After 1650, the population slowly started to rise again, before becoming grander than in 1570. Skanör surpassed its earlier population by 1690, whereas, by 1810, Falsterbo still had not surpassed the population of 1570, ending at no more than 168 (Nilsson 1996. pp. 30). The two towns' total population surpassed 1570 by 1770. Then having a total population of 578 inhabitants. This means that it took about 200 years for the population to somewhat recover. Furthermore, by the end of the market's history, around 1650, there would have been four times as many plots in Skanör than in Falsterbo (Ersgård 1984. p. 89).

Not much is known about the professions of the local population but what we do know is that it is mentioned in 1378 that there was a mayor, a *fogde* and *bymän* (members of the towns council) in Skanör. A mention of a mayor in Falsterbo appears in 1415, it is then two mayors that is mentioned, together with two council men (Ersgård 1988. p. 10, 12).

There are no other clear sources about what the local population has occupied themselves with. There are, however, a few ideas. Ersgård puts forward the idea that Falsterbo's local

inhabitants have occupied themselves by service professions (Ersgård 1978. pp. 19). The jobs they would have undertaken would therefore have been transportation between beaches and *fjts*, gutting and packaging the fish as well as supplying the foreign merchants with groceries. They would likely also have had other jobs related to the market. However, Ersgård also thinks it plausible that the actual citizens would not have had a say in how the market was run (Ersgård 1984. p. 96). As Falsterbo then would have been deeply connected to the market this also meant that the population decreased with the dissolution of the market. This in turn resulted in there only being thirteen plots in the town during the 17th century.

However, as Falsterbo had taken over the main market, but Skanör's market was still active, it is possible that this would have been a local market during the 15th century and forward. As there were only eleven German storages in Skanör in 1494 but forty-two Danish ones it is fair to assume a more local market (Ersgård 1984. p. 95). The local population in Skanör would therefore likely occupy themselves as fishermen and merchants at the time. Other occupations in Skanör, before the relocation of the market would have been connected to craftsmanship. Archaeological excavations around the town square have shown signs of metal- and bone crafts (Ersgård 1984. p. 80). In the block Torsken, bone crafts have been present and, in the block Svanen it has been metal crafts. Furthermore, in the blocks Slottsvärnern, Lagmannen, and Fyrmästaren archaeological excavations have unearthed livestock enclosures and other traces of organized animal husbandry and slaughter (Ersgård 1984. p. 93).

While thimbles and clothing seals have been found within the blocks Kronan and Hamburg, as well as the many clay-lined pits being found around Östergatan, Mellangatan, Västergatan and Norregatan, there are no other clear signs of market activities amongst the local population in Skanör from the newer excavations (Sarnäs 2023a; 2023b; Frejd 2024). In Falsterbo, due to the lack of archaeological evidence within medieval Falsterbo, the main archaeological source of the local population's market activity comes from an excavation in 2022 (Sarnäs 2024). Ceramics from other countries were found, as well as nicer pottery, and metal work. Bone beads were also encountered. Due to the nature of the finds, there is a possibility that the encountered house has been a taverna.

Villa Haghen is an estate mentioned in the written sources. However, there is no certainty of where it was located. While it is possible that it refers to the estate located on Skanör's Ljung, near Ljunghusen, by the name of Skyttsie hage, there is also a theory of it being located in the outskirts of Falsterbo. The former was however disproven during an excavation in 1979 when

it was discovered that Skyttsie hage was a singular farm, whereas the sources mention Villa Haghen being three different entities (Ersgård 1988. p. 87). The locality would then have been made up of three agrarian properties, run by the local population. It is also mentioned to have bordered two farms in the east. This would then likely have helped provide the towns with cereals and other crops, as well as with other agrarian production. Although there is not much agricultural land available on the peninsula, this locality would still have been able to provide some of the products needed.

The archaeological finds of craftsmanship, together with the mentions of, for example, tailors and potters indicate clear practice bundles. It becomes clear that the local population has structured the towns and therefore also been active in the towns' development. The craftsmen and other professions mentioned are also signs of an urban identity, where people did not sustain themselves by the help of their neighbors, but instead specialized in different crafts.

2.5 Economy

The economic activity in Skanör-Falsterbo was deeply connected with herring fisheries. During the first phases of the market, about the early 13th- to late 14th centuries, the economy flourished. Skanör-Falsterbo became Denmark's economic cradle. However, towards the end of the market's life, the economy dwindled. In 1377, Skanör acquired 2470 mark from taxes, and Falsterbo only 1080 mark. In 1494, 117 years later, Skanör acquired no more than 356 mark, and Falsterbo 1919 mark (Eriksson 1980. p. 47). Although Falsterbo pulled in 839 mark more in 1494 compared to 1377, Skanör made a loss of 2114 mark. This in turn means that the total income went from 3550 mark to 2275 mark. In 117 years, the market's income went down by 1275 mark, or in today's value, a decline of 1 404 378 SEK (Edvinsson & Söderberg 2011).

Before 1494, sources regarding the income are sparse and the customs act from that year is therefore one of the few sources from which we can see a whole year's income (Ersgård 1988. p. 124). The only other two are from 1333 and 1377. This means that one of the main sources for the economy is from a period when the market's decline has already started. It is important to mention that many of those paying taxes for fishing and trade have not been locals and instead have only been there for the market. What we do know is that in 1367, twenty-two stalls were pawned in Falsterbo (Ersgård 1988. p. 126).

In 1385, Queen Margaret I regained the full income from the peninsula, after the Prussian Hanseatic towns had disposed two-thirds of the income for fifteen years (Losman 1972. p. 1, 30). Other mentions of the economy on the peninsula from Queen Margarethe I's time would include a letter in which King Olof of Denmark, King Håkan of Sweden and Norway and Queen Margarethe of Sweden and Norway agreed to help the duke Erik av Sachsen-Lauenberg and pay him 5500 *lödiga mark*, they were here going to use 3500 *lödiga mark* from the tax incomes from Skanör and Falsterbo (SDHK-nr: 10902). This would correspond to 21 000 mark, or 24 766 323 SEK (Edvardsson & Söderberg 2011).

Another source mentioning the market's income is from 1333. In this, King Magnus' governors in Scania have reviewed the accounts made by Jöns Klurch and estimated that the expenditures exceeded the incomes by 1252 mark, 5 *örtugar* and 22 Scanian pennies (SDHK-nr: 3985). This would equate to about 1 480 418.8 SEK (Edvardsson & Söderberg 2011). It should be mentioned that the page used to convert the value does not include Scanian pennies and therefore the normal *Penningar (1290-1624)* has been used. The 135.5 SEK that represents the 22 Scanian pennies might therefore be incorrect.

Customs accounts from Lübeck between 1398-1400 also speaks of the economy on the peninsula. The average value on the import to Skanör-Falsterbo during these years has been 36 647 mark (Weibull 1966. p. 77). In 1399 the value of Lübeck's trade at the Scanian fair was at 157 500 mark and the import from the Scanian fair to Lübeck at 116 500 mark (Weibull 1966. pp. 117). In 1400, this was down at 81 500 mark. It should however be mentioned that although the Falsterbo peninsula has been the main location of the market, these numbers might also include other market locations, such as Trelleborg, Ystad or Simrishamn etcetera, which came to be included in the term Scanian fair. However, as the import from Skanör-Falsterbo between 1398-1400 averaged 36 647 mark, this should be put in comparison to the import from Stockholm between 1399-1400 which was averaged at 15 616 mark, less than half of that from Skanör-Falsterbo (Weibull 1966. p. 85).

In 2023, during an excavation near Falsterbo church, a house was found, together with a paving which should be interpreted as either a courtyard or the town square (Sarnäs 2024). The finds included ceramics, whereas 76% were local or at least Scandinavian. The other ceramic came from Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands. Furthermore, bronze and lead objects, such as scissors, knives and dices were found, but also a beer tap handle and a candlestick. Other finds included a large number of bones, including bone beads made for

rosaries, and also pot tile from a tiled stove. Furthermore, the large number of ceramics might point towards a tavern, if not the finds should be an indicator of a wealthy family. 24% of foreign ceramics should further indicate a higher social class which would have been taking part in the market activities and used foreign merchandise to showcase their wealth.

The excavation in Falsterbo 2025 (Sarnäs 2025 – email) where 142 coins were found together with thimbles, buckles, finger rings etc. also indicate the economy on the peninsula. The different archaeological excavations in Skanör have also uncovered different signs of economic activities such as bone- and metal crafts around the square (Ersgård 1984. p. 80). This should further be connected to the economic activity in the town. The economic decline is visible in the archaeological material due to the decline of foreign merchandise and coins on the peninsula from around the time of the market's decline. Falsterbo being moved should also be signs of an economic decline as there were no longer any need for the town hall, nor the old town square.

2.6 Environment

Skanör-Falsterbo's location out on the Falsterbo peninsula means that they are quite separated from the rest of the mainland. The only way to reach the peninsula by land has been through an isthmus that goes through a heather moorland. The two towns are only located, at most, five meter above the sea level in modern times (Fornsök 2019). Knowing that the meadow between Skanör's church and Hovbacken had been filled with water before this causes further difficulties to get around the peninsula.

Stones used for construction have been imported to the peninsula, something likely contributing to both castles being used as quarries after their abandonments. Similarly, the clay used for clay-lined pits has, in some instances, been imported as well. There has been access to wood as the peninsula would have been forested, but other than that, most building material seems to have been imported to the peninsula (Rydbeck 1935. p. 3). Something that would have made construction more expensive, as well as time-consuming.

Due to the separation of the peninsula and the rest of the mainland, the lack of a harbor also creates a further obstacle for the two towns. The shallow water means that there is no natural harbor and therefore the ships would have been unable to anchor by the peninsula. The many sand reefs around the coast also create dangers for the sailors as they have led many ships to

run aground. One of the many examples of this being the 13th century clinker-built ship known as *Falserbobåten*, which was found south of S:ta Gertrud (Hommerberg 1952).

Furthermore, the sand has caused issues in Falsterbo as this has continuously covered the town with aeolian sand. This caused the entire medieval town to be moved further west to its modern location (Ersgård 1978. p. 21). The sand continues to cause issues today, something that is noticeable by the church where they have had to plant specific plants to keep the sand at bay. The issues with the sand nearly caused the church to be abandoned in the 18th century. It also makes archaeological excavations difficult due to the dangers of the sand collapsing in on the archaeologists. In some cases, there is also a layer of aeolian sand between the different culture layers (Ersgård 1978; Balic 2018; Sarnäs 2024). In Falsterbo (Sarnäs 2022), the aeolian sand went down 1.3 – 1.91 meters before the youngest culture layers were found. During an excavation in 2023, the aeolian sand was two meters deep before the youngest layers were encountered (Sarnäs 2024). Due to the lack of visible horizons in the sand, it appears that the population has dug into the sand to gather stones and other materials. It is also possible to see that there are breaks in the construction phases during which the aeolian sand has covered the buildings. The aeolian sand is not as noticeable in Skanör, although it does still appear (Sarnäs 2023a).

Lastly, the fish seemed to have almost disappeared completely by the 16th century, something likely caused by over-fishing and changing migratory patterns, amongst other reasons (Reisnert 2021. p. 214). This would likely have contributed to the market's decline, and therefore also the towns'. The fish did come back for a while before disappearing again. Today, there are hardly any fish around the peninsulas coast.

2.7 Decline

The decline of the market can be seen from the late 14th century and onwards. When the Hanseatic league held monopoly over the market and made it strictly into a fish market some of the merchants and trade started to disappear. Skanör and Falsterbo did, however, keep their town privileges and status for longer. It is first in 1754 that the two towns are joined together. They are then referred to as Skanör med Falsterbo stad (Skansjö 2000. p. 218). In 1947, they lost their own jurisdiction and became a part of Skytts hundred. It is however first in 1970 that they lost their status as town(s) (Andersson 1993. p. 53). While they have officially been one

town between 1754-1970, and since then a locality by the name Skanör med Falsterbo, they have never been considered as one.

The beginning of the decline mainly affected Skanör, this can be seen by the income in Skanör going down by 2114 mark, or 85.4% between 1377 and 1494 (Eriksson 1980. p. 47). The stop in the expansion of the town church in a period where Falsterbo's church was growing bigger is also a sign of the decline of Skanör. Falsterbo's decline started closer to the end of the market but can also be seen from an early phase. Another clear sign of the decline is the disappearance of the Hanseatic towns. Between 1399 and 1400, the import from the Scanian fair to Lübeck went down by 35 000 mark, or 30% (Weibull 1966. pp. 117). Fifty years later, in 1450, there are twelve German *fogdar* on the peninsula. In 1490, that number was down to five (Eriksson 1980. p. 47).

It is in 1674 that the last *fogde* is named at Lübeck's *fit* in Falsterbo, this is also the last mention of Lübeck on the peninsula (Eriksson 1980. p. 50). As Lübeck was the town that seems to have stayed the longest in Skanör-Falsterbo, it is also soon after this that we should put the end of the market. Soon after this the towns' decline would therefore be extremely prevalent. The unofficial end for the towns should therefore, likely be placed around 1680.

While the historical letters do not mention a decline directly, it is still visible by the letters becoming sparser towards the decline. The archaeological evidence shows the decline most clearly in Falsterbo. Towards the end of the market's lifespan and the decline of the towns the medieval town of Falsterbo was abandoned and moved to its current location. The abandonment of the town can be seen in the youngest layers of construction which have been found, as well as the layers of aeolian sand which has covered the remains. The signs of people digging through the sand to retrieve building material such as stone is further a sign of the decline as the money for importing the material has likely also disappeared.

3.0 Malmö

3.1 Emergence

A text from 1256 mentioned a Saint Knut guild together with Skanör, however, it is uncertain if it refers to Malmö. However, the first letter that with certainty refers to Malmö is from 1267 when King Valdemar Birgerson of Sweden asks for protection for Godekin(?) from Malmö

(SDHK-nr: 739; 40938). As both of these should point to an already established town, we should put the emergence a bit earlier than such. The settlement surrounding the main street (Adelgatan) also started around the 13th century (Thomasson 2008. p. 292). Therefore, I will discuss Malmö as a town from the first half of the 13th century.



Figure 17. Oldest known depiction of Malmö, from 1594.

3.2 Legal terminology and definitions

The terminology used to describe Malmö differs from that of Skanör-Falsterbo. Through the different letters written by kings it is possible to see that the town is referred to as a town. In 1353, Magnus Eriksson refers to Malmö as a town (*ciuili*) and the people as *ciuibus* (Weibull 1901. pp. 2) The same can be said of Valdemar Atterdag's letter from 1360 where a mayor and council men are also mentioned (Weibull 1901. p. 13). The town is therefore not referred to in relation to a market in the early letters. This should point towards the town's importance as a town by its' own right. However, while still being mentioned as a town (*byy, stad, staden*), from 1415 the trade in the town starts to make its' presence known in the letters (Weibull 1901. p. 21, 23, 27, 34). In 1415, there is a specific mention of merchants. In 1421, 1449, and 1487 Malmö is referred to as a market town (Weibull 1901. p. 21, 23, 26, 35, 48-49).

In the letters and documents related to the church, Malmö is referred to by its name, rarely is it referred to as a town (*appendix D*). This shows a similar terminology between Skanör-

Falsterbo and Malmö in regards of the church. However, as opposed to Skanör-Falsterbo, the pope is present in the material from Malmö.

As with the letters referring to the crown, the sources regarding the Hanseatic presence the sources mention Malmö as a town (*appendix E*). The one difference is that the Hanseatic sources sometimes refer to Malmö as *Ellenbogh* instead (SDHK-nr: 3626).

There are clear political acts regarding laws and regulations in Malmö. In 1369, a servant of two Brygge citizens was accused of salting herring in Malmö before Michaelmas and therefore suffered violence from some citizens of Lübeck (SDHK-nr: 9487). This was during a time when the herring was only allowed to be salted in Skanör-Falsterbo. In 1370, Kampen made a law that those who were tried in front of their *fogde* in Malmö had to pay the fine given (SDHK-nr: 9654). If they decided to bring it back to Kampen, they had to pay another forty pound fine. Lastly, in 1457 (SDHK-nr: 26947), the king freed the citizens from *jus naufragii* (right of shipwreck).

For Malmö, the toll and taxes are seen in different ways than in Skanör-Falsterbo. First, it is known that the citizens of Malmö did not need to pay toll in Copenhagen, nor did they need to pay the pound toll in Malmö (SDHK-nr: 10031; 25889). Foreigners, however, did pay both the normal toll and pound toll when arriving in Malmö. However, in 1338, strangers travelling between Malmö and Lund, from other places did not need to pay the toll (SDHK-nr: 4459). It is unknown if this related to Danish citizens, foreign merchants or both. Lastly, in 1452, the town tax in Malmö was reduced by 300 *lybska* mark (SDHK-nr: 26097).

There are some privileges that have been enjoyed in Malmö where the town of Skive got permission to not pay toll when in Malmö or Skanör (SDHK-nr: 41099). Furthermore, Malmö had a privilege to people from other towns when arriving with their goods in Malmö or traveling between Malmö and Lund, or other Scanian towns, they did not need to pay tolls (SDHK-nr:4459). It is uncertain whether this only referred to foreign merchants or domestic ones as well.

The injustices made by the Hanseatic league towards Danish citizens mainly consist of thievery and political actions. There are two cases where citizens from Lübeck stole property from citizens of Malmö (SDHK-nr: 4625; 7750). There is also one case of inhabitants from Malmö having their ship wrongfully seized in Rostock (SDHK-nr: 8631). Furthermore, a likely political action by Lübeck against people of Malmö was when they continuously seized

herring arriving in Lübeck (see 3.4.3 *Hanseatic presence*). This took place soon after the castles have been returned from Hanseatic control to Danish and around the time in which Albrekt of Mecklenburg is being held captured by Queen Margrethe I. It is therefore possible that this action has been in a protest, both against the holding of Albrekt of Mecklenburg but also the new tolls and injustices against the Hanseatic league after the return of the castles in Scania.

Another example of an injustice is when a group of merchants complained to their *fogde* in Skanör-Falsterbo about higher demands and tolls. In this specific case, foreign merchants residing in Malmö, also made their way to Falsterbo to complain about it (SDHK-nr: 8370). Another example is when the Hanseatic council representative asked the archbishop in Lund to release the Hanseatic merchants in Malmö (SDHK-nr: 43472). A second one is when the Hanseatic league complained about higher tolls which conflicted with the freedoms and privileges enjoyed not only by them but also by the inhabitants of Malmö (SDHK-nr: 3845).

3.3 Urban landscape

3.3.1 Market and fishing

The medieval square in Malmö has been located between today's Kansligatan in the west and around Kattsundsgatan in the east (Rosborn 1984, p. 41). It has therefore been located by Östergatan and partially on Adelgatan (fig. 18). The medieval square is said to be an extension of Adelgatan and according to tax lists, the highest taxpayers are said to have lived along the southern parts of the square. However on the northern side, the taxpayers would have been below middle class (Rosborn 1984, p. 10).



Figure 18. The Tunnel complex on Adelgatan, the oldest standing building construction in Malmö, which would have hosted stalls.

Buildings such as Rostockergård, which would have belonged to merchants from Rostock, a Danish company house, a Stettin owned building or different guilds also speak of the market and trade that took place in Malmö (Rosborn 1984. p. 25). Here it shows an international trade taking place in the town which further proves the importance of Malmö as a market- and coastal town. Other shops, likely owned by the local population, are also present.



Figure 19. Krämarekapellet in St Petri.

In the block Liljan, located so that its northern edge falls on Västergatan, clay-lined pits have been found. Eighty of these pits were found and can be dated to the late 12th century, as well as the 13th century. The high number of clay-lined pits, and their connection to fishing should therefore indicate the importance of fishing in Malmö as well. Something to note here is that that some of the pits have had wooden lids over them, Ersgård's hypothesis is that these should incline to a will to protect them from being filled up by sand (Ersgård 2006. pp. 48). Osteologist Anna Cardell also identified fish bones and scales from a large number of pits (not specified how many), the fish

material tends to mainly be represented by herring (Ersgård 2006. pp. 48). This should, in my opinion, further show the importance of fishing and especially the fishing of herring in the medieval coastal towns of Scania. The collection of clay-lined pits should indicate the beginning of an urban identity with fishermen creating a community.

The guild in Malmö existed already in 1256 but exactly when it was founded is unknown. It is, however, one out of few which survived the reformation as the guilds were connected to saint cults (Weibull 1956. p. 32). There are multiple mentions of craft guilds as well (see *appendix F*). The guilds that appear are a tailor-, shoemaker-, ropemaker-, flayer-, baker- and smith guild. Due to the *Krämarekapell* in St Petri (fig. 19), we also know that there has been a peddler- or shopkeeper guild.

3.3.2 Church



Figure 20. The oldest staircase in Malmö.

Malmö's town church is called St Petri and is located just outside the modern main square. It is a gothic church built in the early 14th century. The oldest mention of the current church is from 1386, but the oldest parts of the church can be dated to the beginning of the century. This makes the church, together with the tunnel complex on Adelgatan, the oldest building structures in the city. The staircase leading up to above the choir is considered the oldest in Malmö (fig. 20). Multiple changes have been made to the church throughout history, and it is therefore a mixture of ideals from different centuries (Rosborn 1984, p. 20).

One of the medieval chapels in St. Petri survived the reformation. *Krämarkapellet* (the *Krämare* chapel) was owned by one of the richest guilds in Malmö and most likely built in the late 15th century (Rosborn 2016, pp. 155). The chapel is still richly decorated and holds many gravestones over the floor. Although made in the late Middle Ages, this chapel acts as a representation for how the different churches in

building, the Thottska house and the tunnel complex (fig. 18). The complex is also the oldest still standing structure in Malmö, this is dated to late 13th, early 14th century (Rosborn 2016. p. 330). Jörgen Kock's house is located on Västergatan, the Thottska house on Östergatan and the tunnel complex on Adelgatan.

The earliest source mentioning a street is from 1392 (SDHK-nr: 14074) and refers to Adelgatan, which is also the most frequently mentioned one (SDHK-nr: 2206; 41279; 41292; 42708; 42743). Multiple sources also mention plots or stalls on the street. The next mention of a street is Västergatan (SDHK-nr: 18097). This source also mentions a plot and is the only source referencing to said street. While Östergatan is not referenced, Österport is (SDHK-nr: 41345). Österport which would have been the eastern entrance to the city has been located by what today is Drottningtorget. Both Södergatan and *Söndre port* are mentioned together with plots. The southern gate would have been located at first around Baltazargatan – Skomakargatan and later near the beginning of Gustav Adolfs torg (SDHK-nr: 28391; 45110). The medieval town hall would have been located north of St Petri, along Östergatan. It was a relatively small two-story building and had thick walls. (Rosborn 1984. pp. 21). Other streets have also been mentioned (*appendix B*).

3.3.5 Harbor

Malmö has no natural harbor, instead the ships have docked out at sea by a bridge, known as *Färjebron* (Rosborn 1984. p. 40). Manufactured stone islands or cairns have lined the bridge for the ships to dock and around the 3-meter depth, a few kilometers out at sea, more of these cairns can be seen for the deeper ships. Three of the cairns by the old bridge were still visible on a map from 1811 (Rosborn 1984. p. 39). These three are now underneath what became the area for the harbor. There are however sources mentioning boats docking in other harbors around Malmö, many of which now are included in the town, to avoid paying the tolls (Rosborn 1894. pp. 37). This was common enough for it to become outlawed. *Färjebron* was located by what today is *Mälarbron*, northeast of Frans Suellsgatan (fig. 21).

3.4 Power actors

3.4.1 Royal presence

Just as with Skanör-Falsterbo, the royal presence is the clearest in the existence of the castle. The previous mention of *fogdar* should tell of a royal presence. However, as we do not know

much of the early castle it is not possible to fully tell anything about it. Still, as it is mentioned in correlation to royal representation, it will still act as a clear sign of a royal presence in Malmö during the Middle Ages (see *appendix C*). The royal presence is also seen in the imposing of taxes, tolls and laws. The crown is therefore seen as a clear political actor in Malmö.

3.4.2 Churchly presence

Mentions of a churchly presence in Malmö are many. Some of them include deans or canons mentioning churchly institutions in their wills (SDHK-nr: 894; 1061). Preachers are also mentioned frequently for different reasons, such as purchasing stalls or being allowed to take alms (SDHK-nr: 1631; 1700; 3939). For further examples of letters and documents regarding the churchly presence, see *appendix D*. The church does still appear as a present actor in the town.

3.4.3 Hanseatic presence

The first mention of the Hansa in Malmö is in 1329 when German merchants are said to sail to Ellenboghén (Malmö) (SDHK-nr: 3626). The same year the German merchants are also said to have a guild in Malmö (SDHK-nr: 3625). One of the most common written sources regarding the Hanseatic presence includes conflicts with their privileges, such as high taxes and tolls being taken. One of these mention the high taxes going against the local merchants as well and that the Germans sometimes stay in Malmö over the winter (SDHK-nr: 3845; 10654; 43474). Other such conflicts also include when the Danish *fogde* and king took two silver mark per ship, something the German merchants in Malmö went to Falsterbo to complain about (SDHK-nr: 8370). But also, when the mayor and citizens of Malmö forbade the German merchants from residing in Malmö with their goods after St Dionysius day (SDHK-nr: 43398).

There are also many occasions in which Hanseatic towns have seized *läster* (old measuring unit for volume, how much it corresponds to differs) of herring. One includes Rostock returning four *läster* of herring (SDHK-nr: 8294). In 1394, there are six sources mentioning herring belonging to citizens of Malmö having been seized by Lübeck and the council in Malmö demanding them to be given back. Around nineteen *läster* are mentioned to have been seized in that year alone (SDHK-nr: 44342; 44371; 44387; 44348; 44354; 44354). The same year, the council in Malmö sends four confirmations that herring being sent to Lübeck by

citizens of Malmö is salted by the citizens who are sending them (SDHK-nr: 44341; 44343; 44369; 44370).

In 1366, two citizens of Malmö, and two from Lund confirm to the mayor and council in Lübeck that a Ebbe Ebbesson has not been present in Scania or Denmark during the war between the Danish king and Lübeck and therefore has not committed any crimes against Lübeck (SDHK-nr: 8822). His coffins have therefore been wrongfully seized by the council. Another mention of war which relates to the Hansa and Malmö is in 1512 when six Wendic towns write the Swedish council to ask for understanding of the peace work which was established in Malmö (SDHK-nr: 37194). The Hansa is therefore a clear political actor in Malmö which has come to affect the population of Malmö as well.

3.4.4 Local population

By 1570, Malmö had a population of 3577, but by 1610, it had shrunk to 3192. In 1650, forty years later, the number was down to 2504 inhabitants. Meaning that during these eighty years, the population shrank by 1073 people, or 30%. However, by 1690, the population was up to 5740 inhabitants. It should be noted that we see a demise in the population by 1730, when the population is down to 3132 people, before rising again and by 1810 it had reached 6390 inhabitants. The decline between 1690-1730 should most likely be credited to the plague that hit Sweden between 1710-1713 (Nilsson 1996. p. 31)

Many sources mention the local population in Malmö for different reasons. The most common reason for a citizen of Malmö to be mentioned is the transference of property. These often mention the individuals as *borgare* (see *appendix F*). Other common transfereces of property are those related to pawning properties or inheritances (ex. SDHK-nr: 5828; 7101; 8783). There are also instances where property is being gifted to someone as an insurance, such as when mayor Anders Petersson gifted the property which he lived on to his wife Ingegerd Jönsdotter and therefore his heirs also lost their inheritances (SDHK-nr: 11921). Multiple sources like these mention foreign citizens living in Malmö (ex. SDHK-nr: 8018; 9753; 39749). Others of interest are those where professions are mentioned. These include mentions of blacksmiths, goldsmiths, shoemakers, bakers, *fogdar*, shopkeeper and coin master (SDHK-nr: 11572; 15094; 17542; 24734; 24870; 33428; 41527; 42708; 38676). For more examples, see *appendix F*.

In the Block Liljan, it is possible to see the local population and the evolution of the town (Larsson & Balic 2006). In the early Middle Ages, the block was used for a seasonal market, where fishing was the main activity. During the 13th century, it became a permanent settlement. During the early 14th century, tanning and animal husbandry can be seen to have taken place at the site, which points to a change in activity and a more urban lifestyle. During the mid-14th century, the tanning craft stopped but the husbandry continued, houses were built in the block instead. Later these became merchant plots, with no signs of husbandry or craftsmanship and before the end of the century a stone house was built on the block. From the 15th century onwards, it appears as if the higher social classes have resided there. Different practice bundles and the development of the town can therefore be seen clearly in Liljan.

Sources mentioning guilds are also present. The guilds mentioned are the ones of the rope makers, flayers, bakers, tailors, smiths and shoemakers (SDHK-nr: 17871; 21143; 21436; 21872; 21965; 25778). These guilds should be seen as a clear indicator of the urban identity.

Lastly a property known as Skagemands ladugård should be discussed. The property is mentioned in no less than 25 sources, the first in 1352, and the last in 1414 (See *appendix G*). In 1365 a man named Henrik Skaghen is mentioned to have previously owned the plot. From 1397 to 1399, there is a legal dispute surrounding the plot where the king demands it to be handed over to a member of the Rosencrantz family. In 1401, parts of the property were given to Queen Margrethe I. In most mentions of the plot, however, different citizens either sell or pawn their share of the plot.

3.5 Economy

Malmö developed into a town whose citizens and residents spanned the entire socio-economic ladder. Around Färjeporten and by Österport the highest taxpayers resided, the same was true for the southern parts of the main square. Around Söderport and Västerport the middleclass lived, and by the northern side of the square, it was those below middleclass (Rosborn 1984. p. 10).

Although there is a tendency for socio-economic groups to cluster in specific neighborhoods, archaeological excavations show also that the occupation of specific urban plots could have shifted rather dramatically in the course of several generations. In Liljan these shifts are possible to be seen (Larsson & Balic 2006. p. 123-146). In the start of the Middle Ages, the block is inhabited by fishermen. During the 13th century there is instead a tanning activity,

followed by merchants and the burghers. This was then followed by the upper class, including a knight, before going back to a merchant activity (Thomasson 2006. p. 177-179). In modern times, the people inhabiting the block consisted of soldiers and later, during industrialism, the working class. This shows a clear indicator of different classes and incomes being present in the town and the ever-changing character of it. It therefore shows a greater variety of people than in an agrarian environment.

The castle Myntergården is built in 1434 and was used for coinage (Rosborn 1984. p. 37). While being the coin master, Jörgen Kock resided here. However, the castle was replaced by Malmöhus castle about 100 years later. Although the actual castle only stood for roughly 100 years, the coinage does tell of the economy of Malmö as a minting town.

When it comes to import and export with other towns, Lübeck was the most prominent town. In 1398-1400 there was an average of 220 trips per year from Malmö to Lübeck and from Lübeck to Malmö it was an average of 140 yearly trips (Weibull 1966. p. 77). The average yearly import of products from Malmö to Lübeck in 1398-1400 was valued at 43 675 mark (Weibull 1966. p. 77). During the same period, a total of 82 567 ¼ barrels of Herring was exported from Malmö to Lübeck (Weibull 1966. p. 77). In 1399, the total of Lübeck's trade wrap in Malmö was valued at 60 000 mark, the next year it was down at 49 500 mark (Weibull. 1966. p. 118). The same two years the import from Malmö to Lübeck was valued at 44 000 mark and 33 500 mark respectively (Weibull 1966. p. 118). This shows a clear decline in the trade between the two towns.

3.6 Environment

Although Malmö has not had any natural harbor, the fact that there are not as many reefs along the coast has caused less dangers when navigating the coast and therefore not been as much of an issue as in Skanör-Falsterbo. Furthermore, there are multiple ways to get to Malmö by land, depending on from which direction you travel. This in turn means that it has been possible to dock near Lomma or one of the many harbors that are today a part of the city of Malmö, such as Limhamn. It should however be noted that using some of these harbors has been illegal historically and therefore not as commonly used (Rosborn 1894. pp. 37).

Malmö's proximity to Copenhagen should also be considered as it has been profitable when keeping a relationship with the crown and capital. Due to the proximity, it would have been easy to keep a trade between the two cities. It would likely also be an advantage for its

connection with the Hanseatic towns as it would have been closer to the continent. Its close connection to Lund would also be beneficial as it brings a closer connection to the ecclesiastical power.

As with Skanör-Falsterbo, the water outside Malmö's coast has been herring-rich and therefore fishing has been common. The proximity to forests and therefore timber would also have been advantageous and so has the fertile land surrounding the town been. Furthermore, as it is easy to get to from land, it would have been easier to transport stone and other material needed.

4.0 Åhus

4.1 Emergence

In 1252, Åhus is mentioned in a letter for the first time (SDHK-nr: 667). In it, it is said that King Kristoffer of Denmark has made the citizens there exempt from paying a number of taxes and tolls due to leprosy at the hospital in Åhus. Due to the mention of a hospital, we must assume that the medieval town has already existed for a while by then. Furthermore, the church in Åhus can be dated back to the middle of the 12th century (Rosenberg 1984, p. 45). Considering these factors and that there has been an ongoing market since the Viking Age, I will discuss Åhus as a town from the late 11th to early 12th century. This is therefore the oldest of the towns discussed in this study.

4.2 Legal terminology and definitions

In letters relating to a royal presence, Åhus is often mentioned with the word *villanos*. This would be the Latin word for villagers. This word can be seen in King Valdemar's letters from 1326 and 1327, King Magnus letter from 1344 and King Valdemar's letter from 1361 (SDHK-nr: 3418; 3494; 3500; 5043; 7913). Although four of these letters discuss town privileges and the people should most likely be considered town citizens instead of villagers, it still brings up an important aspect of how Åhus and its' inhabitants have been seen.

While discussing Åhus in the ecclesiastical letters, the town is usually mentioned only by its name. It does, however, happen that it is referred to as *town* or *staden* (SDHK-nr: 33745). From this, it can be assumed that the churchly power acknowledged Åhus as a town, separate from its market, as well as an actual town.

The people of Åhus are sometimes referred to as villagers, however they do also appear as citizens. While there are mentions of mayors and council men, some are also referred to together with their professions, such as tailor, skipper or goldsmith (SDHK-nr: 23779; 30065). However, what appears more frequently than in the other towns, are references to priests and priors (SDHK-nr: 6106; 12715; 27425). This points to the power and importance the church had in the town.

The urban identity is not as clear in Åhus as it is in Malmö in the written sources. While we do have mentions of different trades, such as goldsmith, tailor, and priest, we also have mentions of *allmogen* in Åhus, or the *peasants*, meaning that the agrarian society is present as well when discussing Åhus (SDHK-nr: 39176). However, of the archaeological material and historical landscape, the city wall becomes a clear sign of urbanity and urban identity since it was one of the strongest criteria for a town during the Middle Ages.

Out of the laws and regulations mentioned in the written sources, only two mention Åhus (SDHK-nr: 4043; 1849). In one of them, it is said that no one is allowed to commit any crimes or injustices against the *Åhusmannafit*, the *fit* belonging to Åhus. The second gives citizens of Åhus the right to tow their wreckages.

4.3 Urban landscape

4.3.1 Market and fishing

A market in Åhus is known from the Viking Age, and every Mary Magdalene day one would be held (Rosenberg 1984. p. 60; Skre 2008. p. 346). The old market area is believed to have been located by the town square, at the same location as it is located today (Rosenberg 1984, p. 14). Although it is thought to have stretched a bit further west. However, it should be noted that the earliest market was not located within the medieval town, but moved there towards the end of the Viking Age and beginning of the Middle Ages.

The market would most likely have centered around herring-fishing, similarly to Skanör-Falsterbo. This can also be seen in the clay-lined pits that have been found about 350 meters from the square (Rosenberg 1984, pp. 56, 61-62). These pits seem to have been in use during the 14th century as well, something that differs from most other locations, although Ersgård does date the ones on the Falsterbo-peninsula to the same period.

4.3.2 Church



Figure 22. S:ta Maria in Åhus. Seen from southeast.

The church in Åhus is called St:a Maria and is located right by the square, behind the town hall. It is a large Romanesque church, built in the 12th century, with murals painting the walls and ceiling (Rosenberg 1984, pp. 45; fig. 22). As it is located by the square, its' location can be tied to the town churches of Skanör and Falsterbo that are both located by their medieval squares as well. Its' proximity to the town hall can also be seen as a connection. However, as the town square here is thought to be the same as the old market, it should be seen as a difference as the churches in Skanör and Falsterbo were not located by the market.

4.3.3 Castle

The castle, by the name Aoshus, is located about a ten-minute walk from the town square. The castle is situated upon a hill and holds a view over the harbor. From there you are also able to see the church. Due to its' location, sailors approaching the town would have spotted Aoshus before they would have seen the rest of the town. It also gave an opportunity to control the harbor. Through its' placement in relation to the town, it would also distance itself from the townspeople (Rosenberg 1984, p. 44).

The castle is estimated to have been built in the mid-12th century on behalf of archbishop Eskil. Today, only part of the building remains after it was destroyed in 1569 (fig. 23). It was first mentioned in 1262 when it got destroyed for the first time. The building's oldest parts can be seen in a main building, a tower and a hall building. These would have all been built in natural stone, however, during its' restoration, brick would have been used. Today, the ground floor and part of the second floor remain. A bailey would have also enclosed a courtyard by the main building's northern side (Rosenberg 1984, p. 44).



Figure 23. Part of the castle ruins in Åhus.

A larger hill is situated north of the castle ruins and according to Rosenberg, it is likely that this hides the economy buildings that would have belonged to the castle (Rosenberg 1984, p. 44). This is also a hypothesis that I agree with based on my own observations. The hill looks unnatural in its' environment and its' size and proximity to the castle should be noted. Rosenberg further strengthens his point by stressing that the castle was buried underneath a similar hill before excavation, after having been covered by aeolian sand.

4.3.4 Street network, square and town hall

The town hall was first mentioned in 1431 and is the same building as stands today (Rosenberg 1984. p. 46). The oldest part of the town hall is the middle part, which was dated to the 14th century, possibly the first half, in the 1970's. The town hall is in the northern part of the town square, directly south of the church.

The square is thought to be the same as today, albeit it would have stretched further to the west. The block Greta would therefore likely not have existed (fig. 24). It is, however, first mentioned in 1476 (Rosenberg. 1984. p. 14) Nonetheless, it is in the 13th century that it is thought to have gained its rectangular shape. It would be limited to the north by the church. No indications exist of further squares.

Not much is known about the medieval street network. It is thought that the town would have had a triangular shape, surrounded by a town wall. The town would then have spanned about 750 meters along the river and 650 meters to the north (Rosenberg 1984. p. 47, 55) Looking at the maps, it is also clear that, although changes have been made, many of the streets around the square, leading towards Köpmannagatan, Vallgatan, Yngsjövägen and the harbor seem to be the same.

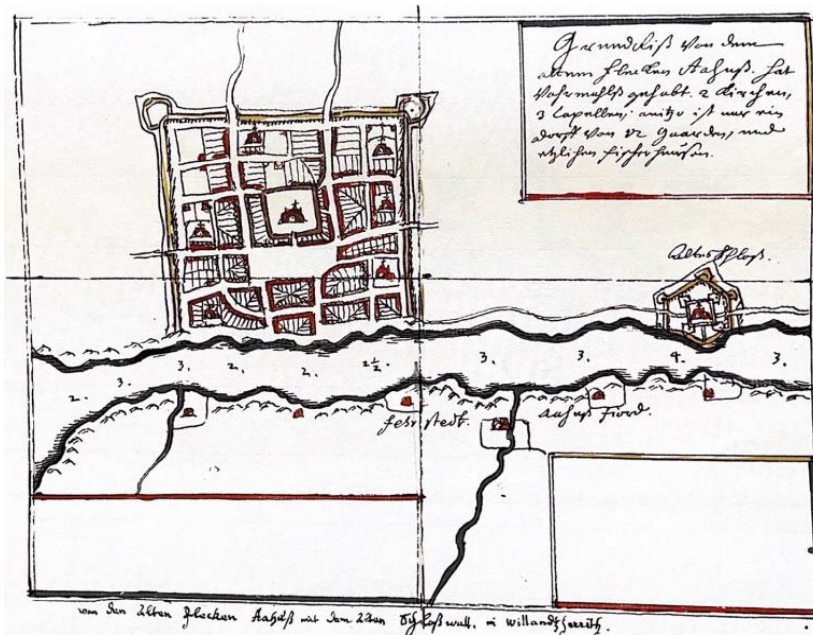


Figure 24. Map over Åhus, ca. 1650

4.3.5 Harbor

Although Åhus is not in direct contact with the coast but instead located close to it, it still has direct access to the ocean through the river Helgeå. The river would not only have made it easier to protect the town, but also to tax incoming merchants.

Furthermore, the river has

led to the town having a natural harbor (Rosenberg 1984. pp. 13). This in turn would have been beneficial for the market in the town, both during the Middle Ages but also during the iron age when the town first started to emerge.

As the harbor has made it easier for merchants to transport their goods to the town, this has also likely been a factor in the town's long lifespan. Even after the town's decline, it has continued to act as a port for Kristianstad. This should indicate the importance of the harbor, and especially a natural harbor.

4.4 Power actors

4.4.1 Royal presence

The royal presence in Åhus can be seen in a few different ways. If we are to connect it to the material aspects discussed in previous chapters, it would be that after the destruction of the castle in 1262 it fell into the hands of the king, before being returned to the church in 1276 (Rosenberg 1984. p. 44). It would also be the mentioning of *fogdar* on *Åhus gård*, the old Dominican convent (Rosenberg 1984, p.45). The written sources do entail a bigger story (see *appendix C*). Åhus is also mentioned in letters regarding war time, involving Sweden, Norway, Denmark, and the Hanseatic league.

4.4.2 Churchly presence

The presence of the church in Åhus is clearly seen in the urban landscape and in the presence of Aoshus and the archbishop. However, the written sources do also mention the ecclesiastical presence. These presences are, however, mainly connected to wills and therefore not a direct presence in the town (see *appendix D*). The church is the institution that appears to have been the strongest actor within Åhus. Different representatives of the church would also be a part of the local population.

4.4.3 Hanseatic presence

The Hanseatic league is not very present in Åhus, however that does not mean that they cannot be seen at all. In 1370, a letter with a peace offering between the Hanseatic towns and King Valdemar, with the Danish kingdom's council, included the mention of Captain Torkel Nilsson from Åhus (SDHK-nr: 9787). Captain Nilsson is mentioned here as a member of the council. The peace offer was never ratified by King Valdemar and therefore ended up staying in Stralsund, although it was written in Stavern.

The Hanseatic league can once again be seen in Åhus in 1523 (SDHK-nr: 40611). In a letter from Bernt van Mälen about a meeting that will be held in Åhus where the duke of Holstein, as well as the Swedish-, Danish- and Åhus' councils will attend. This meeting would be held on St John's Day and would intel who should rule over Scania and Halland. Other letters also discuss this matter, all from May 1523 (SDHK-nr: 40613, 40617).

Lastly, there are other mentions of Åhus and Hanseatic towns, although these are usually about inhabitants of Åhus (SDHK-nr: 7383, 9318). In these letters, it is more common that the matters discussed are about testaments or that a citizen of Åhus is testifying in, for example Lübeck. This shows that Åhus should not be seen as an important town for the Hansa, however it should be considered a militarily important town for the Danish kingdom.

4.4.4 Local population

By 1570, Åhus had a population of 234 people. Forty years later, in 1610, the population was down to 132 inhabitants. Later statistics are not available. In those forty years, Åhus' population shrank by 102 people, or 44% (Nilsson 1996. p.32). As no more data is available, it is not possible to say when the population started to rise again.

In the written material, a few individuals are mentioned. In 1351 and 1459 the priests Tideman Tidemansson and Lage Påvelsson are mentioned (SDHK-nr: 6106; 27425). A Hans Klawesson (Klausson) is mentioned as the mayor in Åhus in 1472 and in a letter from 1516, a mister Anders Mattsson is mentioned (SDHK-nr: 29349; 37817). His position or profession is not explained. Lastly, in 1357, 1358 and 1368 a will is discussed (SDHK-nr: 7224; 7383; 9318). In this, different people are mentioned, Tideke van Wander's daughter (unnamed), a Cecilia Grote and possibly a Hinrik van Wanden. These seem to be citizens of Lübeck living in Åhus.

Near the square, in the block Carl XI, there have been archaeological evidence found pointing towards craftsmanship. The different crafts that have been active in the block, appear to be metal-, bone-, and textile crafts (Pettersson & Larsson 2024). There have also been signs of metal craft around the block Gladan (Ohlsson & Nilsson 2013. pp. 14). Other finds of crafts in Åhus have been sparse (Rosenberg 1984. p. 64). The ones that we do see indicate practice bundles, suggesting the local population's part in structuring the town. There have however been imported ceramics found in the town, such as Baltic ware (Ohlsson & Nilsson 2013. p. 14). These should point towards urban consumption and lifestyle, as well as practice bundles.

4.5 Environment

Åhus' location by the river Helgeå has been advantageous due to its access to the ocean and a natural harbor. The river has also acted as a form of defense. Water access has also been beneficial due to the eel- and herring-rich water. The river, natural harbor and marine animals have all contributed to the market's rise, as early as the Viking age. However, its location is also a hinderance as it is not close to Copenhagen, or any other bigger Danish towns, nor has it been a location where the Hanseatic league has traveled to. That in turn, has likely impacted on the decline of the market and town.

Another important aspect is the aeolian sand in the area. The sand tends to be present in the topsoil during excavations and the ruins of Aoshus have been covered by it. While excavating, the aeolian sand has also been able to be seen in culture layers dating back to the 14th century. There are also mentions of a sandstorm in 1591 which blocked the road to the town and threatened both the town and harbor (Ekologgruppen 1985. p. 6). This sandstorm would have happened around the same time as Falsterbo was moved due to issues with the aeolian sand.

During an excavation of Aoshus in 2010, a dendrochronological study was made on a piece of wood which turned out to belong to a beech tree which commonly grows on the Scanian horsts, such as Linderödåsen, which runs south of Åhus (Lilja, Wallin & Linderson 2010. p. 16). While the nature reserve Äspet is located right next to Åhus, it is not certain it has been forested. The current forest has been planted from the 18th century to keep the sand at bay (Ekologgruppen 1985. pp. 6).

4.6 Decline

The decline of Åhus is commonly attributed to the reformation (Rosenberg 1984. p. 65). Although being important due to its market and location, it is still visible that the church has played a large role in the town's life. As Aoshus castle belonged to the bishop, it is also he who would have had the control over the imports coming to the town. Furthermore, after the reformation and the Scanian wars, King Kristian IV founded a new town, Kristianstad. While this was mainly a response to the town of Vä being destroyed in battle, both Vä and Åhus lost their privileges and titles to benefit the newly founded town. It is therefore by 1617 that Åhus lost its' status as a town (Rosenberg 1984. p. 8).

5.0 Discussion

The different aspects of urban theory include the presence of institutions, a market, a landscape that differs from an agrarian setting, and townspeople. The townspeople will have an urban identity which appears different from that of an agrarian identity. This would have been reflected in both the sense of community, the connection to foreign merchants, and the different crafts. The different aspects of urbanity will therefore be discussed here to compare how they appear within Skanör-Falsterbo compared to Malmö and Åhus.

Furthermore, the different factors that have been identified – environment, legality, politics, economy, and demography, as well as agency – will be discussed to see how they differ between the towns and correlate to one another and thereby create socio-ecological-systems which in turn might have initiated a decline in the towns. The main focus here will therefore be to appear the urbanity and urbanization, together with economy, environment, politics and demographics. The economic and political aspects are directly affected by the different actors' actions in the towns, whereas the environment will first and foremost be natural but has come to interact with the actors. The demographics is in turn a way to view the different possible

communities which might have existed and how these have come to be influenced by different factors. Urbanity and urbanization will be directly influenced by the criteria laid forward in urban theory to understand a town.

5.1 Urbanity, urbanization and urban identity

When studying the written sources regarding the royal presence, Malmö is referred to as a town. This should point to Malmö being seen as separate from the market. While a market exists and is important for the town, it is not necessarily the only thing to make it a town. Åhus is at one point referred to as a market town, otherwise it tends to be mentioned only by its name. In Skanör-Falsterbo it is instead the market that tends to be mentioned, as opposed to the towns. This appears to indicate a distinction between the settlements/towns and the market where it is the market that is important.

Both the Hanseatic and the ecclesiastical sources mention Malmö the same way as the royal sources. The one difference is that the Hanseatic sources sometimes refer to Malmö as *Ellenboghen* instead (SDHK-nr: 3626). For Åhus, the ecclesiastical sources refer to the town mostly by name alone. They do, however, still refer to the town as *staden* as well, something that reflects the importance Åhus had for the church with the castle being inhabited by the archbishop (SDHK-nr: 33745). The Hanseatic league, however, does not mention Åhus often and when it does, it is by name alone. For Skanör-Falsterbo, the ecclesiastical sources mention the towns by their names. The Hanseatic presence, however, refers to the towns by their market instead. This should indicate that the church did not care much about the market, whereas the Hansa did not care much about the actual towns.

The local population is more visible in historical sources regarding Malmö than in the other towns, this in turn might point more towards an established urban identity where the individuals are more likely to take part in aspects related to urbanity, such as selling and pawning property, be in close connection to an international market or take active part in councils. The inhabitants are usually referred to as *borgare* from the earliest letters and onwards (Weibull 1901. p. 2). It is also not uncommon for them to be referred to by their professions or even hold it as a surname. The fact that people had professions such as ropemaker, shoemaker, miller, smith, goldsmith, baker etc. points towards a society where not everyone is as self-efficient (*appendix F*). The many mentions of *fogdar*, council men and mayors also point to a fully developed medieval urban society.

The people of Åhus, on the other hand, are sometimes referred to as villagers, or even peasants. While there are mentions of mayors and council men, and professions, references to priests and priors are common (SDHK-nr: 6106; 12715; 27425). This is something which points to the power and importance the church had in the town.

While the inhabitants of Skanör-Falsterbo are legally defined and seen as townspeople, the same way as those in Malmö and Åhus, there is still a difference in how the towns have been seen and possibly in the professions practiced in the towns. Looking at Malmö, we see a clear presence of the local population involved in a range of economic decisions and activities, they are selling, buying and pawning stalls, and they seem to actively sell their products, not only locally but also on the international market. Trades that are commonly seen in urban settings are rarely mentioned in the documents describing the local population on the peninsula. They are, however, described as actors and decision-makers, selling and purchasing stalls between each other.

The urban identity among the inhabitants themselves can be seen across all four towns. The people of the towns have all referred to themselves as townspeople and therefore seem to have differentiated themselves from an agrarian identity and culture. While certain professions and titles, such as mayor, *fogde* and council men can be seen across all the different towns, there are still differences in how strong the identity might have been. Being a *borgare* might have been seen as better than being a farmer and therefore people preferred to refer to themselves as such since it gave them a higher status.

The medieval population is not too visible in the archaeological material of Falsterbo. While the market area and the different *fits* have been excavated, there is a lack in that of the local population due to the obstacles of the aeolian sand. The finds that have been found do however somewhat point towards the population's wealth and occupations.

In Falsterbo, the 2023 excavation (Sarnäs 2024) should indicate how the urban lifestyle should be possible to view. We can here see that the local population has been active in producing pottery and other ceramic vessels. It is also possible that the beads have been made by locals which should further point towards a craftsmanship in the town. The location near, or directly by the square might also point toward either a tavern, wealthy family or both. It should, however, in either case be considered a sign of an urban lifestyle.

For medieval Skanör, it is more difficult to find signs of the local population as they seem to have been more closely connected to the foreign merchants in how they have lived as they seem to have lived closer together. There are, however, names of streets that should be connected to professions, such as shoemakers and butchers. Furthermore, mentions of tavernas and potters should also be taken into consideration. The finds within mediaeval Skanör include ceramics, Danish coins, an axe, a thimble, a lead ampoule, and clothing seals (Sarnäs 2023a; 2023b). At least two of the clothing seals might be private stamps. This should indicate a Danish trade and a local participation of the market activities. Looking at the different street names, finds, professions and shops that are mentioned or present in the material, it is possible to see how the local population has led an urban life where they have participated in market activities and sold their goods, as well as shaped their surroundings.

I have chosen to discuss the towns from their emergences instead of their fully established urbanities. This has been done as with the emergence of a town, the factors which have been identified must also play a part. There must be a power play, an urban identity must be present, and the institutions and economy must also be there. Without these factors a town would not come into existence. This in turn, further question what a town is, and how we can define it.

When Skanör-Falsterbo lost their jurisdiction and their town privileges they had not acted as towns for a few centuries. It is my opinion that they cannot have been considered towns since, at least, the 17th century. When Lübeck, being the last Hanseatic presence in the towns, disappeared there are no longer any active signs of towns in neither Skanör nor Falsterbo. They may still have had town halls and mayors but there has been no active market, no royal presence and none of the other factors that Andrén (1980), Larsson (2006) or Carelli (2001) put forward as important for towns can be seen. While the three previously mentioned focus their studies on medieval towns, it should not be completely discarded that some of the aspects of towns would have continued into the post-medieval period. The market would still have been important and so should the variation in professions, the street networks and the royal presence have been. Therefore, the development of the towns and the urbanization would have stopped sometime before Lübeck left and the market disappeared completely.

Institutions, such as churches, castles, and markets have been present in all four towns. It is only in Åhus where guilds cannot be noted in the present material. The sources regarding guilds in Malmö show a development which stretches towards the late Middle Ages, in

Skanör and Falsterbo however, they do not seem to exist for as long. It is also only a St Knut's guild which has a clear presence in Skanör. However, by the mentioning of other professions, such as potters, it is possible that other guilds have existed. In Falsterbo, it is the tailors that show their presence, and it is possible that they would have had a guild of their own, however, that is not fully clear in the sources. As the guilds, besides the St Knut in Skanör, do not seem too present in the material it is possible that these have almost, or fully, disappeared with the market's disappearance.

The markets have been important in all four towns. For Åhus, the market has been present since the Iron Age but there are hardly any medieval sources mentioning it. The Hansa does not seem to be present in the town either. As these factors have been important for a medieval town, it is also possible these have acted as factors for the decline of the town. For Malmö, the market has continued to develop. After the Middle Ages, new squares were built, and the Hansa showed a clear presence up until the decline of the Hanseatic league.

For Skanör and Falsterbo, the market has been the main factor for the existence of the towns. It is also the Hansa which has helped keep urbanity going and has contributed to the urban landscape. The Hansa is also intricately connected to both the royal and ecclesiastical presence and have acted as bailiffs of the castles, something they have also done in Malmö. Furthermore, in Skanör and Falsterbo, the Hanseatic league has had their own fogdar, jurisdictions and jails etcetera. The urban aspect of the market has been fully dependent on the foreign merchants but as the Hanseatic league took monopoly over the town the demise seems to have begun.

Skanör and Falsterbo has had a greater variety of churches on the peninsula compared to the other towns, however only a few have belonged to the towns (*appendix A*). In both Malmö and Åhus, the churches have been directly connected to the towns and their parishes. It is also possible to see the decline of Skanör as a town when studying the church as a power actor and institution. The town church's unfinished expansion speaks of how the church no longer valued Skanör the same way as it used to. It is therefore, based on different factors such as economy, the loss of the market and thereby also a decline in the demography, that the church decided not to continue the expansion. St Olof therefore act as a reminder and a finalization of the market and town in Skanör, showcasing how the social-ecological-system has functioned. In Åhus, the church is also present for its decline in its strong connection to the church and

archbishop. It is after the reformation that the final destruction and abandonment of Aoshus happens.

For the castles, they portray both the emergence but also the decline of all towns but Malmö. In all four cases it is possible to see that the earliest castles are built with the emergence of the medieval towns. In Malmö this has then continued to evolve based on need, time, and development. The first castle ended up being replaced by Myntergården and then by Malmöhus castle. While not always having acted as a castle, Malmöhus has continued to evolve together with the town. It is therefore possible to see the importance of that specific institution and building in the town. For Skanör, Falsterbo and Åhus, the castles have turned into ruins. It is in all three cases noticeable that the castles are destroyed or abandoned around the decline of the towns. For Skanör-Falsterbo it is around 1425 and 1530 that the castles are abandoned and then turned into quarries (Ersgård 1984. p. 63, 65). This is also around the same time as the market has more or less disappeared from the towns.

Very little is known of the street network in Åhus, besides it likely having been similar to the present network. For Malmö, multiple streets are named, some still existing today with their medieval names. The town has a very clear structure, and the societal norms are visible through the network. Furthermore, the squares and market streets align well with the different groups of people, and it is possible to see where different professions have resided based on both street names and archaeological evidence.

For Skanör, quite a few streets are named, and the names of the streets do help understand the structure of the town somehow. However, there does not seem to be a clear distinction in where the local population and the foreign merchants have resided. The market is also not connected to the town square nor is it structurally connected to the street network, which distances and separates market and town. The same is true for Falsterbo, however, there are only a few streets mentioned, and it is not known where they have been located. It seems as if there has been some structure to the streets with different professions residing on, and activating different streets, there is also a clear distinction between where the locals and the foreign merchants lived.

5.2 Economy

When discussing the economy, it is important to note that while Skanör and Falsterbo were important and brought in a large sum during the market months, especially during the 13th-

and the first half of the 14th century, the sources available tend to be later than such. Malmö however, does both indicate its prime in the 14th century but also a decline in the 15th century. To fully understand a decline, both before and during must be discussed. This is something that is almost missing from the source material.

In Malmö, there has been a clear socio-economic difference in the spatial organization of the town (Rosborn 1984. p. 10). People have lived in specific areas based on their socio-economic status, meaning that poorer individuals have lived with each other and richer individuals have lived in another part of the town. This division is not visible in Skanör where less is known about the population and their economic conditions. Neither can it be seen in Falsterbo as not enough has been found of the medieval town. In Malmö, this could indicate a more established town where there has been a clear class division. It should however be noted that Skanör-Falsterbo has had a different logic when structuring the spatial organization due to the specific *fits* on the peninsula. There has also not been enough excavated of Falsterbo to fully say either or.

When looking at the customs accounts from Lübeck, it is possible to see that the average income from Malmö was 7028 mark greater than that of Skanör-Falsterbo (Weibull 1966. p. 77). As these accounts are from 1398-1400 it displays the end of the Scanian fair in Skanör-Falsterbo, still it shows a decline in the market. The customs accounts also show the decline in Skanör-Falsterbo in that Malmö is mentioned by itself in all documentation, however, Skanör-Falsterbo are often included in the Scanian fair instead. This in turn means that while we know the number of trips between Malmö and Lübeck and how much herring was imported from Malmö to Lübeck, this is information unknown when regarding Skanör and Falsterbo as we do not know which towns have done which trips (Weibull 1966. p. 77, 118).

The earliest source regarding Skanör-Falsterbo's economy is from 1333 (SDHK-nr: 3985). In this period, the market had started its move from Skanör to Falsterbo and had slowly started to decline. It is likely therefore the income had been 1252 mark, 5 *örtugar* and 22 Scanian pennies less than the expenditures. It is important to note that the period that this represents is an in-between period where the market's glory days have started to pass but the actual decline has not started yet. This sum is therefore of interest as it shows an earlier period than most sources but also due to it being a part of the urbanization process that would have started to slow down in Skanör but speed up in Falsterbo.

The majority of the other written sources mentioning the economy in Skanör-Falsterbo are regarding pawning part of the income from the market. All of these sources also mention Skanör and Falsterbo in connection to their market, further pinpointing the link between them. However, the sources also include mentions of custom accounts, such as one from 1377 and one from 1494 (Eriksson 1980. p. 47). These show a clear decline between the two years where 1377 exceeded 1494 by 1275 mark. Due to the connection between the towns and market, this economic decline should further indicate the disappearances of the towns as they would not be able to exist without the presence of the fish market.

While there are no evidence showcasing a clear socio-economic sectioning in neither Skanör nor Falsterbo, there is still archaeological evidence indicating the personal economy of the town citizens in Falsterbo. There have been nicer artefacts found by a house surrounding the probable location of the town square (Sarnäs 2024). The house in question was located north of the square. The upper class living by the northern side of the square would be contradictory to how the divide has appeared in Malmö. However, it is also possible that Falsterbo has not had a clear lower class as the population would not have been very large. The fishing would, however, have required different groups of people, including fishermen, merchants and laborers. It might also indicate that the more well-off citizens had lived by the square and the middle- or lower class lived further out from the square.

5.3 Demography

When studying demography there are a few aspects that can be noted. These will be explored and discussed further in this chapter.

Malmö has a greater population which resembles that of a town more than the other locations (Nilsson. 1996. pp. 30-32). This in turn should further act as a factor behind why Skanör-Falsterbo might not have been able to continue being considered towns. The towns' populations have likely caused a difference in how urbanity has been shown. There has also been a great difference in Skanör-Falsterbo's population depending on the time of the year which has led to the towns seeming like ghost towns for nine months every year. The number of plots in the towns towards the decline of the market should further indicate the small population and how that might have been perceived as surrounding villages would have been around the same sizes (Ersgård 1984. p. 12). Åhus faces a similar situation as the population there also has been considered small for a town by the time it lost its town privileges. Malmö,

on the other hand, has had a much larger population which would have reflected other Scandinavian urban settlements. The larger the population, the more possibilities of contacts are made available. This in turn creates an identity and communication which is more complex than those in agrarian settings (Roslund 2018. p. 29).

5.3.1. Warfare

A multitude of wars have occurred during the Middle Ages, in which Scanians changed nationality back and forth between Danish and Swedish. Inhabitants of towns have also taken part in wars and feuds. During the Count's feud (1534-1536), Malmö was known to have taken Kristian II's side, together with most of urban settlements and commoners in Scania (Skansjö 2000. pp. 145). The people of Skanör-Falsterbo and Åhus would likely have stood on the same side as well. However, the sources tell more of Malmö, where the citizens stormed the castle and took the *lensmann* prisoner. After which, Jörgen Kock, mayor in Malmö, had to beg for mercy to avoid execution and lost his position as mayor, although he regained his position a few years later (Meijer et.al. 1904-1926. p. 469).

As with war, soldiers are needed. It is to be assumed that property around the towns would have been destroyed, and citizens would have been conscripted during wartime. This in turn would have had an effect on the demography of the towns. For smaller populations, such as those in Skanör-Falsterbo, decreases in the population would have been clearly noticeable. A large decline of the population can be seen in both Skanör-Falsterbo and Malmö between 1570-1650 (Nilsson 1996. pp. 30) Something that should indicate the loss of citizens during wartime. Here both displacement and conscription should be taken into consideration.

5.3.2. Disease

In 1348 the Black Death hit Europe and resulted in more than half of the continents population dying (Myrdal 2003. p. 19). When looking at the beginning of the decline of Skanör-Falsterbo it can be seen that it begins around the time of the plague. The pandemic likely resulted in less merchants coming to the towns. Due to the small sizes of the two towns, they should be considered densely populated during the market months. This in turn would have resulted in Skanör-Falsterbo becoming a breeding ground for the disease which must have hit the towns hard.

Furthermore, the lack of agricultural land on the peninsula meant that grains and food had to be imported from surrounding villages. However, as the plague led to the agrarian crisis,

many farms would have been abandoned, which in turn would have led to a deficiency of crops in the towns (Myrdal 2003. p. 24, 245). This in turn would have resulted in an inability to provide the population and merchants with the food needed to sustain them. With Malmö having more cultivated land surrounding the town it would likely have been easier to find some form of reprieve. While the land around Åhus has not been as fertile as that around Malmö, they would still have been able to provide, at least, their population. Skanör-Falsterbo, which is more isolated, would likely have faced a greater challenge with this as much food already had to be imported.

The disease can also be seen in written material. While it does not mention the plague directly, there is a lack of written material from both Skanör, Falsterbo and Åhus during the years of the Black Death. Malmö, on the other hand still seem to continue, however, the Hanseatic league cannot be seen until 1356, unless discussing wills and heirs. This decline can also be seen in the rest of modern Sweden (Myrdal 2003. p. 24). This should likely be seen as a downfall in market activity in the towns where Malmö's market survived due to its larger local population.

5.4 Environment

Both Åhus and Skanör-Falsterbo have had issues related to aeolian sand. In all archaeological excavations in Falsterbo, and some in Skanör, the aeolian sand make out the topmost layer. In some cases, there is also a layer of aeolian sand between the different culture layers. In Falsterbo the sand became such a big obstacle that it was deemed easier to move the entire town, instead of bearing through it. It should however be noted that it was not until most of the market had left the area that the town was moved. This might have been related to some of the Hanseatic towns having their fits in more desirable areas. It was therefore first when the Hanseatic presence started to dwindle that the town was moved. It should be mentioned that Linné still noted the aeolian sand during his visit to Falsterbo (Linné 1977. p. 261). This might therefore have impacted both politics and economy.

In Åhus, it is first when looking at the ruins of Aoshus that the issue becomes obvious. After its abandonment, the castle ended up getting covered by the sand. When the archaeologists first came to excavate the castle, it was therefore a layer of aeolian sand which greeted them (Juhlin Alftberg 2010. p. 6). During the excavations the trenches were quickly filled again by the aeolian sand (Juhlin Alftberg 2010. pp. 10). This indicates the dangers and obstacles that

the aeolian sand presents. The hill next to the castle ruins is still made of aeolian sand. While this has likely not been as big of a problem in Åhus as on the Falsterbo peninsula, it should not be denied that it likely has created some hinderances in the lives of the citizens. It is likely that the sand made it onto the streets and therefore became an annoyance and something which regularly needed to be handled.

The aeolian sandstorm hitting Åhus in the 1590's and the burial of medieval Falsterbo in the late 16th- early 17th century is contemporary with other locations being largely affected by the sand and abandoned. One example of this is Kämpinge. The village started to decline from the mid-16th century due to an environmental crisis which ended up covering large parts of the village and church in aeolian sand. This ultimately leading to the abandonment of the church and decline of the village (Roslund 2025. p. 205). This in turn indicates an environmental crisis regarding aeolian sand around the mid- to late 16th century.

Malmö, on the other hand, has not had any known issues of aeolian sand and it does not seem as if the sand is present in the area of the medieval town. It has therefore not posed an obstacle for the citizens of Malmö. Therefore, there is a similarity between Skanör-Falsterbo and Åhus which should be taken into consideration. Both areas have had problems with aeolian sand and have also lost their town statuses. While it may not be the sole reason as to why the towns have declined, it should still act as a part of the discussion and a plausible factor to have played a part.

Following a period of warmer weather during the Middle Ages, there was a decrease in temperatures from the mid-14th century which lasted until the mid-19th century (Waldinger 2022. p. 2280). This in turn caused the herring to migrate from the Scanian coast. This would have caused a decline for the market which in turn caused the, by then, herring market to start disappearing. Furthermore, with the little Ice Age, the waters would also have become more difficult to navigate as the ice would have blocked the water ways for the international seafaring. It is also during the coldest period of the little Ice Age, the 17th century, in which the Hansa's presence in Skanör-Falsterbo stops completely (Eriksson 1980. p. 50). This must have caused economic difficulties for the towns and together with the environment, the economy should therefore create a social-ecological-system.

The topography should also be taken into consideration when discussing Skanör-Falsterbo. The Falsterbo peninsula is relatively isolated from the rest of the province and the sand reefs outside its' coast have made it difficult to navigate. The name Skanör comes from *Skathinwsjö*

which means *Skadans ö* or Island of Damage (Reisnert 2021. pp. 206). This is a name which spans back to the Iron Age and has later also become the name for all of Scandinavia.

Considering the long period of time people have actively crossed the reefs, and the fact that many of the German merchants would have passed by them going towards Malmö, the reefs and dangers surrounding them cannot be seen as a lone factor in why the merchants stopped coming to the peninsula. However, the closer they would have gotten to the peninsula, the higher the risks of running aground would become. It might therefore have been included amongst other factors which in turn would have led to the market's demise.

Being isolated from the rest of the country would also have posed hinderances as it would have been difficult to import products. Skanör-Falsterbo has an absence of some natural resources, including stone. This means that to build the churches and castles, all stone would have needed to be imported. The same goes for the clay needed for brick and the clay-lined pits. This would likely have been a tedious task as it would have needed to be transported relatively far, either by land or boat. Even if transported by boat, the ship would have needed to dock in Höllviken, which would still leave another seven kilometers of travel.

Both Malmö and Åhus have been located in a more reachable manner. Neither town is isolated from the rest of the province, which has made it easier to transport goods into the towns. Furthermore, Malmö is surrounded by fertile fields which would be able to provide the town with cereals. It is also close to woodland, such as the beech forest in Torup, although at the time beech would not have been the prominent tree. Åhus is also located close to forests and therefore has easy access to building materials. However, Skanör-Falsterbo would also have close access to timber, due to the peninsula being forested (Rydbeck 1935. p. 3).

While the lack of a natural harbor might have been an imposing factor for the decline of Skanör-Falsterbo, it should be noted that Malmö does not have a natural harbor either. Åhus, on the other hand, does. The lack of a harbor can, therefore, not necessarily be seen as a factor. Instead, other factors surrounding seafaring should likely play a part here as well. Likely the sand reefs have led to a lack of interest in solving the absence of a harbor in a similar manor to how they did it in Malmö. It is therefore a collection of topographical obstacles which have acted as factors.

We can see a clear difference in the topography between Malmö, Åhus and Skanör-Falsterbo. It should be noted that not all topographical obstacles should be lone factors for why Skanör-

Falsterbo declined. Neither should a lack of these obstacles point towards a town's stability in its status. For topography to become an obstacle, it needs to be a collection of factors surrounding the topography. The lack of a harbor, together with the reefs, has made it difficult to travel to the peninsula by sea. The isolation from the rest of the province has made it difficult to travel to the towns by land as well, and the lack of natural resources has made it costly, and time-consuming to build and expand the towns. Making the social-ecological-system visible in the demise.

5.5 Politics

5.5.1 Warfare

Multiple wars have broken out between Denmark and Sweden, but also between Denmark and the Hanseatic league. As a boarder province, this has resulted in Scania being forced to change nationality regularly. Due to the wars that have taken place in both Skanör-Falsterbo, Åhus and Malmö there have been political actions taken in which the decline of the towns is clear.

Wars are mainly present in Åhus in disputes between the church and the crown. It is therefore natural that the decline is related to the reformation as well. Malmö has a connection to both civil wars, wars between Denmark and other countries or the Hansa. For Skanör-Falsterbo, the wars present in the town are in general connected to the Hansa and market. This should be a sign of the political and economic importance of both Malmö and Skanör-Falsterbo for the Hansa, as well as Skanör-Falsterbo's unimportance for the crown. The decline is also clear when in the 14th century, having control of Falsterbo was deemed the same as having control of the province, but in the 16th century, it was Malmö that held that role.

5.5.2 Tolls and market

While town privileges can be seen in all four towns, it is only in Åhus where there are no privileges directly connected to a market. In Malmö, they do not appear in the same circumstances as they do in Skanör and Falsterbo. For Malmö, most of the sources mentioning privileges related to the market, besides the town privileges, are complaints regarding unfair taxes and tolls. In Skanör and Falsterbo, they are often connected to the Hanseatic towns and their *fits*. The letters regarding the *fits* on the peninsula span the majority of the market's life (*appendix E*). Due to the nature of *fits* and the political actions undertaken

to create them, in relation to the economic advantages, this becomes a significant aspect of the social-ecological-system in the towns.

Both Malmö and Åhus have been surrounded by city walls (fig. 21; 24). The entrances of these have likely acted as toll collection points. To enter the town with goods, the merchants would have needed to pay a toll. It would therefore have been important to have proper gates leading into the towns and to have these manned. For Skanör and Falsterbo they would have collected a toll by Ammerbron (Hommerberg 1952. p. 112). The existence of toll collection upon entry should indicate their statuses as market towns, and towns in general. Villages would not have been surrounded by walls, and it would not have been necessary to pay a toll upon entry.

Most tolls in Skanör and Falsterbo have been related to the foreign merchants while little focus has been put on the local population. In Malmö, the opposite seems to be true, although the foreign merchants are still present. For the two-thirds of tolls being utilized by the Hansa, both Skanör-Falsterbo and Malmö, together with other Scanian locations, have been affected. However, it has been more common that the income from Skanör-Falsterbo has been pawned, something that should indicate the large income from the market which would have resulted in debts being paid faster. The tolls should therefore be seen as a sign of both politics and the economy of the towns, but also of the environment where topography has been used with Ammerrännan. It is therefore a clear sign of the social-ecological-system in the town where politics, the economy and environment have correlated and been utilized together.

Although mainly related to the privileges, there have been some injustices that appeared on the markets in the towns. Most of the injustices, visible in the sources regarding Malmö and Skanör-Falsterbo, are injustices against the Hansa by Denmark. However, there are also cases where the Hansa have committed injustices against the locals.

Most of the injustices should be seen as political actions to be used either as an intimidation tactic or as a protest against something that is happening between the different parties. However, not all can be connected to a dispute or war, but the increasing of tolls and discrimination of sorts should still be considered political in its nature. Whether that is related to a dispute, economy, or a show of power, it is still an active political action made against a group of people.

Most of the complaints made by the Hansa are regarding higher taxes and tolls on the markets and between certain routes, mainly Malmö and Lund. These types of complaints are often mentioned in connection to Skanör and Falsterbo. The complaints of are often accompanied by complaints of assaults by the Danish *fogde* against the Hanseatic merchants. The majority, if not all, of the injustices against the Hanseatic league by Denmark should likely be seen as political acts. The injustices are therefore clear indicators of politics and the markets in the towns.

There are a few guilds that have existed in the towns. Åhus appears to be the only one of the discussed towns where there are no sources indicating a guild. This does not mean that there is no possibility of guilds being present. It is instead likely that craft guilds have existed in the town. In Skanör, Falsterbo and Malmö, there have been St Knut guilds. Neither the guild in Skanör nor Falsterbo survived the reformation. As guilds show the inhabitants actively taking part in the market and being political actors, they should be signs of a town. They should also be a sign of the politics and economy of the town.

As there is no mention of guilds in Åhus, there cannot be much said about it, however, the possibility of one or more existing should not be disregarded. For Skanör and Falsterbo, the decline of the towns should be seen in their loss of their St Knut guilds after the reformation. Furthermore, as Skanör used to be the central location for the guild, the disappearance of it should further signal that Skanör at this point had lost almost all of its status.

6.0 Conclusions

While studying Skanör and Falsterbo in comparison to Malmö and Åhus, it is clear to see that there are both similarities and differences between the town that prevailed and the ones that did not. Therefore, it is important to consider factors that have played a part in the decline.

From the legal standpoint, all settlements have received town privileges in the Middle Ages but Skanör-Falsterbo and Åhus were not always referred to as towns in official correspondence of the power actors, such as the royalty or the Hansa. The former are often referred to as 'markets' and the latter simply by its placename. Malmö, on the other hand, was in general always referred to as a town.

The character of economic activity conducted in the towns could have been a contributing factor in the development and decline. When studying the economy, the decline is clear,

however the economy faltering is a consequence of an already declining town and market. Malmö's medieval economy was versatile, based on the production and exchange of goods with the agrarian hinterlands, domestic and foreign merchants; it has stayed resilient and stable despite political and social upheavals. However, in Skanör and Falsterbo, the economy was closely connected with herring fisheries and fish trade, when fish stocks declined so did the market and the towns. Other economic activities recorded in historical and archaeological records were not sufficient to sustain urban development. Although the economy cannot be the only factor behind the decline, it has likely come to affect the towns. While something must have triggered the economy to falter, the economy would have triggered something in response. This would therefore have started a domino effect which would have resulted in a decline.

For the demography there is a clear difference between Skanör-Falsterbo, Åhus and Malmö. The number of inhabitants was far greater in Malmö than in the other towns. The number and types of institutions, workshops and enterprises was much greater in Malmö compared to other towns, and these created opportunities for employment for both skilled and unskilled workforce. This in turn would have resulted in different setbacks hitting the populations of Skanör-Falsterbo and Åhus harder. Furthermore, Malmö appears to have a clearer social structure, and groups of populations connected to urban production than the other towns. The plague and other diseases hitting the towns have also left their marks and the agrarian crisis would have resulted in a decline in crops being imported. The demography should therefore be seen as a contributing factor to the decline of the towns. However, it is still important to note that it must have acted together with other factors and not by itself. It should also not be ignored that the practice bundles found within both Skanör-Falsterbo and Åhus are clear signs of urban identity and the local population's participation in the market and structuring of the towns.

The environment seems to have been an important factor. Both Åhus and Malmö had an easy access to natural resources and foodstuffs and importing the resources has been fairly simple. For Skanör and Falsterbo, this was not the case. Their isolated location has led to importing resources, such as grain, stone and clay being a tedious and cumbersome task.

The aeolian sand is present both on the peninsula but also in Åhus. However, no such sand is present in Malmö, at least not to the same extent. As all archaeological excavations come upon a layer of aeolian sand before reaching the medieval layer, but also sometimes between

the culture layers in Falsterbo and Åhus, and sometimes in Skanör, this should indicate the obstacle the sand causes. The aeolian sand causing Falsterbo town to be moved should further prove this. Due to that, the aeolian sand is something all three towns which declined had in common. Therefore, the aeolian sand should be seen as an aspect behind the environmental factor.

One aspect of the environment which cannot be fully considered a factor for the decline of the towns would be the lack of a harbor. Although the lack of a harbor has likely contributed to the towns disappearing, it is still possible to see that Åhus declined although it had a natural harbor whereas Malmö prevailed besides the lack of one. This instead comes to show that the importance of a town has caused people to find solutions, such as in Malmö and Skanör-Falsterbo. They have anchored either at sea or at a nearby harbor. In Åhus, the existence of a harbor instead shows that it did not always matter for the town as the harbor ended up being used to unload goods which then continued on towards Kristianstad. The harbor was therefore not necessarily a factor for the decline of Skanör-Falsterbo, nor should it be seen as such for other towns.

One aspect which, together with the lack of a harbor would have contributed to the decline would be the sand reefs. The reefs outside of the peninsula's coast have historically posed dangers for passing ships. This would have made navigating and getting to the towns both difficult and dangerous. Although these reefs must still be passed to get from Germany to Malmö, the ships would have been able to keep a larger distance to the shore. However, as there would have been no safe way to get to the peninsula and harbor to dock by once the peninsula was reached, this would likely have been a contributing aspect of how the environment has been an active factor in the decline.

One of the clearest signs of the environmental factor should however be the Little Ice Age and the effect that it had on the herring. As the herring was the main product of the market, when the herring disappeared, so would the market. The Little Ice Age would therefore have been an indirect factor behind the decline of the market as it caused the herring to migrate. The herring migration caused the fishermen and merchants to leave the peninsula. With that, jobs and income disappeared from the peninsula, something which would have caused the locals to move as well. Environment from different angles is therefore important to include when discussing the declines of towns.

Politics has become an important factor due to how the political climate has come to affect Skanör and Falsterbo. While studying the wars in Scania, it is possible to see how the focus and importance switched from Skanör-Falsterbo to Malmö. This is clear in how Falsterbohus castle was destroyed in 1311, and in the fact that Albrekt of Mecklenburg declared himself lord of Scania by taking the same castle under control. However, later, from the 15th century, it is instead Malmö that is seen as important. It was now important to control Malmöhus castle and Skanör-Falsterbo has started to decline. For the market it is possible to see how politics have come to affect it as well. The many *fitts* appear to have taken up more area than the area inhabited by locals, ergo the Hansa has controlled more of the peninsula than the Danes. This in turn would have caused a collapse in the economy when the Hansa disappeared. The tolls in the towns, together with the many injustices have acted as political gambits which have led to aggravations and wars. The Hanseatic league taking control over the market and driving away competition should also be considered a clear sign of decline.

One of the conclusions that I have come to regarding urbanity and urbanization is that we need to redefine what a town and urban setting is. The same goes for urbanity. Skanör-Falsterbo shows an agrarian settlement for most of the year, still they are considered towns. It is also difficult to define urbanity and urban identity, as when does this appear? Does a person first consider themselves townspeople when the urban society is fully developed or is it when a town starts to emerge?

I would argue that urban identity is something that develops together with urbanization. Based on the practice bundles related to fishery, which are visible in the towns before they are fully formed, it is clear that an urban identity develops with the emergence. But the urbanization process is not something that stops, it never goes static. A town is therefore always under development, it never fully stops emerging as different time periods require different things of a town. That is why Malmö is still a town; its urbanization process has continued and does so to this day. Skanör-Falsterbo may have lost their market, but they kept their town privileges much longer. Therefore, we cannot see when they stopped being towns, other than the official loss of their privileges, but we can see why. While many factors have played a part in this, they have all led to a stop in urbanization. It is therefore not necessarily that they declined as towns, but they stopped developing which ended up being the end of the towns. Skanör-Falsterbo froze in time as 16th century towns, and after that their development was agrarian, the urbanization process stopped.

In summary, while not every aspect of the factors which have been considered might have contributed to the decline of the towns to the same extent, there is neither one single factor which has acted by itself. A clear sign of this is St Olof. For St Olof and the unfinished expansion, it is likely a combination of economy, demography and the market which has resulted in it never being finished. Similarly, all factors have interacted with one another and together resulted in Skanör and Falsterbo no longer being towns. The same can be said for Åhus. Certain factors, such as the aeolian sand and the small population, together with how the towns and townspeople have been referred to are present in both Skanör-Falsterbo and Åhus, should be weighted further than some of the other factors in the decline of towns. However, there are no sole factors which have come to decide the decline. There are multiple similarities between Malmö and Skanör-Falsterbo and yet Malmö is still thriving. Therefore, all of these factors should be considered when discussing the decline of a town and aspects such as environment must continue to be used when discussing urban settings and not just out of an urban environment perspective but on a larger scale. It is clear that multiple social-ecological-systems have been present, and due to the human interaction with the different factors they have come to result in the decline.

In the end, the terms urbanity, town, and urbanization must be redefined and clarified. Actively talking about a decline is not something which seems to be possible as it first requires a stop in the process. The process of urbanization does not stop but continues throughout the life cycle of a town. It is therefore not a decline but a reversion that happens. A town cannot, therefore, be seen as a fully formed landscape and the sense of urbanity must therefore also be further discussed to understand how people have viewed themselves and the space they exist in. It is therefore not possible to see why Skanör-Falsterbo stopped being towns as that happened in the latter half of the 20th century. Instead, it is possible to see when a reversion happened, and the urban identity seemed to disappear, but to do this, multiple factors must be taken into account as one cannot stop the urbanization process by itself.

6.1 Future research

I believe that further studying the often “forgotten” towns in either medieval Denmark, modern Sweden or both could be beneficial in our understanding of urbanity and urbanization. Due to their often unique characteristics but also due to their reversions. Gaining more understanding regarding their reversions, it should be possible to gain a further insight into medieval urbanity. Furthermore, focusing on aspects such as the environment and

topography when studying the decline, or reversions of towns can be something that can further help us understand how different actors have reacted to the environment and how that has impacted the urban way of life.

I believe that further comparing Skanör-Falsterbo to other towns, mainly coastal, such as Trelleborg, Simrishamn, Copenhagen, Aarhus etc. is a promising field which can help us understand how the markets and fishery have correlated with each other and in which degree the late medieval herring migration has impacted that.

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8.0 Appendix

Appendix A. Churches

Churches in Skanör	First mention	Last mention	Location	Comment	Source
Rostock's church	1353	Taken out of commission around 1400	Around 300 meters east of St Olof	Might be the same as a German church, also seen on Mejer's map. The graveyard has been excavated. Might have been destroyed in the fire of 1412. In that case, the church attacked by the archbishop in 1482 must have been another one	Redin 1976. pp. 24; Ersgård 1984. p. 14; Carelli 2007. p. 168; Jahnke 2016. p. 100
Flynborn's church	1650	1650	Southeastern part of Skanör	No traces have been found of it but a map from the 18 th century has a cemetery marked out at the same place	Johannes Mejer's map of Skanör from 1650. Fig. 9; 10
German church	1650	1650	South of the town	No evidence of a church at the location besides the map	Johannes Mejer's map of Skanör from 1650
St George	1650	1650	Directly east of the town	There are no written sources, nor any archaeological traces or evidence of a St George in Skanör	Johannes Mejer's map of Skanör from 1650. Fig. 9
Franciscan chapel	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Jahnke (2016) believes it possible that the Franciscans from Halmstad had a chapel in Skanör	Jahnke 2016. p. 101
Dominican chapel	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Jahnke (2016) believes it possible that the Dominicans from Lund had a chapel in Skanör	Jahnke 2016. p. 101

Churches in Falsterbo	First mention/ construction year	Last mention/ demolition year	Location	Comment	Source
S:ta Maria	1336	1653	Within Lübeck's fit, about 75 meters north of the modern-day apartment complex known as Falsterbohus	Church belonging to Lübeck. Both church and graveyard were found in 1899. It was torn down a few years after being renovated due to a Swedish law stating the right to use all foreign buildings as quarries. The church was the only German church in Falsterbo with the permission to perform the anointing of the sick	Ersgård 1984. pp. 15; Jahnke 2016. p. 98
Fransiscan chapel	1352	Unknown	Danzig's fit, at the Flommen golf course	Possibly encountered in 1930 when a gråsten wall was found. Sources regarding it are uncertain	Ersgård 1984. p. 15
Dominican chapel	Unknown	Unknown	Falsterbovång, in a part of the meadow known as Svärtestycket (the Black section)	No chapel found at the site. It would explain the name as the friars were known as Black friars, would also explain the willows and pear trees growing there	Hommerberg 1952. pp. 110

Church and Hospital of the Holy Ghost	1343	1532	The exact location is not known, Blomqvist estimates it to have been located north-east of the castle	Because of the long period that it has existed; it should likely be connected to the town Falsterbo and not the market. It would likely have disappeared with the reformation	Ersgård 1984. p. 15
Ecclesia Danica	1352	Unknown	North of the modern beacon, about 200 meters south of the Franciscan chapel, close to the old Danish fishing camps	Excavated in the 1880's. 14x8 meters in size. During my visit to the site in 2021, I noted that it would have been located right by the seaweed wall which has acted as a city wall. Nothing is visible today	Ersgård 1984. p. 15
Stettin's church	1579	Unknown	Within Stettin's fit in Falsterbo	Besides a map from 1579, showing a cemetery, nothing has been found	Ersgård 1984. p. 16

Churches in Malmö	Construction year/ first mention	Demolition year/ last mention	Location	Comment	Source
Ecclesie Malmøgh inferiori	Before 1269	Unknown	Unknown	Possibly located where St Petri now stands	Rosborn 1984. p. 20
Monastery and Hospital of the Holy Ghost	1384	1538	Northeastern corner of Stortorget	Burnt down twice during the 15th century, the town hall now stands in its place	Rosborn 1984. p. 20
St George chapel	1464	After 1549	In the Northeastern corner of Gustav Adolf's square	The demolition would have started around 1506 but was still standing, and mentioned in 1549	Rosborn 1984. p. 20

Symonis et Jude kapell/ S:ta Annas kapell	1412/1419	1537-1543	Eastern part of the block Fisken	Mentioned by two different names but are believed to be the same. Franciscan convent/chapel. Later replaced by a newer convent/chapel further southwest	Rosborn 1984. pp. 20
Sancte Marie Magdelene kapell	Unknown	From the late 16th century	Eastern part of the block Skepparen	Belonged to the Dominican order. Order founded in Malmö between 1296-1333. Gifted by the king to the town in 1530	Rosborn 1984. p. 21
Latin school	Around 1406	Still existing	Southeastern part of St Petri's graveyard	Permission for the school is given in 1406 and it is first mentioned in 1445. Today the school has been moved and acts as a high school by the name Malmö lantinskola	Rosborn 1984. p. 21

Churches in Åhus	Construction year/ first mention	Demolition year/ last mention	Location	Comment	Source
St Nicolai	1330's	Unknown	Unknown	Not much is known regarding the church. Possibly belonged to the Dominican convent	Rosborn 1984. p. 12
Dominican convent	1243	1600's	Directly south of the square	Still visible above ground. Later became <i>Åhus gård</i> . The convent church was torn down in the 1600's	Rosborn 1984. p. 44
Hospital of the Holy Ghost	1339	1524	Likely directly east of the square, by the location of S:ta Anna's hospital, or 100m north of that	By 1524 the hospital was changed into a S:ta Anna's hospital	Rosborn 1984. p. 12
St George's hospital	1252	1549	West of the town, outside the city walls	Got included in S:ta Anna's hospital in 1549. Nothing visible above ground today	Rosborn 1984. p. 12

Appendix B. Street network

Streets in Skanör	Location	Comment	Source
Travnestræde	Unknown	The street also appears in other spellings and mentions both stalls, taverns and houses. They also mention <i>tabernam</i> which have been translated to taverns, however as a taberna would be a shop, it is also possible that they in some cases should be considered shops or stalls.	SDHK-nr: 13344; 16920; 7154; 11741; 43446; 18462

Ghabradestrate	Unknown, possibly close to a Franciscan chapel	The street is, on SDHK, also mentioned as <i>Slaktargatan</i> or <i>Butcher Street</i> , it is therefore possible that there have been butchers located on the street	SDHK-nr: 10275
Næstwitheleyghe (Næstvedlejet)	Unknown	Mentioned twice together with a taberna and clothing stalls	SDHK-nr: 5510; 6621
Trælaborghsstræde	Unknown	Mentioned to have a tabernam	SDHK-nr: 18456
Transtrædhe	Unknown	Mentioned having a few stalls	SDHK-nr: 18520

Streets in Malmö	Location	Comment	Source
Street between St Petri and St George	Possibly corresponding to Kalendegatan	-	SDHK-nr: 41308
Street southeast of the school	Possibly corresponding to Djäknegatan or Rondellgatan	-	SDHK-nr: 41367
Torggatan	Possibly different name for Adelgatan	Today located by Lilla torg. Based on other landmarks noted in the source, it has likely been by Adelgatan	SDHK-nr: 41294
Strandstråtet	Possibly corresponding to Norra Vallgatan	-	SDHK-nr: 41294
Allmänningsgatan	Possibly corresponding to Bruksgatan and Göran Olsatan	One source mentions a plot on the street, in the eastern part of the town, stretching 15 ells along Adelgatan	ex. SDHK-nr: SDHK-nr: 26582

Appendix C. Royal presence

Royal presence	Year	Content	Comment
SDHK-nr: 298	1202	King Valdemar gives Lübeck privileges in Skanör-Falsterbo, specifically at the markets and gives them the rights to their fit	The first royal presence shown in the written sources
SDHK-nr: 297	1229-1241	King Valdemar gives permission to raise a beacon in Falsterbo	The first beacon in the Nordics. For more information, see 2.3.5.3 <i>Beacon</i>

SDHK-nr: 655	1251	King Valdemars' successor, King Abel I gives similar rights to Rostock as to Lübeck	This would be their fit at Lagmanshejdan in Skanör
SDHK-nr: 662	1251	King Abel I gives the merchants in Skanör the right to transport their products during certain times, even during holidays	-
SDHK-nr: 3398	1326	It is promised that all royal castles in Scania and Halland, except those in Skanör, Helsingborg and Falkenberg shall be destroyed and not rebuilt. Furthermore, it is stated that no property owner in the country will be prevented from buying and selling at Skanör or other markets, unless he has been guilty of a crime	Document from the Danish election of kings where Valdemar II was elected. Skanör is here mentioned mainly as a market and not a town
SDHK-nr: 41099	1326	Valdemar II exempts people from Skive from paying taxes in other towns, except Skanör and Malmö	-
SDHK-nr: 3670	1329	King Kristoffer of Denmark gives Johan of Holstein the castles in Skanör and Falsterbo, together with other castles, as a pawn setting	-
SDHK-nr: 4546	1339	King Magnus promises his sister Eufemia and her husband that the taxes collected from the market in Skanör will be used to pay the remainder of Eufemia's dowry	-
SDHK-nr: 10036	1371	The Danish headman in Scania, knight Henning Podebusk states that the castles in Skanör-Falsterbo have been returned to Danish ownership	More about this in <i>2.4.3 Hanseatic presence</i>

SDHK-nr: 40743	1376	King Olof Håkansson and Queen Margrethe admits to being indebted to Duke Erik of Sachsen. They are said to own him 3500 marks and therefore pawns a sixth of the income from Skanör-Falsterbo	This corresponds to over four million Swedish kronor in 2025's value. This should thereby also give us an insight into how much the markets at Skanör-Falsterbo were worth
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Royal presence in Malmö	Year	Content	Comment
SDHK-nr: 40938	1267	The Swedish king Valdemar Birgersson asks for free passage for a Godekin from Malmö	The earliest mention of Malmö by itself. The second oldest in general
SDHK-nr: 1631; 1700	1294/ 1296	King Erik of Denmark gives the Dominican friars permission to collect alms in Malmö	In 1296, he also mentions Skanör and Falsterbo
SDHK-nr: 3845	1332	A reply to German merchants from King Magnus regarding the high taxes in conflict with the merchants' privileges	A clear connection between the Hansa and the crown
SDHK-nr: 6664; 7867	1353/ 1360	King Magnus and later King Valdemar issues privileges for Malmö	It is stated that they are to be similar to that of Lund
SDHK-nr: 8019	1361	Kings Magnus of Sweden and Håkan of Norway joins forces with the Hanseatic league in a war against Denmark and promises them power over castles in different Scanian towns, including Malmö	The castles of Skanör and Falsterbo are also mentioned. This is a clear connection between the three towns

Royal presence in Åhus	Year	Content	Comment
SDHK-nr: 667	1252	King Kristoffer exempts the people of Åhus from paying certain taxes	The first mention of Åhus
SDHK-nr: 3494	1327	King Valdemar confirms his predecessors' privileges for Åhus' citizens and that they are not required to pay taxes anywhere in the kingdom they are with their goods, besides Skanör	-
SDHK-nr: 1543	1344	King Magnus forbids visitors at the market from disturbing Åhus' fit in Falsterbo	A mention showcasing the connection between Skanör-Falsterbo and Åhus
SDHK-nr: 1849	1299	King Erik Menved forbids his fogdar from preventing the people of Åhus from salvaging their goods from a shipwreck	First mention of fogdar in Åhus
SDHK-nr: 44299	1394	Tuve Nielsen, Åhus' <i>fodge</i> , in front of a court in Lübeck, certifies that his journeyman is a Hans Lemgo and that their six loads of herring were salted in Ystad and belongs to them	A connection to the Hansa and what happened between Malmö and Lübeck with the herring the same year
SDHK-nr: 2229	1308	King Erik owes the people of Åhus 1200 mark	-

Appendix D. Churchly presence

Churchly presence	Year	Content	Comment
SDHK-nr: 40827	1201-1223	Archbishop Anders Suneson institutes two new prebends at the cathedral due to donations from Skanör's square and church	This is the first mention of a churchly presence in Skanör-Falsterbo

SDHK-nr: 40849	1226	Confirmation of previous letter by King Valdemar Sejr	-
SDHK-nr: 1700	1296	King Erik Menved allows the Dominican friars to collect alms in Skanör and Falsterbo	The first mention of Falsterbo together with a churchly presence
SDHK-nr: 3788	1331	Archbishop Karl in Lund adds a new parish to the prebend that the canon Peter Helgeson at Lunds cathedral held in Skanör and Falsterbo	-
SDHK-nr: 41180	1340	The church and hospital of the Holy Ghost is mentioned to have fallen into the hands of Stralsund as it is also located on their fit in Falsterbo	The first mention of the church and hospital of the Holy Ghost in Falsterbo
SDHK-nr: 9832	1370	Canon Folke Dagnarsson from Lund declares that he sold 22 unused stalls in Falsterbo to the council in Stralsund	The stalls are said to be near the graveyard, however, it is not mentioned whether this refers to the one by S:ta Gertrude, S:ta Maria or another one
SDHK-nr: 10161	1372	The canon Nils Erlandsson in Lund gifts a stall to his relative, the director of the church and hospital of the Holy Ghost in Lund, Peter Larsson in his will	The stall would have been located near Vagnstorget in Skanör. Where this square is located is unknown as this is the only source I have been able to find mentioning it
SDHK-nr: 41432	1377	The archbishop in Lund, together with six Danish bishops gives out 40 days pardon to those who visit The Church of our Lady in Skanör	It is possible that it is one of the churches shown on Mejer's map. Another option would be that it refers to the S:ta Maria church in Falsterbo but has mentioned the wrong town

SDHK-nr: 16318	1404	The dean in Roskilde and canon in Lund, Laurentius Johannis gifts 5 stalls to Lund's Cathedral	-
SDHK-nr: 47075	1488	The king states that all those who own stalls or shops in Falsterbo must pay a stall tax to the dean in Lund, Peder Povelsen	This is the last letter of interest regarding the churchly presence in Skanör-Falsterbo

Churchly presence in Malmö	Year	Content	Comment
SDHK-nr: 13078	1386	The archbishop gifts a plot in Malmö to Lund's cathedral	Similar sources are common throughout Malmö's written sources
SDHK-nr: 17706	1411	The archbishop Peter's deputy, bishop Johannes promises pardons for those who visit the church of the Holy Ghost in Malmö after it has been affected by fire	For information about the church see <i>appendix A</i>
SDHK-nr: 43472	1388	The Hanseatic league asks the archbishop in Lund to free the Hanseatic citizens that are being held prisoners in Malmö	First out of two mentions about the church with the Hansa
SDHK-nr: 41289	1475	The chapter and churchwardens in Lund rent a farm on Adelgatan to merchants from Stettin	The second out of two mentions of the church with the Hansa
SDHK-nr: 1550	1292	Pope Nicolaus IV gives Malmö permission to keep their parish church	-
SDHK-nr: 8760	1365	Pope Urban V gives the same permission as Nicolaus IV	-
SDHK-nr: 16656	1406	Pope Innocentius VII gives permission to establish a school by St Petri in Malmö	For information about the school see <i>appendix A</i>
SDHK-nr: 6333	1352	The Canon Johannes Henriksson pawns Skagemands ladugård in Malmö	For information about Skagemands ladugård, see: <i>3.2.3.4 Local population</i>
SDHK-nr: 13355	1387	Gerlacus Skelmsson gifts a farm to the cathedral in Lund as a <i>själagåva</i> for a Berta Håkansdotter, after whom he inherited the farm	Example of connection between the local population and the church

Churchly presence in Åhus	Year	Content	Comment
SDHK-nr: 1315; 1467	1284/ 1289	Dean Bengt and Dean Tygesen Pust gifts money to the St George hospital in Åhus and to the preachers in the town in their wills	-
SDHK-nr: 4268; 33745	1336/ 1499	Archbishops in Lund and bishops in Denmark offers pardons to those who visit and help at the hospital/ St George in Åhus	In 1336, it is offered to those who help at Åhus' hospital, as it is almost 60 years before the first mention of the hospital of the Holy Ghost, the hospital being referred to is likely the St George
SDHK-nr: 2596	1314	The archbishop in Uppsala sends a representative to meet the representative of archbishop Esger in Åhus because of an ongoing primacy dispute	A sign of a politically active church in Åhus
SDHK-nr: 2755	1316	Pope Johannes XXII demands the archbishop in Lund to meet with Uppsala's archbishop Olof and handover a pallium	Presence of the pope in Åhus as well

Appendix E. Hanseatic presence

Hanseatic presence	Year	Content	Comment
SDHK-nr: 298	1202	King Valdemar gives certain privileges to Lübeck in the two towns	The first letter that shows a Hanseatic presence in the towns. Similar letters also appear surrounding towns such as Rostock, Wismar, Greifswald etcetera. This occurs throughout the market years and the letters are written by different kings (ex. SDHK-nr: 655; 657; 871; 40948; 2736; 3014; 2216)
SDHK-nr: 297	1229-1241	About the beacon in Falsterbo, the inquiry is made by friars from Lübeck on behalf of the merchants from the same town	-
SDHK-nr: 1143	1280	King Erik of Denmark gifts a fit to Greifswald in Falsterbo	This fit is, in the letter, said to be located between the old enclosure and the Germans churchyard. Furthermore, it should also have been located between the beach and Stralsund's fit
SDHK-nr: 1280	1284	King Erik issues a letter where he states that he will personally ensure the safety of German merchants after they have felt it to be unsafe to travel to Skanör-Falsterbo	-

SDHK-nr: 1964; 1965; 1966; 1967	1302	The towns of Doesburg, Harderwijk, Zutphen and Nijmegen issues complaints that they are being treated unjustly by the Danish <i>fogdar</i> in Skanör-Falsterbo, as well as other locations within Denmark	In the letters they state that the <i>fogdar</i> has removed their privileges, are taking their goods by violent means and are refusing them the right to their goods on shipwrecks. They are therefore asking the king to ensure a stop to this
SDHK-nr: 41043	1312	The parish priest from Örsjö, Jens Strangesen, has no demands on Rostock, Stralsund, Wismar or Greifswald after they kept him prisoner in Skanör's castle during a war between the Hansa and Denmark	-
SDHK-nr: 5958; 7105; 6621; 7019	-	-	Multiple letters mentioning ownership and indebtedness amongst individuals from the Hanseatic towns
SDHK-nr: 7587	1359	A testament mentioning that a citizen of Stralsund gifts S:ta Maria in Falsterbo 2 Lübeck marks, but also that he gives money to friars in Falsterbo and Skanör	-
SDHK-nr: 4659	1341	Gherardus Wigeblot from Stralsund has built a stall made out of wood, in a spot that he was not supposed to build on	-
SDHK-nr: 41143	1333	Citizens from Stavern have been attacked by citizens of Lübeck in Falsterbo	This has been during a dispute between Stavern and Lübeck, and Hamburg
SDHK-nr: 5182	1345	The council in Anklam requests the help of Stralsund and Demmin in solving a dispute with Greifswald over a piece of land in Falsterbo	-

SDHK-nr: 7059	1356	An arbitration issued by Lübeck and Greifswald after a dispute between Stralsund, Rostock and Wismar on one side and Kampen on the other	The arbitration is regarding a dispute on 22 nd of September 1352 where there were both acts of violence and a death at the market in Skanör
SDHK-nr: 18992).	1417	Herman Dordewant admits to having received 80 Lübeck golds in Skanör from the fogde, Reymer Vylant, at the Prussian fit in Falsterbo	The last written source about the Hanseatic league in Skanör-Falsterbo which is available on SDHK. It should however be mentioned that there is still a Hanseatic presence in the towns after this.

Appendix F. Local population

Local population in Malmö	Year	Content	Comment
SDHK-nr: 3939; 12037	1333/ 1381	<i>Borgare</i> Nils Jakobsson sells five stalls to preachers in Lund/ <i>Borgare</i> Olof Nilsson Korrebonde sells a plot	Other sources, including the transference of property ex. SDHK-nr: 4422; 5928; 11361; 11409; 14339
SDHK-nr: 5827	1349	Gozeke Sithogh pawns his plot to Gotrik Jakobsson	-
SDHK-nr: 8409	1363	A citizen of Lübeck writes in his will that his daughter, Greteke, who lives in Malmö will inherit some money	-
SDHK-nr: 7550	1359	A legal document regarding Mats Murare who had deposited some belongings with a citizen of Lübeck for safekeeping during a turbulent time, which were now stolen	<i>Murare</i> translates to mason
SDHK-nr: 12733; 12740	1384	Nicolaus Hemmingsson, known as <i>Möllare</i> , sells a <i>property</i>	<i>Möllare</i> is a word in the Scanian dialect meaning miller
SDHK-nr: 10031	1371	A customs officer did not collect pound duty from a skipper as he was a citizen of Malmö	-

Appendix G. Skagemands ladugård

Skagemands ladugård	Year	Content	Comment
SDHK-nr: 6330; 6333	1352	Canon Johannes Henriksson, pawns Skagemands ladugård in Malmö to Henrik Michelsson in Lund	First mentions of Skagemands ladugård
SDHK-nr: 8777	1365	Henrik Skaghen is mentioned to have previously owned the property	Likely the first owner of the plot, it is not mentioned when he owned it
SDHK: 14861; 14863; 15012; 15098; 1399; 15251	1397-1399	A legal dispute regarding the plot's ownership	The king ends up getting involved and demands it be given to a member of the Rosencrantz family
SDHK-nr: 15702; 15716; 15717	1401	Parts of the property being given to Queen Margrete I	-
ex. SDHK-nr: 7594; 7849; 7853; 8774; 41756; 12904; 14861; 14872	1352-1414	Different citizens either selling or pawning their share of the plot	The most common documents regarding the property.
SDHK-nr: 18258	1414	Knight Klas Grupendal verifies documents regarding the plot	The last mention of the plot