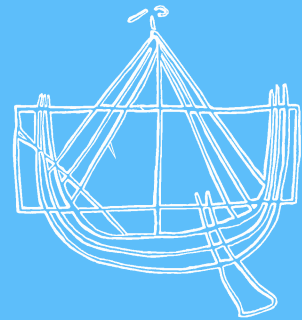
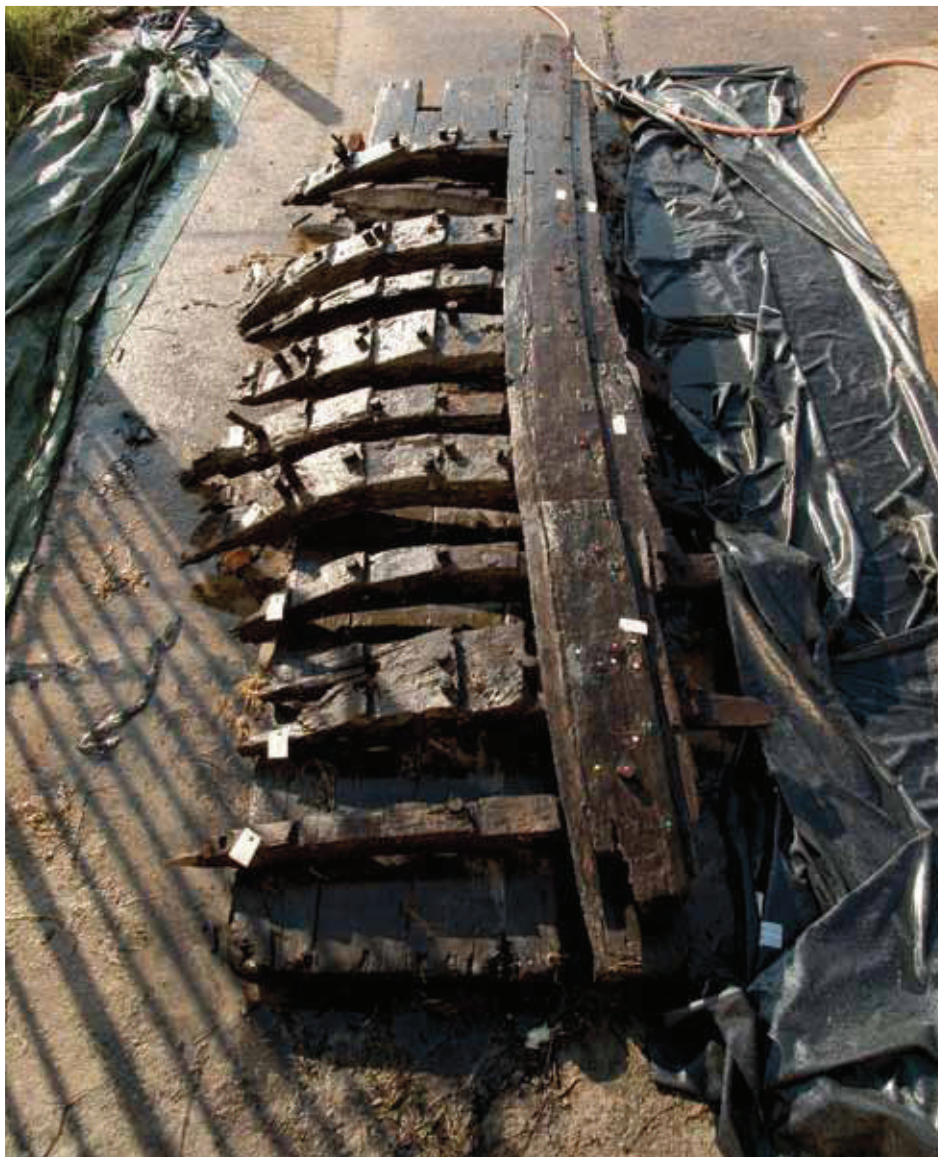


Maritime Archaeology
Newsletter



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from Denmark



FPL 77 is part of a clinker vessel converted with flush planking, as discussed on p. 24. Dendrochronology suggest that it was built in the Øresund area shortly after 1590 AD and that it was converted with wood from the southern Baltic area. Photo: Jens Auer.



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From Paris to Paris

When this newsletter goes to press, the National Museum in Copenhagen hosts the fourth Paris conference, short for preserving archaeological remains *in situ*. Frugal management poses many challenges. Maritime archaeology has been strong in iconic excavations and becomes ever better at finding ways to integrate research in planning and development. The 1992 European Convention leads the way, and although much can be improved, the idea that impact mitigation is where new knowledge is generated in the most profitable way, keeps ever more maritime archaeologists engaged and employed. But long-term management *in situ* is another matter. Understanding and control of physical factors, the central theme of the Paris conference, is difficult enough. But so much is invisible. How to provide for public enjoyment? Protection *in situ* is the first option of the 2001 UNESCO Convention, which just had its third meeting of States Parties in Paris.

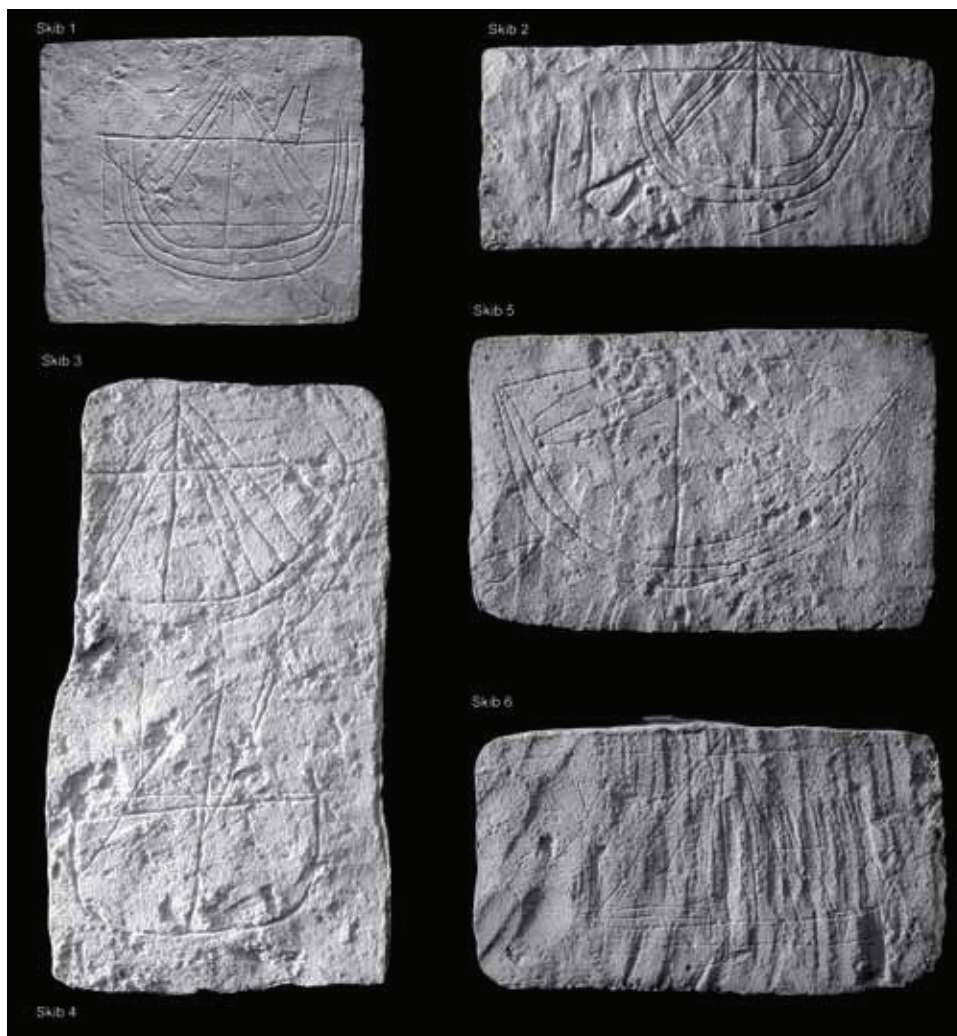
The value of the invisible is central to the contributions by Ole Grøn and Liv Lofthus on North Sea prehistory and reservoirs in inland Norway. More visible are the shoes of the *St George*, studied by Martin Lonergan. Equally tangible are the fragments of ancient shipwrecks from Aarhus and from the Darss, presented by the team of Lars Krants Larsen and Bente Grundvad respectively. Fragmentary or not, they are the bread and butter of ship archaeology – important complements to iconic ships! Highly visible are the images that Ole Crumlin-Pedersen and Ole Kastholm discuss in their relation to archaeological information. There is much to enjoy, and let us not forget: it is the benefit of enjoyment that makes archaeology and heritage management acceptable, including management *in situ*.

Thijs J. Maarleveld

Six ship graffiti from Himmelev Church

This Newsletter's logo is an early medieval ship engraved in the church of Himmelev. Himmelev is a tiny parish that has presently been absorbed in the northeastern suburbs of Roskilde on the Island of Zealand in Denmark. The image is one out of six ship graffiti, which have only partially been published and dealt with. The present short note tries to remedy that and to put them in focus all six.

Himmelev Church was erected in the first half of the 12th century on a ridge overlooking the inner waters of Roskilde Fjord. In 1972-73, the National Museum of Denmark undertook archaeological investigations inside the church on the occasion of a restoration project (cf. report in the NM topographic archive). A result of this was the revelation of a number of ship graffiti incised



in the soft limestone ashlar that had been concealed beneath the plaster. The graffiti were placed at the doorways, just above floor level. Two were found at the southern door, and four at the northern door, which is now out of use. The position of the graffiti indicates that they do not belong to the church's official art work, but are instead a product of spontaneity, possibly carried out by craftsmen taking part in the church's construction. This is affirmed by the hasty character of the ships' depiction. Thus these graffiti ought to be seen as contemporary depictions of vessels – probably with Roskilde Fjord as inspirational setting and probably with the 12th century as their date.

In Mette Felbo's study of the ship motifs of Scandinavia 800-1400 AD, only four of the Himmelev graffiti are mentioned, the same goes for the internet database of ship motifs NAVIS 2. These four are still visible in the church and are numbered 1-4 (Felbo 1995, 1999; NAVIS 2). The remaining two ship graffiti are again hidden behind plaster and are numbered 5-6 by the present author. The only documentation that exists of these two images is to be found in the archives of the National Museum, where it is supplemented by casts of all six motifs, and in the Viking Ship Museum's picture archive.

Ship 1

The upper vessel at the west side of the north door has high bows, a square sail and a large steering oar at the side. The sailing direction is to the left. The strakes of planking are clearly marked. The mast is supported by shrouds (i.e. ropes to the railing), three aft and three forward, but there is no evident fore stay. The sail is characterised by being more than twice as wide as high. In the sail's front edge is attached a line or a stake that ends in front of the mast – the purpose of this line/stake is

Casts of the ship graffiti. Ship 1 measures c. 30x25 cm, while the remaining are a bit smaller. They are not mutually scaled. (The Viking Ship Museum's Picture Archive).

stretching the sail's edge when sailing close to the wind, just as seen on some Viking ship motifs as well as on historical square rigged vessels (e.g. Andersen & Andersen 1989; Kastholm 2009, 124).

Ship 2

The vessel beneath ship 1 is similar in style. The high bows and clearly marked strakes are characteristic, and the rigging is almost identical to ship 1, but ship 2 lacks the square sail. The steering oar, however, seems to be a bit clumsier than the one on ship 1, and the sailing direction is opposite. A yard meant for a sail is hoisted in the mast and is evidently of the same approximate dimensions as can be seen in ship 1.

Ship 3

The upper vessel at the west side of the southern door is only partly preserved, with one of the bows missing. Again this is a ship with high bow(s) and marked strakes. The mast is supported by shrouds; four on both sides (fore and aft cannot be distinguished). Hoisted in the mast is a yard of the same length as the ship.

Ship 4

The vessel beneath ship 3 is the sketchiest of the six. Again it is characterised by high bows, but the hull is merely shown through a single line defining the keel. The rigging is reduced to a mast of considerable length, supported by two stays, one to each bow, and a yard which is hoisted halfway in the mast. The yard is partly incised twice, possibly reflecting a correction of the image.

Ship 5

The upper vessel at the east side of the north door is somewhat similar to ship 1, 2 and 3. The bows are high, the board planks marked, the steering oar is visible and the mast is supported by shrouds; three aft and three forward. Finally, it cannot be distinguished whether the lines from the mast to the stem and stern are meant to be stays or a yard.

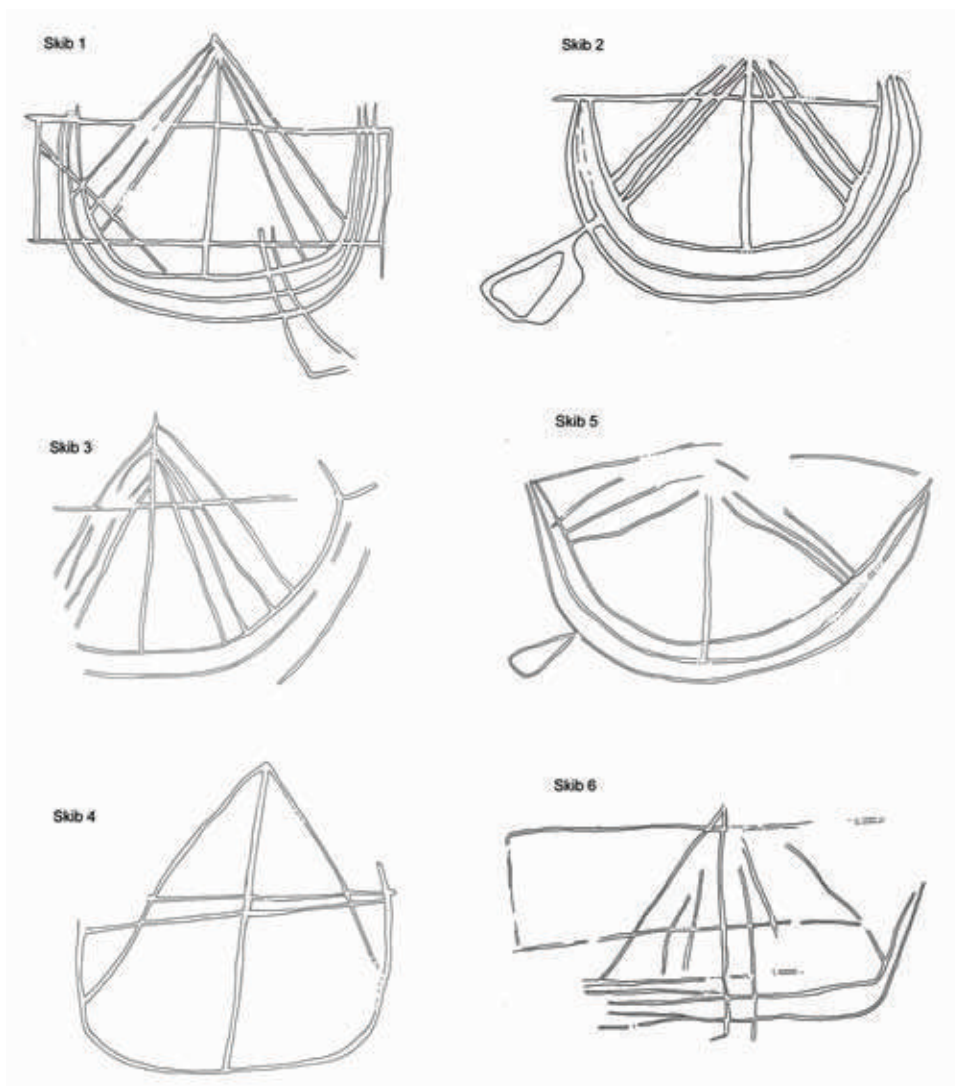
Ship 6

This vessel seems somewhat ambiguous, primarily due to a poor carving. Only one bow is clearly visible, and it differs from the other five. Again it rises high, but instead of the soft curve, it bends sharply between keel and stern. The strakes of planking are indicated and the mast is supported by shrouds, three on each side. The ship bears an extremely wide square sail, which is not even fully preserved on the right side.

Although not identical in design and style, these ship graffiti evidently share the same roots, which descend back in the

prehistoric Scandinavian boat tradition. An interesting feature is the presence of wide and low sails or – in absence of a sail – very long yards. The present author has previously argued that these low and wide sails ought to be seen as real representations, probably connected to a specific vessel type: the war ship (e.g. Kastholm 2007; 2009; 2011 and forthcoming; see also Heide 2006; Planke 2006).

The motifs drawn on basis of the casts. They are not mutually scaled. (O. T. Kastholm).



The find circumstances indicate that the graffiti of Himmelev Church are documentary images of vessels of the early 12th century. An obvious source of inspiration is the sea traffic of Roskilde Fjord that is so well documented in the ship finds of Roskilde's waterfront and the Skuldelev barrier (cf. Bill, Gøthche & Myrhøj 2000; Crumlin-Pedersen & Olsen 2002). These two assemblages hold the most important examples of war ships, i.e. the Roskilde 6, the Skuldelev 2 and the Skuldelev 5, all built between the 1020's and the 1040's and put out of use in the late 11th century. It seems therefore that only a few decades separate the graffiti from these archaeological finds. The Himmelev graffiti should therefore be regarded as valuable sources in reconstructing late Viking Age vessels. This could in particular be true for war ships.

Ole Thirup Kastholm

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The Archäologisches Landesamt Schleswig-Holstein asked a group of MAP students to dive in Schleswig harbour and collect parts of bits, knees, and strakes of a medieval wreck disturbed by dredging. Here, Véronique Laplante hands a strake fragment to Jan Fischer of the Amt. Photo: Sila Sokulu.