

# UBAS



University of Bergen Archaeological Series

## Placing Place Names in Norwegian Archaeology

Current Discussions and future Perspectives

Sofie Laurine Albris (ed.)



UNIVERSITY OF BERGEN

**14**  
2023

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# Preface

In 2019, I started the research project ArcNames at the University of Bergen. One of the defined goals of the project was to revive interdisciplinary discussions between archaeology and onomastics in Norway.

The discipline of onomastics is being cut down at most Norwegian universities and only few specialised onomastic researchers remain. Meanwhile, archaeological discoveries are forwarding new understandings of the settlement history in Norway, encouraging us to re-evaluate traditional views on the place name material. The need for an informed dialogue between onomastics and archaeology is growing with the constantly expanding knowledge about landscape and settlement. The application of place name material in archaeology, however, is a debated issue in Norway.

Onomastics has a lot to offer archaeology, and vice versa, and collaboration between the two disciplines could be better facilitated. All the Norwegian archival material related to place names has recently been gathered in the Language Collections at the University of Bergen, creating a new basis for revitalizing place name research in Norway. In this context, I arranged an interdisciplinary seminar at the University of Bergen on October 20, 2020. The aim was to bring together researchers from both onomastic and archaeology working with toponymy in the Norwegian Iron and Viking Age landscape to discuss the status and perspectives of place names in Norwegian archaeology and to bring attention to current problematics, particularly the reduced capacities in the onomastic discipline. The workshop had presenters from various Norwegian institutions addressing the relevance and use of place names in archaeology today and discussing problems and limitations, in addition to exploring future possibilities in this line of research.

Several of the speakers agreed to contribute with written articles. With some additional papers, the result is this collection of articles presenting various perspectives on the use of place names in relation to archaeology in Norway. I am very grateful to all the authors for taking time to contribute to this volume.

This collection of papers serves to illustrate how place names have a continued relevance to archaeology both in and beyond Norway. Views on the material differ and the evidence may seem incoherent, but this should rather encourage interdisciplinary studies than discourage them. Using place names and archaeology in combination has a long range of methodological implications, and it also calls for qualified theoretical discussions, something that has been lacking in traditional research.

*Sofie Laurine Albris and Krister SK Vasshus* introduce the topic of interdisciplinary work between archaeology and onomastics, giving an overview of the key themes covered in the book and in research history. The paper further discusses the theoretical perspectives in combining two such different source materials as archaeology and place names.

*Peder Gammeltoft* uses new digitized mappings of the main types of Norwegian settlement names to address settlement patterns in Norway from a macro perspective.

*Geir Grønnesby* discusses the observed differences in settlement structure between the Early and Late Iron Age in Norway and their implications for our understanding of place names, particularly from a theoretical perspective. The article proposes that the fundamental relationship between people and landscape changed significantly at the end of the 6th century, with significant impact on landscape experience and naming practises.

*Per Vikstrand* evaluates the linguistic and archaeological evidence of plural tuna-names in Norway. In the Iron Age, plural tuna-names have clear connections with centrality in Central Sweden and are part of a prestigious vocabulary connected with centrality during the Iron Age. Vikstrand concludes that only Tune in Østfold is a clear representative of this type of place name in Norway.

*Kjetil Loftsgarden* uses a quantitative approach to the place name element *skeid* throughout Norway. The name localities are evaluated in combination with archaeological and historical sources and likely sites of skeid-assemblies are identified and discussed.

*Birgit Maixner* uses place names in combination with archaeological and topographical evidence to identify and evaluate components of centres of power in the coastal landscape of northern Trøndelag in Central Norway.

*Håkon Reiersen and Christopher Fredrik Kvæstad* present a detailed analysis of the Iron Age and Medieval portage at Haraldseid in southwest Norway. The article combines place names, early maps, historical and archaeological evidence, to demonstrate the strategic importance of the site and suggests that there is a core of truth in local legends, associating it with the Viking king Haraldr Fairhair.

*Dikka Storm* studies the Sámi settlement Stuorgieddi on the island of Innasuoilu in Southern Troms. The local Sámi place names have gone through a process of Norwegianization and translation into Norwegian until work has been in recent decades done to recreate and restore Sámi place names according to the Place Names Act of 1990. The article demonstrates how the local Sámi place names reflect the economy and use of cultural and social space as well as the close connections between people, their activities and place names at Stuorgieddi.

I want to thank the UBAS editorial group and the anonymous peer reviewers for their assistance in editing and reviewing the chapters. Thanks especially to Randi Barndon, who served as the supervisor of the ArcNames project for encouraging me to put the book together. I also thank AHKR (department of Archaeology, History, Cultural Studies and Religion) at the University of Bergen and the University Museum of Bergen for their administrative assistance with the publication.

Both the seminar and this publication were put together as a part of the research project *ArcNames. Individuals, social identities and archetypes – the oldest Scandinavian personal names in an archaeological light*, funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme. The project research focused on personal names and individual identities in the Scandinavian Iron Age from an archaeological point of view. The project was a Marie Skłodowska-Curie individual fellowship under grant agreement No. 797386, running from March 2019 to June 2021 and hosted at the University of Bergen at the Department of Archaeology, History, Cultural Studies and Religion.

Sofie Laurine Albris

*National Museum of Denmark, Copenhagen, January 2023*





Birgit Maixner

# Place names as a resource for evaluating Iron Age central place complexes in the coastal landscape of northern Trøndelag, Central Norway

*Archaeological research on Iron Age central place complexes in Norway has been limited so far compared to Denmark and Sweden, but especially little has been learnt about centres of power in the coastal landscape of northern Trøndelag in Central Norway, despite the fact that one of Scandinavia's largest burial mounds, the Herlaugshaugen on the island of Leka, is situated there. As the archaeological material from this region consists mainly of grave finds, the evidence of place names might be of particular importance to identify and evaluate various components of central place complexes according to those patterns that have been observed in other places in Scandinavia. This article focusses on those two areas in coastal northern Trøndelag in which large burial mounds have been found – the surroundings of the Herlaugshaugen burial mound on the island of Leka, and the land bridge between Firth Folda and Lake Salvatnet at the mouth of the Namsen water system – and brings together archaeological and toponymic evidence and topographical analyses in order to assess whether they provide indications of central place complexes at these sites.*

## Introduction

The reconstruction of the Iron Age coastal landscape of northern Trøndelag in Central Norway has generally received little attention in archaeological research apart from local-history overview work in the 1960s by historian and place name researcher Jørn Sandnes (1965). In contrast to the areas of inner northern Trøndelag where archaeologists focussed their interest in the past, very little is known so far about possible Iron Age centres of power on the coast of this region. This is despite the fact that one of the largest burial mounds of Scandinavia, the Herlaugshaugen on the island of Leka, is situated there.

The evidence of 1<sup>st</sup> millennium AD elite milieus and centres in southern Scandinavia, with political, economic and religious functions, which together represent centrality, led to the emergence of the concept of central places in archaeological research in the 1990s (Watt 1991, Fabech and Ringtved 1995, Helgesson 2002). According to this concept, a central place complex consisted of the centre itself, meaning a magnate's residence with a hall building, workshop areas for specialized handicrafts, religious areas, satellite settlements, and trading and harbour sites. An important element of the central place concept is the assumption of continuity of power (Eilersgaard Christensen 2007). Traditionally, interdisciplinary approaches

have been used to identify central place complexes, using archaeological, toponymical and historical sources. Whereas Scandinavian central place research developed in southern Scandinavia and under local conditions, in Norway there has been little focus on central place research following Myhre's (1987) ground-breaking work in the 1980s. Consequently, possible central place complexes of the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium AD are to a lesser degree known and investigated in Norway.

The archaeological source material of the Iron Age on the coast of northern Trøndelag consists primarily of grave finds, which are supplemented by scattered, stray and settlement finds and a few defensive structures. Consequently, place names might take a special role in the evaluation and reconstruction of settlement patterns of the Iron Age coastal landscape in the region. The last century's place name research has provided Scandinavian Iron Age archaeology with a rich basis for analysing the prehistoric landscape in combination with archaeological sources, and for better understanding the complex spatial structure of central places. In particular, the name environment theory founded by the Swedish researcher Lars Hellberg (1975) in the 1970s, and later further developed especially by Stefan Brink in several works (1996, 1998, 1999a), which takes its starting point in reoccurring structures in place names, is a useful tool to infer the structure and functions of Iron Age central place complexes. The theory, which has been criticised by Jørgensen (2005, p. 188–190), assumes that the individual place names within these patterns reflect certain elements and functions and their locations within an area, such as the magnates' farms, religious and legal functions, defence, craft production, and communication. In particular, Per Vikstrand (2001, 2004, 2011) has also contributed to the understanding of sacral place names through in-depth studies. While the aforementioned studies had their starting point and focus mainly on central Sweden, the relation of place names and central place milieus in southern Scandinavia has been investigated especially by Lisbeth E. Christensen (2007, 2010) and Sofie L. Albris (2014, 2015, 2017), without, however, being able to uncover patterns similar to those in central Sweden. In Norway, the scholar Magnus Olsen (1926) presented reflections and investigations on sacred place names already at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In contrast to Denmark and particularly Sweden, however, Norway has so far lacked comparative studies on the occurrence of place names in central place milieus, just as archaeological central place research in Norway has not yet been advanced to the same extent as it has in the neighbouring Scandinavian countries. Exceptions are studies that focus either on selected cultural environments, such as Frans-Arne Stylegar and Oliver Grimm's (2005) investigation of the maritime central place Spangereid, Stefan Brink's (2007, 2018) studies on place names in the vicinities of Kaupang and Avaldnes, and Marie Ødegaard's (2018) research on the relationship between place names and gathering places in Fyresdal and Råde, or on selected place names in their cultural-historical context, such as the studies on the place names Hov (Røskaft 2003), Lund (Vasshus 2011), Gudme (Stylegar 2011), Skeid (Loftsgarden *et al.* 2017), and \*Sæheimr (Maixner 2020).

Some years ago, Per Vikstrand (2012) described the relationship between toponymy and archaeology as a 'stormy affair' that can fall between the extremes of speculative, insufficiently knowledge-based use of place names by archaeologists on the one hand and a 'cowardly' interpretation that merely describes landscape elements by place name researchers on the other. In fact, the use of place names in archaeology not only requires knowledge about the place name material's volume and localisation, but also involves several fundamental methodological issues (cf. Albris 2014, p. 21–32) that must be considered.

One of these issues is dating. Place names in Norway are generally not documented before the Middle Ages and in many cases, only since the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. While for many of the so-called name classes, such as names suffixed with *-heim*, *-vin*, *-stad*, or *-land*, dating frameworks for different periods of the Iron Age are available (cf. Sandnes 1997, Vikstrand 2013, p. 11-14, Schmidt 2015, see also Gammeltoft, this volume); especially some of the place names indicative of central places cannot be dated using this scheme. Furthermore, the place names in an area, even when they can all be dated with high probability to the long period of the Iron Age, do not necessarily denote simultaneous phenomena and functions within this period.

A second challenge is the interpretation of place names based on their semantic content. The semantic content of place names can provide information about topographical characteristics, vegetation, fauna, buildings, traffic, agriculture, religious practice, etc. However, after a place has been given a name, the place can change, leaving the name unchanged. There is therefore no given correlation between the meaning implied by the name and the archaeological remains from a particular period. Conversely, linguistic changes can lead to the original meaning no longer being clearly inferred, and even appearing distorted (Albris 2014, p. 30).

A third central problem is representativeness, which also includes the absence of place names. The absence of certain names expected in an area based on archaeological sources may be due to various factors. On the one hand, the lack of transmission of a formerly extant place name, i.e. the possibility of name death, must be considered. On the other hand, it is quite possible that naming never took place. As Vibeke Dalberg (2008) has pointed out, the naming of a place depends on which of various ways of structuring a natural space through naming has been chosen. While place names refer to the specificity of a place, and must be unique within their local context, it is not self-evident that they refer to the very conditions that are of archaeological interest (Albris 2014, p. 23).

However, despite the challenges mentioned above, in recent decades the approach of combined use of place names and archaeological sources has proved to be a central tool for the identification and reconstruction of Iron Age centres of power in Scandinavia. The aim of this article is to investigate how place names in Norwegian archaeology can contribute to the evaluation of presumed Iron Age central places that have hardly been archaeologically explored. For this purpose, I selected the two areas on the coast of North Trøndelag in which large burial mounds with a diameter of over 20 m exist (cf. Forseth and Foosnæs 2017, p. 51) on the rationale that these may indicate a central function of the respective areas (Fig. 1). The first of these areas is a district on the island of Leka around the so-called Herlaugshaugen, which is one of the largest burial mounds not only in Norway, but in all of Scandinavia. The second area is the land bridge between Firth Folda and Lake Salvatnet, at the western end of which there are three large burial mounds situated in a row.

In the following, the settlement patterns in both areas will be examined individually with regard to topography, archaeological sources and place names indicating centrality. I will devote special attention to the relationship between the evidence of archaeological sources and place names, i.e. the extent to which the two categories of sources reinforce or complement each other. The aim is to evaluate the extent to which evidence of Iron Age central place complexes can actually be assumed in the vicinity of the large burial mounds, and which components can be identified. On a higher-ranking level, the objective of this article is to assess the place names' contribution to Norwegian central place archaeology in general.



The following chronology of archaeological periods is used in this article: Roman Iron Age: AD 1-400; Migration period: AD 400-550; Merovingian period: AD 550-750; Viking Age: AD 750-1050. In Norwegian Iron Age terminology, the Early Iron Age (AD 1-550) spans from the Roman Iron Age to the end of the Migration period, whereas the Late Iron Age (AD 550-1050) encompasses the Merovingian period and the Viking Age.

The archaeological data used in this study are derived from two databases: the Norwegian University Museums' collection databases (Universitetsmuseenes samlingsdatabaser) and the Directorate for Cultural Heritage's database of monuments and sites (Askeladden) in Norway. The following abbreviations will be used for the museum inventory numbers: B: University Museum of Bergen; T: NTNU University Museum. The place names are collected from The Norwegian Mapping Authority's official database of place names, Sentralt stadnamnregister (SSR) ([kartverket.no](http://kartverket.no)).



**Figure 1.** Distribution of large burial mounds with a diameter of over 20 m in the coastal landscape of northern Trøndelag. The areas under investigation in the article are marked with red rectangles. Basic map by Kartverket – [www.kartverket.no](http://www.kartverket.no). Illustration: B. Maixner.

## The surroundings of the Herlaugshaugen burial mound on the Island of Leka

The first area to be investigated for central-place elements with the help of archaeological sources and place names is the area surrounding the large burial mound, Herlaugshaugen, located in the north-eastern part of the island of Leka.

The island of Leka is located in the north of the county of Trøndelag, west of the main sailing route along the coast (Fig. 1). A 2.7 km wide, sound-like fjord, the Lekafjorden, separates Leka from the island of Austrå to the east and the mainland immediately adjacent to it. In terms of its strategic location on the main sailing route along Norway's western coast, the island is comparable to the island of Karmøy in south-western Norway, with its centre of power at Avaldsnes (cf. Skre 2018), although the sound at Avaldsnes is much narrower.

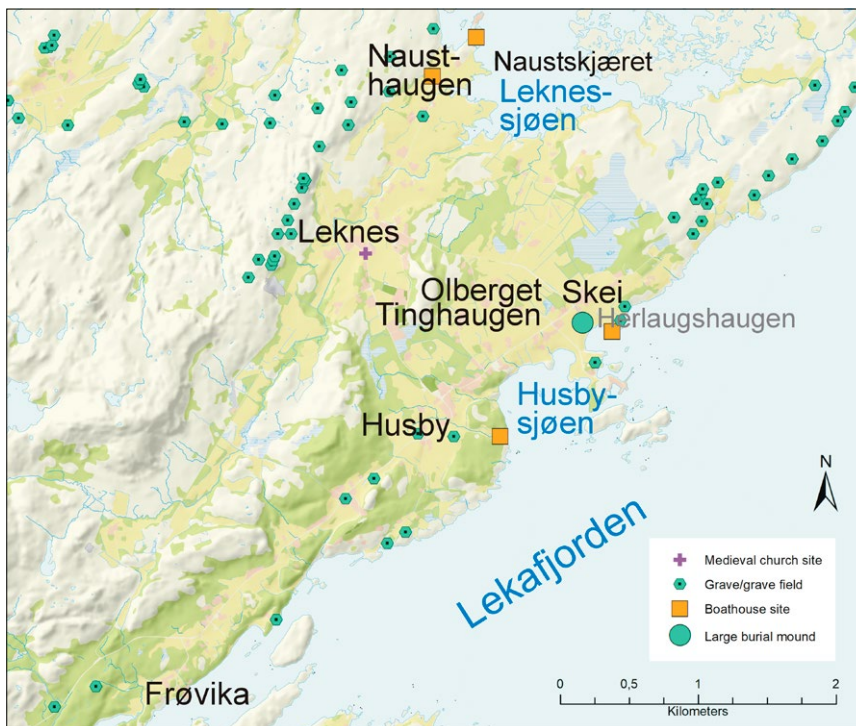


Figure 2. Map of the surroundings of the Herlaugshaugen burial mound on the Island of Leka. Basic map by Kartverket – [www.kartverket.no](http://www.kartverket.no). Illustration: B. Maixner.

The centre of the island of Leka is characterised by a barren landscape consisting of exposed bedrock up to over 400 m high. Areas near the coast, however, which consist of marine beach deposit, are suitable for agriculture. Smaller such areas are scattered in the northwest, west and south of the island. The largest contiguous areas of arable marine beach deposit, however, are located in the vicinity of Herlaugshaugen on the east side of the island, in the area of the modern farms of Leknes, Skei, Husby and Frøvika. This triangular-shaped area has access to the sea in two directions, in the north via Leknessjøen bay, and in the southeast via several bays to the fjord Lekafjorden.

The archaeological sources from the vicinity of the Herlaugshaugen burial mound are limited so far, and primarily belong to only two categories: Graves and boathouse sites (Fig. 2). Along the coast and along the mountain rim northwest of the modern farm of Leknes, a large number of smaller burial mounds of earth and cairns of stone are present. Most of them probably date from the Iron Age, although, apart from Herlaugshaugen, they have not been archaeologically investigated and many of them have obviously been looted. However, their large number may indirectly indicate dense settlement in the area.

The largest and most dominant of the burial mounds is the aforementioned Herlaugshaugen in the area of the farm Skei, a monumental mound 62 m in diameter and seven m high (cf. Stamnes 2015, p. 17) (Fig. 3). Excavations in the 18<sup>th</sup> century yielded features that were interpreted as a boat grave with a chamber and animal grave goods, thus probably dating the grave to the Late Iron Age (cf. Petersen 1917). However, the descriptions of these early excavations indicate that a stone cairn seems to form the core of the monumental mound. Geophysical investigations conducted in 2012 indicated that the mound was constructed in several phases. Whereas these investigations gave no clear indications of a ship burial, a construction in the centre of the mound was detected, which might be the supposed central cairn (Stamnes 2015, p. 76).



**Figure 3.** The Herlaugshaugen burial mound on the island of Leka. In the background the Lekafjorden and the island of Austra on the other bank of the fjord. Photo: B. Maixner, 2021.

During the 1755 excavation, a figurative decorated bronze cauldron was found at the bottom of the burial mound, which was not further documented and subsequently melted down. The cauldron is described as 'Kiedel, meget udgravered' (Suhm 1784, Fortale) and 'kjedel av metall med opphøgede bilder' (unpublished, undated note of Harald Egenæs Lund (1910-1972), NTNU University Museum, Cultural History archives document No. 16767). These

descriptions may indicate that the cauldron was made in Repoussé metalworking technique. Thus, it could possibly have been a Roman vessel, similar to the bronze tableware from e.g. the Danish Hoby grave (cf. Friis Johansen 1911-1935). Consequently, in contrast to what is generally supposed, one might assume the presence of a rich primary grave from the Early Iron Age in the inner stone core of the Herlaugshaugen burial mound.

Descriptions from the 19<sup>th</sup> century (cf. Rygh 1879-1880, p. 5), as well as the occurrence of several stray and grave finds from the vicinity of the Herlaugshaugen grave mound, namely a piece of payment gold from the Migration Period (T3979), a probable Early Iron Age anthropomorphic figure made of iron (T11946), an oval brooch from the Late Iron Age (B420) and a sword (B1360), probably from the Viking Age, indicate that the mound was part of a larger cemetery on the ground of the farm of Skei. About 1.5 km northwest of Herlaugshaugen, on the ground of the farm of Leknes and close to the mediaeval church site, two parts of a large disc-on-bow-brooch (T18340, T27627) indicative of high status (Fig. 4) from the Merovingian period were found.



**Figure 4.** Fragment of disc-on-bow-brooch (T18340) from Leknes on the island of Leka. Photo: Ole Bjørn Pedersen, NTNU University Museum.

The second category of archaeological sources from the vicinity of the Herlaugshaugen burial mound are boathouse sites. Four boathouse sites in total are known from Leknessjøen bay as well as Husbysjøen bay and the adjacent bay to the north on the Lekafjorden (Fig. 2) (unpublished map of Harald Egenæs Lund 1952-1954, NTNU University Museum, Cultural History archives map No. 425a; Askeladden IDs 110648-1 and 110620-1). It is assumed that boathouses fulfilled multifunctional purposes, serving as shelters for both military and mercantile ships, as working places, and as storage rooms for maritime equipment and maybe

trading goods (Stylegar and Grimm 2005, p. 260). The boathouse sites at Husbysjøen bay and near the Herlaugshaugen burial mound are dated to the Iron Age according to the Directorate for Cultural Heritage's database of monuments and sites (Askeladden), but there is no information about the dating methods, and the dating basis is therefore uncertain. There is also no information about the size of the sites. More than 300 boathouses are known in Norway so far, and their dates range from the first centuries AD until c. 1500. For most of these boathouse structures, no archaeological dating is available but there is the possibility of a rough dating based on the sites' placement relative to the former local sea level, whereas dating based on the latitude-longitude relationship has proved less certain than previously assumed (Stylegar and Grimm 2005). Studying Iron Age boathouses from south-western Norway, Bjørn Myhre (1985) convincingly showed that these were concentrated around the chieftains' administrative centres. The number of boathouses in an area seems to provide information about different levels of society. While the occurrence of single boathouses indicates central farms, the occurrence of several boathouses seems to be linked to the most prominent farms (Stylegar and Grimm 2005, p. 259). The large number of boathouses in the vicinity of the Herlaugshaugen burial mound, although their dating to the Iron Age and contemporaneity is not certain, may support the exceptional nature of the area.

In sum, the representativeness of the archaeological finds from the surroundings of Herlaugshaugen is limited due to their small number, and their significance can be questioned. Nevertheless, it is striking that among the few archaeological finds and features, there are several categories associated with rich archaeological milieus: the Migration Period payment gold from the vicinity of the Herlaugshaugen burial mound, the large Merovingian disc-on-bow-brooch from the area of the farm of Leknes, the monumental architecture of the probably Late Iron Age extension phase of the Herlaugshaugen burial mound, and the possibly Roman Period bronze cauldron from the presumed primary burial of the same, if it was one.

At the same time, these finds and features indicate a long continuity of economic prosperity and high social status in the area throughout the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium AD. The numerous boathouse sites, if one assumes a dating to the Iron Age, underpin the impression of centrality and power. Directly, however, the archaeological sources represent only two practices in this area: the somewhat very elaborate burial of the dead, as indicated by the graves, and naval defence, and possibly mercantile activity, as indicated by the boathouses. It is therefore of interest to investigate the extent to which the place name material supports, complements or nuances the picture derived from the archaeological sources.

In fact, several place names referring to central functions are concentrated in the area. One of them is the farm name *Skei* (1518-1523 Skede), on the grounds of which the Herlaugshaugen burial mound and the associated burial ground are located. The place name element *skeið* is often associated with ancient horse races and fights (cf. Wessén 1921), but it has also been suggested that this place name could refer to a fenced-in place of worship (cf. Vikstrand 2001, p. 361). Another place name associating a central function is the neighbouring farm name *Leknes* (1430-1440 Leknes). The farm names *Leknes*, *Liknes* and *Leiknes* are often found in the coastal areas of Norway, and are explained to go back to either *leikr*, m. 'game' or the verb *leika* 'whirl'. In the former case, they may refer to a place where the population of the district gathered for cultic games in pagan times (cf. Rygh 1898a, p. 64-5, Sandnes and Stemshaug 1997, p. 287). No Medieval spellings with the diphthong 'ei' are attested for the farm name

*Leknes* on the island of Leka. An origin of the latter from *leikr* m. 'game' is therefore uncertain. That this may nevertheless be the case may be given by the fact, noted by Elias Wessén (1921, p. 116-8), that *skeið*-names occur in several cases in the neighbourhood of *leik*-names, and at the same time can be linked to church or assembly sites (see also Loftsgarden, this volume). Not only do the farm names *Leknes* and *Skei* occur in neighbourhood on the island of Leka, but, at least in the Late Middle Ages, a church was also located south of the modern farm of Leknes (Fig. 2). Approximately 500 m southeast of the modern farmyard of Leknes in the direction of the farm of Skei, an 88 m high, freestanding hill is located, the Olberget. A small farm at its foot bears the place name *Tinghaugen* and could thus also refer to an assembly site in the area. In contrast to the assembly aspect in connection with court functions and games related to the cult, the possible connection between *skeið*-names and large cemeteries has so far been undercommunicated. In addition to the present example from Leka, two examples from Trøndelag can be mentioned: the large cemetery 'Skeifeltet' at the farm of Skei in the municipality of Sparbu, where there is also a courtyard site (cf. Stenvik 2001), and a recently excavated cemetery at *Skeiet* farm in Vinjeøra. However, since both the burial itself and possible subsequent commemoration ceremonies can be assumed to have been accompanied by assemblies, it is not a contradiction to find *skeið*-names related to cemeteries. Already the early Nordic historians assumed that close links existed between legal assemblies, pre-Christian cult sites and several forms of markets and games (cf. Munch 1852, p. 152-3, Schück 1926, p. 170-1).

About three kilometres southwest of Skei and Leknes, another place name indicates cultic activities. This is the place name *Frøvik* (1518-1523 Frøwig), which could possibly go back to a place name \**Frøjuvik* derived from the name of the goddess Frøya (Rygh 1903, p. 370).

The assumption that central functions are concentrated in the vicinity of Herlaugshaugen is supported by another place name in the area: *Husby* (1518-1523 Hwseby). The phenomenon of more than 130 Scandinavian *Huseby*-names has been studied for a long time by a number of researchers (most recently Lemm in 2014 with a review of the research history). It is widely accepted that these names denote significant sites that were included in an administrative system of royal farms in the 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> century, and in this context received the standardised place name \**husabyr*. An important observation is that the *Huseby*-names are a secondary phenomenon and have replaced the original names of the places. In some cases the original names can be reconstructed from historical records, for example in the case of three *Husebys* in south-eastern Norway, all of which contain the ending *-sal*: *Tesalr* or *Tesalir* in the municipality of Råde, *Óðinssalr* - with the theophoric name Odin - in the municipality of Fredrikstad, and *Skiringsalr* in the municipality of Larvik near the Viking Age trading place of Kaupang (Brink 1999b, p. 287). Unfortunately, the original name of Husby on the island of Leka has not survived.

Åke Hyenstrand (1974) had pointed to the fact that many *Huseby*-names are located in the immediate vicinity of monumental burial mounds or large cemeteries of the Late Iron Age. He concluded that many of the Medieval *Huseby* farms represented manors or the seats of minor kings in the preceding period. An embedment of the royal *Huseby* farms into already existing central place complexes, probably after previous confiscation or transfer to the Crown, is therefore likely.

Finally, two place names at the Leknessjøen bay contain the Old Norse word *naust*, as a term for a massive boathouse, as opposed to a light shelter (Old Norse *hróf*) (Falk 1912, p. 27-8). These are the field names *Nausthaugen* and *Naustskjæret*, both found in the area where Harald Egenæs Lund observed one of the boathouse sites mentioned in the 1950s.



Figure 5. Map of the Folda-Salvatnet-area. Basic map by Kartverket – [www.kartverket.no](http://www.kartverket.no). Illustration: B. Maixner.

In sum, the archaeological sources and place names provide indications that in the Iron Age several central functions and components according to the central place concept were located in the vicinity of the Herlaugshaugen burial mound. However, without further archaeological investigations, it is impossible to clarify when and whether these functions and components existed simultaneously. Some of these components are indicated either by archaeological sources or place names, others by both categories of sources. The place name *Husby* can be interpreted as a reference to the former existence of a magnates' farm in the area, the original name of which is lost. The monumentality of the late extension of the Herlaugshaugen burial mound, the lost decorated bronze cauldron from the cairn inside Herlaugshaugen, which may be interpreted as a Roman import, and the status-indicating Merovingian disc-on-bow-brooch support this assumption. In contrast, some place names refer to functions that are not yet evident from the archaeological material, but which represent important components of central place complexes. These include, in particular, assembly functions and possibly cultic games (indicated by the place names *Skei* and possibly *Leknes*) as well as legal functions (*Tinghaugen*), but also the reference to cult practice (*Frøvik*). Finally, the unusually large number of boathouse sites as well as the two place names containing *-naust* may indicate

naval defence, possibly also mercantile activity as other central functions of the area. Apart from this possible indication, the elementary central place components craft production and communication, have on the contrary, not yet been illuminated in the area either by place names or by archaeological sources. Due to topographical considerations, they are likely to be found in the beach areas close to streams flowing into the sea. Probable localities are the beach zones of the bays on both sides of the headland projecting south of the Herlaugshaugen burial mound into the sound-like fjord (Fig. 2, 3). The find material of such places of exchange and production is usually characterised by weights, hacksilver, dress ornaments, imported goods and possibly non-ferrous production waste, and could therefore be most easily identified by the use of metal detectors.

## The Folda-Salvatnet-area

The second area on the coast of North Trøndelag where the presence of large burial mounds suggests a central site complex is the headland between the firth Folda and the large lake Salvatnet (Fig. 5).



Figure 6. Map of the Salsnes-area. Basic map by Kartverket – [www.kartverket.no](http://www.kartverket.no). Illustration: B. Maixner.

In the Iron Age, the area was situated at a cross-over between important water and land routes in several directions (Fig. 1): 1. the Firth Folda leading in a north-easterly direction, 2. the Namsen water system, which was an important connection eastwards to the inland and to areas in present-day Sweden, 3. the isthmus Namdalseid leading towards the Trondheimsfjorden in



the southwest, and 4. the lake Salvatnet leading into the interior of the region. Furthermore, the headland is close to the main sailing route running north-south along the Norwegian coast. In the Iron Age, natural resources in demand in the south, such as fur, antlers and iron, were probably transported to the sailing route along the coast via the inland waterways mentioned above.

Geologically, the area around Salvatnet is characterised by exposed bedrock. Exceptions are only two areas where there are larger areas of fertile marine beach sedimentation. The largest of these areas is situated in the area of today's Salsnes at the western end of the headland, on a bay at the mouth of the Namen water system in the area of today's farms Mo, Vestgården, Østtun and Kvernsvika. In terms of its extension, this area represents one of the largest contiguous, agriculturally favourable areas in the entire region (Fig. 6). It is in this area that the three large burial mounds are located. Only a narrow isthmus of about 800 m width separates Firth Folda at this point from Lake Salvatnet, which stretches about 29 km inland. Lake Salvatnet drains into Firth Folda through the short Moselva river.

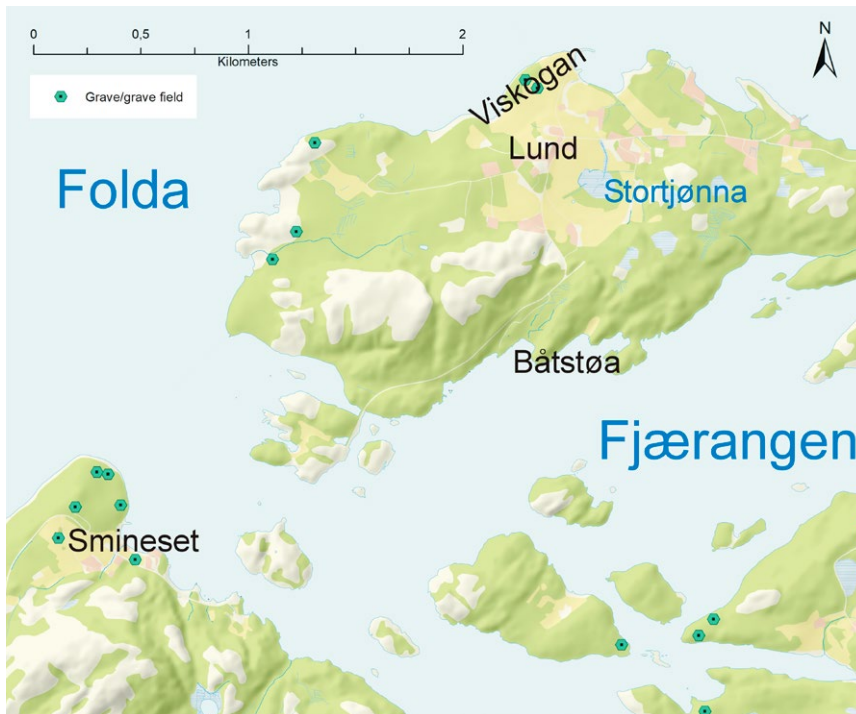


Figure 7. Map of the Smineset-Lund-area. Basic map by Kartverket – [www.kartverket.no](http://www.kartverket.no). Illustration: B. Maixner.

The second, but much smaller, area with favourable conditions for farming lies about ten km further northeast, on both sides of the mouth of the fjord Fjæringen, in the areas of the modern farms of Smineset and Lund (Fig. 7). While the land bridge between the Firth Folda and Lake Salvatnet is only narrow, it widens towards the northeast. The small, branched fjord Fjæringen, however, forms not only a sheltered bay south of Lund with the possibility of landing boats on the beach at the place called Båttstøa (båt = boat, stø = landing place), but also

leads far towards Lake Salvatnet. Due to its location at the entrance to the fjord Fjærangen and the associated passage into Lake Salvatnet, the area between Smineset and Lund has a similar strategic position as Salsnes.

The land bridge between an arm of the fjord Fjærangen and Lake Salvatnet is only about 800 m wide. A path leads across it in a depression, which is paved by a timber bridge on swampy sections. Dating proves construction phases in the Viking Age and the Middle Ages (Ystgaard 2005, p. 86). Even in modern times, people living at the inner parts of Lake Salvatnet pulled their boats across this land bridge when they wanted to fish in the sea (Askeladden ID 55996-1). The presence of a hillfort, Festningen, at this location indicates that this narrow point was also of strategic importance. So far, only one dating, pointing to the Bronze Age, is known from its construction (Ystgaard 2005, p. 87-8). However, typological features may indicate that the site was built in the later Roman or Migration period (cf. Ystgaard 2005, p. 112-3).

Apart from the constructions of the large burial mounds and the hillfort, the archaeological sources from the Folda-Salvatnet-area are sparse. Similar to the island of Leka, there is a large number of small burial mounds and cairns, which are mainly concentrated on the coast (Fig. 5). An exception are the three aforementioned large burial mounds lying in a row on a beach wall in the area of the farmyard of the modern farm of Vestgården (Fig. 6, 8). Today, the mounds are shut in between modern buildings and high vegetation in spots, but originally, they may have been visible from afar, and especially from the sea. The two outer mounds are cairns and are about 30 m in diameter, the middle one, which appears to consist mostly of earth, is slightly smaller. No dating information is available about them.



**Figure 8.** The northern and middle of the three large burial mounds at the present-day farm of Vestergården, Salsnes, seen from the west. Photo: B. Maixner, 2021.

Immediately to the north-east of the large burial mounds is a circular bog, Stormyra (Fig. 6, 9), probably being a small, silted lake, about 300 m in diameter. On the south-western edge of the bog, several hearths with burnt stones and charcoal were observed in newly cultivated land in the 1940s (Askeladden ID 66798). Probably these were cooking pits. As no samples of charcoal were collected, their dating is unknown. However, cooking-pit sites in Norway generally date from the Roman Iron Age and the Migration period (c. AD 0-600) (cf. Ødegaard 2019).

Very few archaeological finds from the Iron Age and early Middle Ages are known from the Salsnes area. One is a female burial with jewellery from the transition between the Merovingian period to the early Viking Age (T22602) from a cairn from the area of the present-day farm of Østtun. The others are a cylindrical weight of lead (T28532), and a 13<sup>th</sup>-century enamelled Limoges-mount, probably from a cross, from the plough horizon in the area of the Mo farm (T28531). Their presence suggests market activity, maybe even the existence of an otherwise undocumented medieval church at the junction between Lake Salvatnet and the coast.

In contrast, there are no known finds from the area of Smineset and Lund that can be dated with certainty to the Iron Age. However, there are two indications of iron extraction and processing from the vicinity of the farm of Smineset, namely an iron extraction site in a bog rich in bog ore (Askeladden ID 26298), and two slag deposits near the present-day farmyard (Askeladden ID 55997 and 16634). The dating of these sites is unknown, but generally the extraction of local bog-ore deposits near the settlements is a phenomenon that is older than the extensive specialised exploitation of rich bog-ore deposits in the mountain regions from the ninth century on (cf. Barndon and Olsen 2018, p. 80).



**Figure 9.** The Stormyra bog at the present-day farm of Vestergården, Salsnes, seen from its north-eastern edge. Photo: B. Maixner, 2021.

Two spindle whorls of soapstone (T13974-13975) from the ground of the farm of Lund belong to a group of objects that have a long period of use into the modern period, and therefore cannot be dated with certainty to the periods before that.

The significance of the archaeological sources for the Folda-Salsvatnet area is thus very limited. In combination with the topographically strategic location at the transition from Lake Salvatnet to the sea, and at the crossing point of important waterways, the three large burial mounds and the possibly medieval church site indicate a local or regional centre of power at this location. The function and significance of the agriculturally favourable areas around Smineset and Lund, on the other hand, which was obviously densely populated in the Iron Age due to the existence of cairns and small burial mounds, is not illuminated by the archaeological sources alone.

In the following, the evidence of place names will be examined. The place name *Mo*, which is very common in Norway and is situated at the outlet of Lake Salvatnet, is only descriptive of the topography and refers to a dry sandy plain (cf. Sandnes and Stemshaug 1997, p. 314). However, the place name may indicate plains suitable for holding markets.

The potential of the farm names *Vestgården* and *Østtun*, on the contrary, might be different. Oluf Rygh (1891, p. 241-2) assumes that they represent two parts of an originally larger farm with a vanished name. Possibly its name was *\*Tun*, which could be indicated by the two lost names *Uttun* and *Nordtun* in combination with *Østtun* and Vestgården's older name *Vesttun* (Rygh 1903, 341). If this is the case, the place name could indicate a farm with special status in the Iron Age - the nodal site within Stefan Brink's (1996) central place complex model (see also Vikstrand, this volume). Another possibility is that the vanished name was *Salisnes*, which survives from around 1430. This name in turn, according to Sandnes and Stemshaug (1997, p. 380), could go back to a lost lake name *\*Salir* or *\*Salr*. The question is, however, whether it is not more likely that a farm, and possibly the forerunner of today's farms Vestgården and Østtun, bore such a name, and that the name of the lake was derived from it. This comparison suggests itself not least because of the three burial mounds in a row in Gamla Uppsala in the Lake Mälaren area, one of the most important early mediaeval centres of power in Scandinavia and, according to the description by Adam of Bremen from the 11<sup>th</sup> century, also a major cult centre. Excavations at Gamla Uppsala revealed a magnificent hall of 60 m length from the Vendel period (AD 600-800) (cf. Brink 1996, p. 245, Ljungkvist and Frölund 2015). A number of researchers believe that *sal* in the name Uppsala refers to the local occurrence of halls (for a summary of the state of research cf. Vikstrand 2013, p. 142). *Sal*-names are relatively rare and often have uncompounded forms, i.e. *sal* or *sala*. In central Sweden, it has also been observed that *Sal*-names are linked to clay plains and thus pastures (Vikstrand 2013, p. 146). According to Herschend (2001, p. 54), however, this is not a contradiction, since pastureland is an important prerequisite for the development of wealth, which can find its expression in halls. In addition to Uppsala, there are other examples in Sweden of the occurrence of *Sal*-names in central place settings, such as *Sala* in Västmanland, and *Sal* in Västergötland (Vikstrand 2013, p. 146-7). It has also been suggested that *Sal*-names may give a clue to cult buildings (Andersson 1990, p. 89-91). If this assumption is right, large hall-like buildings of a manor could be supposed to have stood near the large burial mounds. Whether the lost name in the area was *\*Tun* or a *Sal*-name, it indicates centrality.

About 700 m south-west of the three large burial mounds, a small headland between the bays of Kynnvika and Sørsjøen bears the place name *Naustneset*, containing the above-mentioned element *-naust*, which refers to boathouses. As mentioned, boathouses show a link to chieftains' administrative centres, and the place name *Naustneset* thus fits into the milieu indicated by the large burial mounds and the *Sal-* or *Tun-*name.

A sacral function can possibly be inferred for the second largest area of agriculturally favourable land in the Folda-Salvatnet area, namely the area around the farms Lund and Smineset at the mouth of the fjord Fjæringen. Today's farm of Lund is situated on a spur about 300 m from the coast, and at about equal distances from the bays of Sandvika and Litlstrandbukta (Fig. 7, 10). Immediately south of the modern farmyard is a marked, rocky outcrop of 35 m in elevation. To the south-east, the farm borders a silted-up lake of a strikingly round shape, Stortjønna, similar to the Stormyra bog described next to the three large burial mounds at the farm of Vestgården on Salsnes.

The interpretation of the name *Lund*, sacred or profane, is not undisputed among place name researchers (cf. Vikstrand 2001, p. 282-3). However, research about the contexts of Lund names in the Lake Mälär Region and in western Norway has shown that around 30% (Vikstrand 2001, p. 291) and 36% (Vasshus 2011, p. 107-8) respectively of the names are to be regarded as sacral. Only one sacred Lund (grove) as a place of worship is attested for Scandinavia from contemporary written sources, namely according to Adam of Bremen (Book IV, chaps 26-27) (Trillmich 2000, p. 471-2) the holy grove beside the temple at Uppsala, in which sacrificed bodies of humans and animals were hung within the trees.



**Figure 10.** The area of the Lund farm, seen from the hill Nonhaugen. In the background the Folda firch. A Viskogan. B Farmyard of the present-day farm of Lund. C Rocky outcrop at the present-day farm of Lund. D The silted-up lake Stortjønna. Photo: B. Maixner, 2021.

At the landscape level, theophoric place names compounded with *-lund*, such as the Swedish *Torslunda* or *Fröslunda*, may indicate that groves were used as places of worship in the Norse religion, although the link to individual gods was probably not essential (Vikstrand 2001, p. 291). A few years ago, investigations on a hill in Lunda, Strängnäs, Södermanland in Sweden near an Iron Age magnates' farm could provide archaeological evidence of a grove and give an impression of traces of religious practice that can be expected at such places. The archaeological features at the site encompassed stone settings and constructed 'floors' of sharp-edged stones. The find material consisted of fragmented burnt bones, pieces of burnt clay, tiny drops of resin, colourful beads and edged tools such as knives and arrowheads (Andersson 2006).

As Per Vikstrand (2001, p. 278-291) and Krister Vasshus (2011) have shown through their research, the name milieu in which *-lund*-names occur can provide crucial clues as to whether they are to be interpreted as sacred or profane. In the vicinity of *Lund* in the Folda-Salvatnet area there is a field name, *Viskogan*, which may indicate a sacral interpretation, although the age of this name is uncertain. The area named as *Viskogan* refers to a moraine range immediately on the coast, which is situated north of the modern farm of *Lund*. On the ridge lies a small burial ground comprising at least seven cairns. In the shell grit area between the moraine range and the modern farmyard of *Lund*, another grave, a flat grave, and other cultural traces were found (Askeladden ID 6766 and 36224). One meaning of *vé-* is 'sacred place' and can thus refer to places of worship. However, the place name element *vé-* can also phonetically coincide with *viðja* 'withy', *vik* 'bay', and *viðr* 'forest' (Christensen 2010, 110). *Vé-/vé* occurs in numerous place names, both as a prefix and as a suffix. The prefix *Vé-/vé* in nature names such as *Viholmen* (holm = holme), *Vinäsl Vines* (nes = headland), *Visjön* (sjö = lake), *Vimose* (mose = bog) is not uncommon (Andersson 1990, p. 77-83, Vikstrand 2011, p. 298-301). The present place name *Viskogan* (skog = forest) could refer to a sacred grove, although the age of the field name is unknown, as mentioned. The close proximity of the two place names *Lund* and *Viskogen*, and the presence of the aforementioned burial ground on the latter, however, could be indications that the area had a former sacral function. It is also possible that the marked rocky outcrop beside the present-day farmyard of *Lund* attracted ritual activity. There are several examples from Iron Age Scandinavia with indications that offerings took place at outcrops and erratic blocks (cf. Fabech and Näsman 2013, p. 77-9).

The place name *Smineset* (1430-1440 Smidianese) west of the mouth of the fjord *Fjæringen* probably goes back to *smiðja* f., smithy and *nes*, headland (cf. Rygh 1903, p. 382). The place name is interesting because it coincides with the mentioned archaeological evidence of iron extraction and processing. In Stefan Brink's (1996, p. 242, 2008, p. 62) model of a (particularly central and eastern Swedish) central place complex, the related place name *Smedby* represents an elementary component, which possibly has to be understood as denoting a smith's farm, where weapons or jewellery were forged. Thus, in combination with its location at the entry into the *Fjæringen* fjord, even a function related to fortification and warriors can be discussed as a basis for the place name *Smineset*. Thus, the site would correspond to the mentioned hillfort *Festningen* at the opposite access to the fjord.

The toponymic evidence thereby not only confirms the comparatively sparse archaeological sources in the Folda-Salvatnet-area, but even gives an impression of possible central functions that have not yet been illuminated by other sources. The assumption of the existence of a central place at *Salsnes*, which is indicated by the three large burial mounds in a row at the

present-day farm of Vestgården, is supported by the fact that either a central place indicating place name \**Tun*, or a *Sal*-name, pointing to the presence of large halls, can be reconstructed in the area.

The area about 10 km away from Salsnes in the area of today's farm of Lund is archaeologically unobtrusive and does not stand out in any way from other areas along the coast that are favourable for settlement. It is only through the place names *Lund* and *Sminesset*, possibly also *Viskogán*, that the area emerges as a central place with distinctive cultic functions and military elements. At the same time, the assumption of a place of worship at this location indicates that the assumed farm was not an ordinary farm, but a farm with central functions that controlled the entrance to the fjord Fjæringen and thus the connection between the Salsvatnet lake and the coast. Beyond a possible ritual component and a function related to fortification, the place name *Sminesset* may pragmatically indicate that the processing of iron, extracted not only locally but possibly also in the hinterland of the lake Salvatnet, had economic significance. It can also be assumed that the trade in hunting products, especially furs and antlers from the hinterland as evidenced by several – but also undated – pitfalls (e.g. Askeladden ID 60356, 36222), took place via Lund and Salsnes.

The 10-km distance between the Salsnes and Sminesset-Lund areas is borderline for considering them parts of a coherent central place complex. However, the fact that each controlled one of the two transitions between the Firth Folda and Lake Salvatnet makes it likely to understand them as belonging together in some way. It is likely that the Sminesset-Lund complex is to be understood as a central farm, which was subordinate to a manor situated on Salsnes.

Striking landscape elements in both areas, Salsnes and Lund, are the circular bog and the silted-up lake Stormyra (Fig. 9) and Stortjønna (Fig. 10), respectively, both of which may have originally been lakes. It cannot be ruled out that these had a role in the cognitive landscape because of their conspicuous shape, and thus represented places where ritual acts were performed. An indication of this may be the fire pits at the edge of the Stormyra bog, which probably represent cooking pits. Norwegian cooking pit sites are associated with large gatherings in the context of political, legal and cultic affairs (cf. Ødegaard 2019). Charlotte Fabech (1991, p. 300) has drawn attention to the general tendency for a shift in ritual activities away from wetlands and open nature towards the dwellings of the social elite at the transition from the Early to the Late Iron Age. However, there are many examples of ritual deposits being carried out in water bodies in the Viking Age as well (Lund 2008). One example is the magnate's residential complex of Tissø on the Danish island of Zealand, which was situated at the bank of the Lake Tissø, approximately seven km from the coast. The complex was in use from the sixth to the eleventh century AD and is characterised by monumental halls and extensive workshop areas. As Lars Jørgensen (2014, p. 251) has pointed out, the Tissø complex constituted a pre-Christian ritual landscape encompassing the residence itself with cult buildings and ritual features, weaponry, tool and jewellery offerings in lake Tissø, an open ritual site with sacrifices and traces of meals, offerings of a sword and a tool chest in the Halleby river, a well with animal offerings, and horse sacrifices in a bog area. The distribution of the objects apparently sacrificed in Lake Tissø suggests that they were thrown into the water from the edge of the lake (Lund 2008, p. 56). It would be interesting to see if targeted investigations could bring evidence of ritual sacrifice of objects in the circular lakes/moors of Stortjønna and Stormyra.

**Table 1.** Compilation of central functions in the surroundings of the Herlaugshaugen burial mound and in the Folda-Salvatnet-area as indicated by archaeological sources and place names.

	Surroundings of the Herlaugshaugen burial mound		Folda-Salvatnet-area			
	Archaeological sources	Place names	Salsnes		Lund	
Archaeological sources			Place names	Archaeological sources	Place names	
Manor	- Herlaugshaugen burial mound - Disc-on-bow-brooch - Roman cauldron (?)	Husby	Large burial mounds	-Sal *Tun (?)		
Assembly		Leknes Skei Tinghaugen	Cooking-pits (?)			
Cult		Frøvika Leknes Skei	Cooking-pits (?)	-Sal		Lund Viskog (?)
Defence	Boathouse sites	Nausthaugen Naustskjæret	Iron extraction and processing	Naustneset		Smineset
Trade and production			Weight of lead	Mo		

## Conclusion

The aim of this article was to shed light on the contribution of place names to the evaluation of possible central place complexes that have scarcely yet been explored archaeologically. Two areas in the coastal region of northern Trøndelag were selected, where the presence of large burial mounds suggested central sites: the area around the Herlaugshaugen burial mound on the island of Leka, and the land bridge between Firth Folda and Lake Salvatnet. Both areas were investigated for their strategic position, topographical features, archaeological sources and central functions indicating place names. As a result of this investigation, it can be stated that in both areas, the evidence of place names contributes significantly to identifying and spatially anchoring characteristic components and functions of Iron Age Scandinavian central place complexes.

In particular, the surroundings of the Herlaugshaugen burial mound appear through the combined archaeological and toponymic investigation as an obviously long-lived centre of power, whose core seems to consist of a chieftain's farm or manor, in the surroundings of which various assembly functions were observed; these were related to legal functions and (cultic) games, cultic activities, as well as naval defence. The Folda-Salvatnet area seems to have been located at a lower level of power, but because of its place name possibly referring to large halls, assembly functions indicated by cooking pits, military aspects and above all distinctly cultic elements as expressed both in the place names and in the landscape, it shows clear signs of having been a central place complex. A special strategic location is characteristic of both areas. The spatial distribution of the components indicated by archaeological sources and place names over a larger area coincides with a characteristic of Iron Age Scandinavian central sites. As can be seen from the compilation in Table 1, the contribution of place names at the two areas investigated is even greater than that of the sparse archaeological sources. Some functions, such as assembly, legal functions and cults, are so far almost exclusively indicated by place names. However, it should not be overlooked that the place names – just like archaeological sources – are primarily indications that require interpretation, and that neither their dating to the Iron Age nor their contemporaneity with each other and with



the archaeological sources is certain, although probable. Clear evidence of craft production and communication is missing from both groups of sources from both study areas but can be assumed in the areas close to the beach and should be detectable there with metal detectors. Striking topographical formations in combination with sacred place names, such as the circular lakes/bogs at Salsnes and Lund, as well as the striking rock formation at Lund, give perspectives on possible ritual actions that could have found their material expression, e.g. through the sacrifice of objects, and can be followed up by archaeological investigations. Hence, another important function of the use of place names in archaeology is that of a tool for identifying areas for targeted further investigations. Beside those already mentioned, the area-wide geophysical prospection for possible hall buildings indicated by the place name element *sal* in the vicinity of the large burial mounds on Salsnes, or the targeted search for boathouse sites in the area of the place name Naustneset, are practical applications of the inclusion of place name studies in Norwegian central place research.

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## Placing Place Names in Norwegian Archaeology

This collection of papers serves to illustrate how place names have a continued relevance to archaeology both in Norway and beyond.

The interdisciplinary use of place name studies and archeology have long traditions in Norway and Scandinavia. However, the prerequisites for this type of research have changed in recent decades with decreased resources in onomastic departments while archaeology develops rapidly through new methods in surveying, natural sciences, metal detection and excavations. Where do we stand today and how can we improve and renew our views on toponymy and of the methodological challenges we face when combining linguistic and material remains?

The various papers in the book emphasise how place names can provide unique insights into past people's perceptions of land and sense of place, providing access to emic categories otherwise unavailable to archaeologists. Names work as active elements in ongoing discourses about the landscape, and there can be intimate connections between places, names, populations and identities. Toponymy may reflect or evoke emotions on both individual and collective levels.

Through a range of perspectives, this collection of papers explores the status and perspectives of interdisciplinary research in a Norwegian context, focusing on the methodologies of interdisciplinary studies, research environments and prehistoric as well as historical periods.



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